

UNIT OVERVIEW

Unit Length	Approximately ten 70–85-minute lessons
Grade Level(s)/Subject(s)	10-12th grade American Studies / Sociology
Unit Overview	<p><i>The 1619 Project</i> was released to immediate backlash from conservative lawmakers and media. This unit asks students to reflect on the media backlash to the project and connect political media rhetoric to current anti-critical race theory (CRT) legislation.</p> <p>Students will ask and answer questions on the media’s significance in crafting narratives that become law. They will also practice skills of rhetorical analysis.</p>
Objectives & Outcomes	<p>Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify rhetorical devices commonly used in political media ● Analyze political media and communication for effectiveness ● Connect media narratives to lawmaking ● Write a letter to a state representative or create an Instagram campaign evaluating anti-CRT legislation in their state
Standards	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</p>
Unit Resources	<p>Analyzing <i>The 1619 Project</i>: Illustration for “The Idea of America” Excerpt from “The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones [.pdf] Excerpt from “The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones [.docx]</p> <p>Analyzing responses to <i>The 1619 Project</i>: Newt Gingrich, NY Times launches propaganda campaign on race, Fox News, opinion “What the NYT’s 1619 Project aims to teach your kids” by John Podhoretz, NY Post, opinion “The 1619 Project Hurts Blacks” by Robert L. Woodson, Wall Street Journal, opinion</p>

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	<p>1776 Commission Final Report “What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?” by Stephen Sawchuk, <i>Education Week</i> Florida Department of Education Rule 6A-1.094124</p>
Performance Task(s)	<p>In the culminating project, students will write a letter to their state lawmakers or create an Instagram campaign evaluating current anti-CRT legislation in their state and its relationship to the truth. In order to demonstrate full understanding of the media literacy aspect of the unit, students will include evidence of media in their letter that they believe influenced the law.</p>
Assessment/Evaluation	<p>Formative Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily exit tickets (e.g. identifying the thesis of <i>The 1619 Project</i>)• Worksheets/graphic organizers in which students analyze arguments and rhetoric• Rhetorical Analysis Quiz (identify rhetorical devices in a reading selection) <p>Summative Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final assignment and rubric [.pdf]• Final assignment and rubric [.docx]

DAILY LESSONS AND RESOURCES

Days 1-2: The 1619 Project Thesis

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
SWBAT identify the thesis of <i>The 1619 Project</i> by analyzing the <i>1619</i> podcast trailer, excerpts from the essay “The Idea for America,” and images from the essay
Lesson Materials & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustration for “The Idea of America” • Excerpt from “The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones [.pdf] • Excerpt from “The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones [.docx] • 1619 podcast trailer • Interview with Nikole Hannah-Jones on <i>The Daily Show</i> • U.S. Voting Rights Timeline from the Northern California Citizenship Project
Lesson Activities
<p>Do Now (20 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project this image from “The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones in <i>The 1619 Project</i>. Ask students to use an image analysis protocol, such as this one, to understand this image. 2. Provide 5-7 minutes for students to analyze the image before going over each step of the protocol as a class. 3. After completing the protocol, open a class discussion guided by the question: <i>What predictions can we make about The 1619 Project based on how we interpret this image?</i> <p>Hook (20 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a brief overview of <i>The 1619 Project</i> with basic details through PowerPoint or lecture (who, what, when, where) 2. Emphasize the lesson objective, that the class will be using the image from the do now, along with other samples from the project to identify the thesis/central argument 3. Introduce and then play the 1619 podcast trailer. <i>It may be helpful to play through completely once and then play it again so the students can answer the questions.</i> 4. Use the following guiding questions to scaffold student understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What location might Nikole Hannah-Jones be describing at the start of the clip?

- Who is the ‘our people’ she is referring to in the statement, “They say our people were born on the water . . .”?
- How does Hannah-Jones describe the journey on the “endless teal of the Atlantic”? Provide 2-3 examples.
- What do you think she means by, “They had been made Black by those that believed themselves to be white?”
- Based on everything you heard in the clip, what do you think is the significance of the year 1619 in U.S. History?

By the end of discussion, students should know that 1619 was the year of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans to American lands.

Main Activity (45 mins):

1. **Introduce “The Idea of America” essay** as a central text in the project, and explain that the class will be reading an excerpt from the essay and completing a couple of activities based on what they read
2. **Teacher read aloud of [“The Idea for America” excerpt](#).**
3. After an initial reading of the text, **ask students to select the ONE sentence that stands out** most to them/best describes the author’s point.
4. After each student has selected a sentence, the class should **form a circle and each student should read the sentence** that resonated with them. *Explain to students that they should only read the sentence, and not to offer any explanation.*
5. After the first circle, **repeat steps 3 & 4 but with a single word** from the text.
6. Ask students to **pair off, and read through the excerpt again**, using the following guiding question to identify the thesis:
 - Why does Hannah-Jones’ dad fly the American flag? What reasons does she provide for why he shouldn’t want to fly it?
 - According to Hannah-Jones, how did the year 1619 and slavery impact America?
7. Show [Trevor Noah’s interview with Nikole Hannah-Jones](#) on *The Daily Show* (0:00 - 4:40)
8. Class discussion: Based on what we’ve read and seen so far, what is Nikole Hannah-Jones’ argument about how the year 1619 and slavery impacted America?

Closing (15 mins):

1. Hand out [U.S. Voting Rights Timeline](#) and ask students to work with a partner to identify how voting eligibility has changed since 1776. Then, they should answer the question: Is Hannah-Jones right about the founding ideals being a lie when they were written? Why or why not?

2. Explain in closing that Black people and other racially oppressed groups have organized and protested since 1776 to have full access to the right to vote. Ask students to point out some examples from the timeline. Wrap up by reminding students that the central argument of *The 1619 Project* is that Black people have been the “perfectors” of democracy since arriving to this land in 1619. Why would naming 1619 as America’s founding year be seen as controversial? And who would consider it most controversial?

Exit Ticket (5 mins):

Why might an essay/entire 100+ page project be necessary to make this point? Who do you think the audience may be?

Days 3-4: Media Response

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
<p>SWBAT...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define partisan, conservative, and liberal in order to effectively interpret a news media bias chart ● Read and analyze conservative news media responses to <i>The 1619 Project</i> in order to identify themes/patterns in opposition to the project
Lesson Materials & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AdFontes Media Bias Chart ● Newt Gingrich, NY Times launches propaganda campaign on race, Fox News, opinion ● “What the NYT’s 1619 Project aims to teach your kids” by John Podhoretz, NY Post, opinion ● “The 1619 Project Hurts Blacks” by Robert L. Woodson, Wall Street Journal, opinion ● Conservative Media Response Graphic Organizer [.pdf] ● Conservative Media Response Graphic Organizer [.docx]
Lesson Activities
<p>Do Now (5 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students to respond to the question, Where do you get your news? Provide 2-3 minutes for students to write down a response and then share out. 2. Recap student learning about <i>The 1619 Project</i> thesis from days 1-2. <p>Hook (25 minutes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students to define, using the learnersdictionary.com, the following terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partisan ● Conservative ● Liberal 2. Project the AdFontes Media Bias Chart and discuss with students to scaffold understanding using the following guiding questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the title of the chart? ● What is the label on the horizontal axis? What is the label on the vertical axis? ● How does this chart classify the <i>NY Post</i>? <i>The Wall Street Journal</i>? Fox News? ● Where do your news sources from the do now fall on the chart? If the sources you use are not on the chart, why do they think they may not have been included? 3. Explain to students through lecture or PowerPoint that conservative news media/media on the right more often agree with Republican lawmakers, and typically have audiences that skew Republican. But

this phenomenon isn't unique to Republicans; news media on the left more often agree with Democratic lawmakers, and typically have audiences that skew Democratic.

4. **Re-introduce *The 1619 Project*** and explain to students that many conservative news media responded to the project immediately. **Emphasize the objective:** the class will be reading a variety of conservative news media responses to *The 1619 Project* in order to extract themes that may be similar amongst them. *It may be helpful to ask a student to refresh the class on the thesis/purpose of the project.*

Main Activity (45 minutes):

1. **Project video of [Newt Gingrich's Fox News interview](#)** about *The 1619 Project*.
2. **Break students into heterogeneous groups** of three and ask them to discuss what Newt Gingrich's argument is against *The 1619 Project* and share out.
3. After discussing the video, **explain to the groups that each member of the group will be reading a different opinion piece** that was published by a conservative news media source after the release of *The 1619 Project*.
4. Each member of the group should select one of the three opinion pieces to **read and then complete [the graphic organizer section](#)** for their piece. Students can choose among the following opinion pieces:
 - [Newt Gingrich, NY Times launches propaganda campaign on race, Fox News](#) (re-watch and take notes)
 - ["What the NYT's 1619 Project aims to teach your kids" by John Podhoretz, NY Post](#)
 - ["The 1619 Project Hurts Blacks" by Robert L. Woodson, Wall Street Journal](#)
5. When all members of the group have finished reading and responding to their assigned piece, each member should **share a summary of their piece and the information necessary** for their groupmates to populate the remainder of the graphic organizer (remaining two sections).
6. Finally, the group should **respond to the questions at the bottom of the organizer:** what commonalities are there between the opinions? What differences?

Closing (15 mins):

Discuss as a class:

- What similarities did you see? What differences?
- Remember the definition of conservative. Why do you think conservatives might have negative opinions of the project?
- What is the difference between "opinion pieces" and "news articles"?
- What is the significance of a large news media outlet sharing an opinion piece? How does the publisher affect who the audience is and who sees the piece overall?

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Exit Ticket (5 mins):

Remember who primarily watches/reads conservative media outlets. Based on the audience, what do you think the intended purpose would be of these news opinions?

Days 5-6: Introduction to Rhetoric

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
<p>SWBAT...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define <i>rhetorical device</i> and understand the purpose and effects of rhetorical devices ● Identify four rhetorical devices in political writing ● Use rhetorical devices effectively in an original piece of writing
Lesson Materials & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rhetorical Devices handout [.pdf] ● Rhetorical Devices handout [.docx] ● Presentation on rhetoric [.pptx] ● What Is Rhetoric? choice board [.pptx] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources associated with the choice board: ○ Defining Rhetoric worksheet [.pdf] ○ Defining Rhetoric worksheet [.docx] ○ Speech by Ronald Reagan [.pdf] ○ Speech by Ronald Reagan [.docx] ○ Speech by Barack Obama [.pdf] ○ Speech by Barack Obama [.docx] ○ Speech by Jesse Jackson [.pdf] ○ Speech by Jesse Jackson [.docx] ○ Speech and ad by Donald Trump [.pdf] ○ Speech and ad by Donald Trump [.docx] ● Exit ticket quiz on rhetorical devices [.pdf] ● Exit ticket quiz on rhetorical devices [.docx]
Lesson Activities
Part I / Day 5
<p>Do Now (5 mins):</p> <p>Choose one of the following situations. What would you say?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Option 1:</i> Convince your parent/guardian to let you get a pet. ● <i>Option 2:</i> Convince your classmates that your favorite show/book/movie/video game is the best. <p>Hook (20 minutes):</p> <p>Use this PowerPoint to guide students through definitions of rhetoric and provide the four types of political rhetorical devices that will be used in the remainder of the unit. There are two practice activities included in the slides. The presentation can either be delivered by the teacher or student-paced.</p> <p>Main Activity (35 minutes):</p>

Students should choose one activity from each row of this [rhetoric choice board](#). Today students will complete one activity from row one and one activity from row two. (PDFs are linked in the choice board PowerPoint. Word Doc versions are also available in the Lesson Materials & Resources section above.)

Closing (10 mins):

Use the snowball discussion method for students to share what political devices they saw in the political speeches they analyzed. They should also share thoughts on the following:

- Is the use of rhetorical devices wrong? Why or why not? **The goal of the discussion is to reach the enduring understanding that rhetorical devices are not wrong, but can be misleading.**

Exit Ticket (5 mins):

Which rhetorical device do you think is most effective? Why?

Part II / Day 6

Do Now (5 mins):

Review: What is a rhetorical device? What is the purpose of a rhetorical device?

Main Activity (40 mins):

1. Students should complete row 3 of the [rhetoric choice board](#). (Students will use rhetorical devices to write a letter, a review, or a speech.)
2. When they finish writing, direct students to complete a peer review of their choice board activity with a partner using the [Ladder of Feedback protocol](#).

Closing (15 mins):

[Whip Around](#): Ask each student to share one example of a rhetorical device used in their writing the class.

Exit Ticket (10 mins):

Students should complete this [exit ticket quiz](#) to assess their understanding of the rhetorical devices they learned about and practiced using in the past two lessons.

Day 7: Tracing Conservative Media Language and Rhetoric to the Creation of the 1776 Commission

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
<p>SWBAT...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify rhetorical devices commonly used in political media. Make connections between political media and the evidence lawmakers use to create policy.
Lesson Materials & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1776 Commission Final Report Matching Rhetorical Devices graphic organizer [.pdf] Matching Rhetorical Devices graphic organizer [.docx]
Lesson Activities
<p>Do Now (5 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students to respond to the question: why is the year 1776 important in U.S. History? Provide 2-3 minutes for students to respond. Discuss with students the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Emphasize that this is the year most historians and Americans claim as the founding year of the United States. <p>Hook (10 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the 1776 Commission through PowerPoint or lecture. Ensure that students know it was a Trump Administration Initiative that was established one year after the release of <i>The 1619 Project</i>. Project the video: “What Trump is saying about 1619 Project, teaching U.S. history” from <i>PBS NewsHour</i> (0:00 - 0:55). Use the following guiding questions for discussion after listening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think Trump means by “patriotic education?” What would a patriotic education look like? Do you believe public education should teach students to be proud of their country, no matter what? Why would Trump say that <i>The 1619 Project</i> could “destroy our country”? What political rhetorical devices did Trump use in this clip? <p>Main Activity (40 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hand out the 1776 Commission Final Report Introduction (pages 1-2) and complete a teacher read aloud.

2. In pairs, students should **read the report again** and **identify 3-5 political rhetorical devices**. Provide 15 minutes for students to read and annotate the document. Then, ask students to **share out**.

3. After the class has identified and discussed the rhetorical devices used to describe and make important the work of the 1776 Commission, students should **refer back to the answers from the [formative assessment](#)** where they identified the rhetorical devices in the conservative news opinions.

4. Students then complete the [Matching Rhetorical Devices graphic organizer](#). Provide 15 minutes for students to complete the graphic organizer.

Closing (15 mins):

Class discussion guided by the questions:

- What similarities did you see between the arguments made in the 1776 Commission Report and those made in the conservative news opinions?
- How do you think one impacted the other?

Exit Ticket (5 mins):

Where should lawmakers get their news? Do you believe they should use news sources to inform their policy decisions? How could this be helpful? How could it be dangerous?

Day 8: Analyzing Anti-CRT Bills

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
<p>SWBAT...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and discuss anti-CRT legislation and rhetoric to analyze its causes and its impacts • Make connections between anti-CRT legislation and the political rhetoric that catalyzed its creation
Lesson Materials & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?” by Stephen Sawchuk, <i>Education Week</i> • Florida Department of Education Rule 6A-1.094124
Lesson Activities
<p>Do Now (5 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask students to read the “What is Critical Race Theory anyway?” section of this <i>Education Week</i> article. 2. Students then respond to the question, do you believe <i>The 1619 Project</i> falls under the umbrella of critical race theory? Why or why not? <p>Hook (10 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain to students through lecture or PowerPoint that in recent months, conservative news media have started conflating the 1619 Project along with any diversity and inclusion efforts into one critical race theory (CRT) category. Use examples like this news clip to demonstrate. 2. Project video of Gov. Ron DeSantis speech at FL Department of Education Meeting (0:00 - 1:47). Use the following questions to guide discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does Gov. DeSantis claim that critical race theory teaches kids? • What rhetorical device is he using? 3. Project map of states that have passed anti-CRT bills. Explain to students that as of June 2021, five states had passed laws that ban the teaching of critical race theory, and 17 states had introduced laws in their state legislatures to ban CRT. Find your state. Has anything been introduced or passed where you live? <i>Note: Educators may want to search out a map updated close to the time of their teaching.</i> <p>Main Activity (45 mins):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher read aloud of the Florida Department of Education Rule 6A-1.094124. 2. Guide discussion with the following questions:

- What does the FLDOE Rule seek to ban?
- What reasons does the Rule provide (indirectly) for banning these topics?
- How could this rule be harmful to teachers and students?
- What specific similarities does the FLDOE rule share with the 1776 Commission and the conservative news opinions you have explored in this unit so far?

3. Group Chart Paper Silent Conversation: *Before class, place 6 pieces of chart paper around the room with the questions below.* Students should be counted off into 6 groups to travel to each chart paper, discuss the question, and write a response. As new groups come to the chart paper, they can respond to groups before them or respond to the original question.

- How do you believe the initial media reaction to *The 1619 Project* impacted the policies that came next? (1776 Commission, anti-CRT laws)
- How does this series of events affect how you think about the power of the media?
- Why do you think it is important to some conservatives that *The 1619 Project* and other similar works are not taught?
- Do you think teaching/education is political? Can it ever *not be* political? Think about what teachers teach vs. choose to leave out.
- Read this [tweet](#) from conservative writer and thinker Christopher Rufo. What is he admitting to in the second tweet? What could be the political purpose behind lumping all racial and diversity conversations into one CRT category?
- What were the primary rhetorical devices you have seen demonstrated in these conservative texts? Do you think they were effective?

Exit Ticket:

What do you think should be done about the ban on teaching race, power, and privilege?

Extension Activity:

If your home state has passed or introduced any anti-CRT laws, ask students to research them and evaluate how they would change social studies/civics education for future students.

Days 9-10: Resisting Misinformation / Summative Assessment

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
SWBAT... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create advocacy material (a letter to a state representative or social media campaign) evaluating anti-CRT legislation in their state.
Lesson Materials & Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final assignment and rubric [.pdf]• Final assignment and rubric [.docx]
Lesson Activities
<p>Do Now:</p> <p>Ask students if they prefer writing or creating visuals for projects. Provide 3-5 minutes for students to respond and then take an informal poll of the class.</p> <p>Main Activity:</p> <p>Explain to students that they will be given two class periods to complete the summative assessment for the unit. Review the final assignment and associated rubric with students.</p> <p><i>It may be helpful to find an exemplar to show students, such as these letters, this campaign, or the examples embedded in the Student Work section below.</i></p> <p>Provide students time to work independently. It is anticipated that this assignment could take 2-3 class periods.</p> <p>Closing:</p> <p>Once students have completed the assignment, a gallery walk can be made by printing out Instagram slides and short quotes from student written letters.</p>
Examples of Student Work
<p>Students in the unit author's class during the 2021-22 school year created the following projects, which may serve as examples for other students completing similar projects.</p> <p>Instagram campaign / slides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student example 1• Student example 2

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- [Student example 3](#)

Letter:

- [Student example 1](#)