Listening Guide for *The 1619 Project* Podcast
Episode 1: "The Fight for a True Democracy"

1619 *is a* New York Times *audio series hosted by journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, who created* The 1619 Project *initiative for* The New York Times Magazine. *You can find more information about the podcast along with transcripts for listening at* [nytimes.com/1619podcast](). *Episode one explores the many ways in which Black Americans have fought to help the U.S. move toward the ideal of democracy it was founded on. This episode includes some scenes of graphic violence, which we identify in the guide.*

Some questions to consider before listening:

1. What is democracy? How have you heard it defined?
2. What are some symbols of democracy that you know of? Are any of these symbols in your home? In your school?
3. Some of the history and personal stories told in this podcast are hard to listen to because they describe painful events. What can we do to take care of ourselves when something is both important to hear and difficult to listen to?

Listening Guide

Time Stamp	Main Topic	Questions to consider
0:00- 4:45	Introduction/story of the White Lion	Nikole Hannah-Jones comments that the White Lion, the first slave ship to arrive in the British North American colonies, arrived at a port ironically named Point Comfort. What is ironic about that name? Does this irony remind you of any other historical names or landmarks?
4:45-10:35	Nikole Hannah-Jones' anecdote about her dad & the flag	How did Hannah-Jones feel about the American flag her dad flew in their yard as a child? Why? What flags have you seen flying in and around your neighborhood? Do you know some of the stories behind why people fly them?

10:35- 20:25	Thomas Jefferson and the hypocrisies of the founding documents of the U.S.	In what ways does the podcast suggest the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were hypocritical when written? Do you agree? What is some evidence that Thomas Jefferson and some of the other founders of the country were aware of this hypocrisy? This section is bookmarked by the reflection of an elderly Black gentleman whose grandfather was enslaved by Jefferson. Why do you think it was important to the podcasters to include his voice?
20:25- 25:55	Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War	What did Abraham Lincoln and James Mitchell want and expect Black people in America to do once they were freed? What questions do you have about Lincoln and his leadership after listening to this section of the podcast? The Black abolitionists who chose to stay and fight for the American ideal claimed the U.S. as their home. What defines home for you?
25:55-30:22	Reconstruction	What initially allowed for some progress in developing rights for Black Americans during Reconstruction? Why was that progress eventually halted? Have you heard the term “The Great Nadir” before? What questions do you have about the experiences of Black Americans during this period of history?
30:22-34:15	The story of Isaac Woodard Jr. (graphic descriptions of violence)	How does learning about the violence against Isaac Woodard Jr. and other Black veterans after the World Wars make you feel? Have you heard stories similar to Woodard’s before? What hypocrisies does this violence against Black Americans who fight for the country reveal?

34:15-39:10	The Civil Rights Movement	This section lists several groups of people, the NAACP, young Black people, activists like Martin Luther King Jr., and Congress members. How did individuals from each of these groups help in the fight for civil rights and true democracy? How have the laws and amendments fought for by Black people helped other groups of Americans?
39:10-41:57	Closing	Why did the assignment Nikole Hannah-Jones' teacher gave her make her feel ashamed? How could the teacher have improved the assignment with the history of her Black students in mind? What is research? What did doing research about Black history help Nikole understand about her dad and about herself as an American?

Some questions to consider after listening:

1. How has listening to this episode changed your understanding of the rights and liberties you have today?
2. What inequities do you think still exist in the U.S. today? Who in your community do you know fighting to make positive changes in this area?
3. What additional research do you want to do about U.S. history after learning about the ways in which research can expand your understanding of a topic?