

The 1619 Project: Materials on the theme of Democracy

Your submitted project proposal should include reference to utilizing at least one resource from the list below during your project implementation. You are welcome and encouraged to utilize other [materials from The 1619 Project](#) as well as relevant [Pulitzer Center Reporting on Human Rights and Racial Justice](#).

[The 1619 Project print magazine](#)

Essays

- 1.) [“The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones](#)
 - a.) The essay at the cornerstone of The 1619 Project, exploring the contributions of Black Americans in moving the United States towards its stated democratic ideals.
- 2.) [“Undemocratic Democracy” by Jamelle Bouie](#)
 - a.) An essay examining some of the political ideologies we see in U.S. politics today as lasting legacies of the assumption used to justify slavery: that some people are inherently entitled to more power than others.
- 3.) [“Mortgaging the Future” by Mehrsa Baradaran](#)
 - a.) A short overview of the origins of the U.S. dual banking system and its connection to the conflict between federal and state power over maintenance of the slave-based economy of the South.
- 4.) [“Chained Migration” by Tiya Miles](#)
 - a.) A short essay about the enslaved Black people that were relocated by their enslavers as white settlers displaced Native American people and moved into the American West in search of more land.
- 5.) [“The Wealth Gap” by Trymaine Lee](#)
 - a.) An essay outlining some of the systemic causes behind the vast wealth gap between Black and white Americans today.

Creative Works

1. [March 5, 1770: poem by Yusef Komunyakaa](#)
 - a. A creative work set on March 5, 1770. Crispus Attucks, a fugitive from slavery who works as dockworker, becomes the first American to die for the cause of independence after being shot in a clash with British troops.
2. [Late 1773: poem by Eve L. Ewing](#)
 - a. A creative work in conversation with the publication of Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral by Phillis Wheatley, a 20-year-old enslaved woman in Boston. When a publishing house in London released the book in 1773, Wheatley became the first African American to publish a book of poetry.
3. [July 27, 1816: poem by Tyehimba Jess](#)
 - a. A creative work set on July 27, 1816 when American troops attack Negro Fort, a stockade in Spanish Florida established by the British and left to the Black Seminoles, a Native American nation of Creek refugees, free black people and

fugitives from slavery. Nearly all of the soldiers, women and children in the fort are killed.

4. [Jan. 1, 1863: story by Darryl Pinckney](#)
 - a. A creative work set on January 1, 1863, imagining the scene at a reading of the Emancipation Proclamation at a Union Army encampment.
5. [July 30, 1866: story by ZZ Packer](#)
 - a. A creative work set on July 30, 1866 at a constitutional convention called for by abolitionist leaders, in response to the Louisiana Legislature’s refusal to give black men the vote. The crowd of people at the convention are attacked by a mob of armed white people.
6. [Feb. 12, 1946: story by Jacqueline Woodson](#)
 - a. A creative work set on Feb. 12, 1946 telling the story of Isaac Woodard, a decorated 26-year-old Army sergeant, who is severely beaten by white police officers while still wearing his uniform. The attack leaves Woodard permanently blind.
7. [Oct. 15, 1966: poem by Joshua Bennett](#)
 - a. A creative work set on Oct. 15, 1966, remembering the formation of the Black Panther Party for Self- Defense which would eventually be declared an enemy of the government by the FBI.
8. [July 17, 1984: story by Kiese Laymon](#)
 - a. A creative work set on July 17, 1984 marking the date of Rev. Jesse Jackson historic “rainbow coalition” speech in San Francisco.

The 1619 Project Print Broadsheet

1619 K-8 Infographic

1619 Podcast

1. [The Fight for a True Democracy](#)
 - a. In 1776, the nation was founded on the ideal of democracy. In 1619, when enslaved Africans first arrived in what would become the United States, black people began the fight to make that ideal a reality. Released on Aug. 23, 2019.
2. [The Land of Our Fathers Part 1](#)
 - a. 150 years after the promise of 40 acres and a mule, the story of black land ownership in America remains one of dispossession. The Provosts, who trace their family to the enslaved workers on Louisiana’s sugar-cane plantations, know this story well. Released on Oct. 4, 2019.
3. [The Land of Our Fathers Part 2](#)
 - a. The Provosts had worked the same land for generations. When it became harder and harder to keep hold of that land, June Provost and his wife, Angie, didn’t know why – and then a phone call changed their understanding of everything. Released on Oct. 11, 2019.

1619 Books

Born on the Water

A New Origin Story

1. Preface: “Origins” by Nikole Hannah-Jones
 - a. The preface was written two years after “The 1619 Project” issue of The New York Times Magazine was published. It offers additional personal context from Nikole Hannah-Jones, the principal author of the project, and provides reflections on the reception and impact of the project in the years since publication.
2. Chapter 1: “Democracy” by Nikole Hannah-Jones
 - a. Historical analysis of the hypocrisies that existed in our laws and societal structure at the nation’s founding and Black Americans’ role in shaping our democracy and helping America live up to its ideals.
3. Chapter 4: “Fear” by Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander
 - a. The essay opens with a description of the global protests in 2020 that followed the murder of George Floyd, and outlines how the protests connect to centuries of resistance and rebellion by Black people against enslavement, and the policies and policing practices enacted in the over 150 years since the abolishment of slavery to criminalize Black communities.
4. Chapter 7: “Politics” by Jamelle Bouie
 - a. The essay begins and ends with the 2020 presidential election, but also traces pro-slavery arguments and waning Southern influence leading up to the Civil War (1820-1850). This has some references to the purpose of government in the Revolutionary War era. The essay briefly touches on moments in the mid-20th century (ex. Brown v Board, Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act) to show through lines in conservative ideology, but dedicates more time to a critique of contemporary Republicanism in the Obama era (2008-2016).
5. Chapter 8: “Citizenship” by Martha S. Jones
 - a. This essay makes strong references to founding documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution throughout, to highlight debates in rhetoric and interpretation. With a focus on 1776-1893, Jones provides other examples of legal cases that highlight inconsistencies in the definition of American citizenship. The essay also reveals how over time citizenship evolved into a key issue in the Colored Conventions, and among Black activists and abolitionists more broadly.
6. Chapter 17: “Progress” by Ibram X. Kendi
 - a. This essay explores the racial progress narrative present in U.S. history since 1619 all up to the present day. Prior to reading this essay, students should have some knowledge of U.S. history, specifically of colonial, antebellum, and civil rights time periods.
7. Chapter 18: “Justice” by Nikole Hannah-Jones
 - a. “Justice” provides some context on Reconstruction and its aftermath; student understanding can be enriched by further study of these periods. The author briefly mentions reparations provided to Japanese-Americans in response to internment during WWII; Native Americans in response to violent displacement

and land theft; and Jewish people following the Holocaust. Further examination of one or more of these case studies would provide useful context for comparison and analysis.

8. 1619 - "The White Lion" by Claudia Rankine
 - a. A poem memorializing the historical significance of August 1619.
9. 1770 - "First to Rise" by Yusef Komunyakaa
 - a. A poem centering the Boston Massacre and death of Crispus Attucks
10. 1775 - "Freedom is not for Myself Alone" by Robert Jones Jr.
 - a. A short work of fiction about an enslaved man reflecting on his choice to join the British Army.
11. 1850 - "A Letter to Harriet Hayden" by Lynn Nottage
 - a. A monologue featuring the story of a woman who escaped to Canada on the Underground Railroad.
12. 1866 - "An Absolute Massacre" by ZZ Packer
 - a. A short work of fiction set in the aftermath of the New Orleans Massacre of 1866.
13. 1870 - "Like to the Rushing of a Mighty Wind" by Tracy K. Smith
 - a. A found poem using words from Senator Hiram Revels' speech in 1870.
14. 1898 - "Race Riot" by Forrest Hamer
 - a. A poem memorializing the Wilmington massacre.
15. 1960 - "From Behind the Counter" by Terry McMillan
 - a. A short piece of fiction imagining the experience of a Black man working in a restaurant in Greensboro, North Carolina.
16. 1965 - "Quotidian" by Natasha Trethewey
 - a. A poem exploring the lives of Black women in the 1960s.
17. 1972 - "Unbought, Unbossed, Unbothered" by Nafissa Thompson-Spires
 - a. A work of fiction reflecting on the presidential candidacy of Shirley Chisholm
18. 1984 - "Rainbows Aren't Real, Are They?" by Kiese Laymon
 - a. A short essay conveying some of the excitement and hope around Reverend Jesse Jackson's presidential bid.
19. 2008 - "Mother and Son" by Jason Reynolds
 - a. A short work of fiction set during the 2008 Presidential election.
20. 2020 - "Progress Report" by Sonia Sanchez
 - a. A poem focused on the 202 racial justice uprisings in response to the murder of George Floyd.

1619 Docuseries (on Hulu and Disney+)

1. Episode 1: Democracy
 - a. Nikole Hannah-Jones recounts, through her experiences and historical events, the centuries-long struggle of African-Americans. This includes their fight to vote, to democratise America, and to hold it to its ideals.
2. Episode 2: Race
 - a. Examines the construct of race as a political invention while tracing the impact that has had on African-American women's bodies and reproductive lives.

3. Episode 5: Fear
 - a. The team explores how modern policing, surveillance, and the criminalization of Black Americans draws roots from the slavery era, fear of Black rebellion, and a centuries-long quest for freedom.
4. Episode 6: Justice
 - a. The team examines the historical events that denied Black Americans the opportunity to build generational wealth through Nikole Hannah-Jones' family story and one Georgia community fighting for restitution.