Amplify Through Art

Data Visualization Artifacts
Merry Lanker - Stephen Decatur Middle School
Amplify Through Art Background

Unit Overview - In this unit, students will delve into the often overlooked and censored aspects of African American history in the United States. Through the lens of visual representation, students will explore significant events, figures, and narratives that have been marginalized in traditional historical narratives.

By creating various forms of visual media such as data visualizations, students will engage with these stories, gaining a deeper understanding of the complexities of African American history and the impact of censorship on historical narratives.

Student Work Overview - Data visualizations from students in African American Art History class at Stephen Decatur Middle School cover a wide variety of topics and issues, from the birthweight of enslaved babies to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s arrests, to the differences in Black and White schools during segregation, and more. Students took their understanding of data visualizations and did independent research with what were impassioned take further.
Amplify Through Art Background

Students looked at the work of data journalist and artist Mona Chalabi. They were inspired by her body of work.

Many students were shocked when they read the example of her work shown to the right “For Every $1 A White Man Earns”
"12.5 million people got onto the boats but only 10.7 million people made it to America. 1,800,000 people died going to America."
Data Visualization by Natalie F.

“How Many Slaves Landed in the US”
Data Visualization by Danika G.

“The average weight for a baby was over 5.8 lbs. The average weight of a baby born to enslavement was under 5.5 lbs.”
“The number of Black men killed by gun violence continues to grow over time.”
“Police brutality against Black people is significantly higher than it is for White people.”
There were major differences in school resource allocation during segregation. Black schools were poorly resourced; Black teachers were paid less than White teachers, books were often hand me downs from White schools, and items like desks were often broken or missing.

(Data Visualization by Isaiah W. and Takari W.)
Data Visualization by Bryshun H.

“Martin Luther King, Jr. was arrested 29 times during his lifetime.”
Infant and child mortality rates were twice as high among enslaved children as among Southern White children. Half of enslaved infants died in their first year of life. A major contributor to the high infant and child death rate was chronic undernourishment.

“Infant and child mortality rates were twice as high among enslaved children.”
While the death rate of the US enslaved population was about the same as that of Jamaican enslaved persons, the birth rate was more than 80 percent higher in the United States. In the United States enslaved persons were more generations removed from Africa than those in the Caribbean.