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Art Power!: Exploring the Black Arts Movement

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A Curriculum Guide for Educators

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Abstract

Art Power! is a curriculum guide designed for educators of early adolescents who are interested in integrating art history, cultural institutions, and art making into their curricula. The guide seeks to highlight two New York City based institutions: The Schomburg Research Center in Black Culture and The Studio Museum in Harlem. In addition, the intended audience is for middle school students in New York City. It is believed this audience would benefit from learning about the history of African American culture related to New York City's neighborhoods and the exposure to cultural institutions who value this narrative. *Art Power!* includes opportunities for students to participate in inquiry-based discussions around objects, engage in art-making, reflect, and collaborate on a research project. Lastly, to empower educators to expand this content study and support students' research, there are various additional resources included.

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Rationale

My interest in creating a resource around the Black Arts Movement came from my experiences as a student of art and art history. From as early as elementary school, I was confident that I wanted to be an art teacher. I lived in my sketchbook, created tons of fashion designs and movie scripts, and frequently visited museums with my mother on weekends. I was immersed in art-making and art objects constantly, and it wasn't until I was applying to colleges that I began to feel guilty about these experiences. I knew there were other teens, of similar cultural backgrounds, even in my own neighborhood who were never given the opportunities to build a rich relationship with art. I began to deeply question why exposure to a variety of art techniques and the visiting to cultural institutions was so exclusive. Another deciding moment was in realizing I was exposed to only two artists of African descent between elementary school and high school. What messages were those years of curricula sending me about people who were both black and artists?

Today, as an emerging educator this frustration by the lack of equity and access in art education and cultural institutions has inspired me to create the material in which I believe. For *Art Power!* I am focusing on the need for a new lense for the late Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Movement. The narrative of these movements, in many curricula, have weakened the level of impact and inspiration possible for students of diverse backgrounds. In addition, the desire to learn about African Americans has often been limited to Black History Month, where students may be limited to a small list of

important figures. The Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Movement are rich enough moments in history for students to be given the extended opportunity to be immersed and discover for themselves the multitude of perspectives and events. In gathering resources for this curriculum, I found Putting the Movement Back Into Civil Rights Teaching by Deborah Menkart (2004)to be a phenomenal K-12 resource guide. Menkart effectively addresses the need for a shift in the narrative of the African American experience being taught in the classroom. Through reflections, essays, primary sources, and lesson plans, the guide creates a dynamic exploration of the Civil Rights Movement. The organization of the book is through six lenses that represent common gaps in civil rights teaching (Menkart, Murray, & View, 2004, p. 6). These six lenses include: women, youth, organizing, culture, institutional racism, interconnectedness of social movements (Menkart, Murray, & View, p. 6).   I found a plethora of the essays inspiring and helped me deepen my interests in developing my own curriculum guide about the Black Arts Movement.

The Need

From the year 1980 we have seen a steady decline in the hours dedicated to art education in schools throughout the United States (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). The cause of this has been argued to be due to the increase in school budget cuts, leaving many schools with little to no funding for the arts. Another cause to be considered is the shift nationally towards engaging students primarily in rigorous mathematics and reading curricula. This shift aligns with the culture of high-stakes standardized testing, visibly in an abundance of

our schools today. The population of students that research have shown to suffer the most are those of low socioeconomic status or are considered a part of a minority group. In 2008, African-American and Hispanic students had less than half the access to art education than their White peers (Rabkin & Hedberg,2011). Unfortunately these are too often the same populations who are more likely to attend underserved schools, and are at greater risk of dropping out of school. The dropout rate in the United States has fluctuated between 25-30%, and an estimated 2 million students attend a high school where less than 50% of students graduate (Balfanz, 2010).

Given the proposed concerns about the state of arts in schools, my intended audience for *Art Power!: Exploring The Black Arts Movement* are early adolescents attending New York City public schools. However, those in other localities may use this as a guide to other relevant resources and cultural institutions. Hearing the statistics that students of disadvantaged minority groups have been facing for the last thirty years can be disheartening, but the incorporation of opportunities in the arts may serve as a glimmer of hope. Students with high involvement in the arts, including minority and low-income students, are more likely to perform better in school and attend school more often (Dwyer, 2011, p. 17).

Art Power! aims to be a resource for educators to integrate art as a companion to an existing Civil Rights or Black Power Movement curriculum, or as a stand-alone learning experience. The interdisciplinary nature of *Art Power!* gives non-art specialized educators the support and flexibility to apply this resource in their classroom. The benefits of an arts integrated curriculum include:

- Increase in student achievement in other academic areas like mathematics and reading;

- Stronger motivation and engagement in students, visible in improved attendance rates and higher educational aspirations;

- Development of habits of mind including critical thinking, problem solving and confidence when facing complexities;

- Development of social competencies including strong collaboration, social tolerance, and teamwork skills (Dwyer, 2011, p. 17).

Developmental Considerations

Early adolescent or preadolescent children are going through a period of tremendous changes in various aspects of their being. Kurt Lewin (1939) described this developmental period as a time of transitions and contradictions. Adolescents are often found acting both immaturely like a child, and maturely like an adult. The back and forth of behavior is largely attributed to their cognitive immaturity and their liminal status. (Muus, 1998, p. 134-136). Lewin describes the adolescent as the "marginal man," a person standing in between the child and adult life spaces. Within every lifespace there are barriers to goals of that age, leaving the person to make decisions that lead to attraction or repulsion of goals. For adolescents, this space is unstructured and confusing leading to conflicts in attitudes, values, and lifestyles. They see their goals, unsure if they are appropriate and how to reach them. As the "marginal man" they are social outcasts, unable to fully relate

with either children and adults. Instead they rely heavily on their own age groups as sources of inspiration, fellowship, and idols. Their behavior with others reflects this transitional space, as they are able to be both sensitive and aggressive, and struggle to develop a sense of belonging to a group (Muus, p. 136).

A character strength of this age group includes their development of a sense of purpose. As they orient for the adult world, adolescents are becoming interested in commitments larger than themselves (Malin, H., Liauw, I., & Damon, W., 2017, p. 4). In addition to their new powers of reflective thinking and moral reasoning, adolescents are prone to taking roles to solve injustices they are passionate about. This idealistic characteristic leads them to critically judge the world and search for ways they can reform it (Rice & Dolgin, p. 129). While these emerging characteristics can often lead to extreme views, it also leads to their increased empathic capacity. They can relate to the underdog and those suffering and seek opportunities in their school and community to act on these emotions.

Another highlight of the intense development of the adolescent is their creation of their identity. Identity can be described as the intersection between the individual and society. The individual is experiencing a dynamic relationship between who they want to be and the expectations of the world around them. Erik Erikson (1963) analyzed human development through the lens of the psychosocial. Adolescence is associated with Erikson's fifth stage, during this time the major conflict is between identity and role confusion (McLeod,1970). As stated previously, adolescents are increasingly capable of thinking reflectively about themselves including their personhood, ideas, and thoughts.

This new awareness can cause teens to become overly concerned with their appearance and become egocentric, self-conscious, and introspective (Rice & Dolgin, p. 131). Adolescents are constantly navigating to find their identity in relation to external factors like school, community, friends, and family.

I've created the following chart which looks at the typical growth patterns for early

adolescents:

	11 Year Olds	12 Year Olds	13 Year Olds	14 Year Olds
Cognitive	- Develop Hypotheses - Enjoys debating ideas - Increased ability to maneuver abstract concepts - Difficult tasks are met as a challenge rather than a defeat	- Can and will see both sides of an argument - Research and study skills advance	- Abstract reasoning beginning to be functional - Not willing to take big learning risk -	- More abstract reasoning - Willing to admit an error and revise - Respond well to academic challenges -
Social/Emotional	- Easily frustrated by nature of given tasks -Inclusion/Exclusion dynamics in peer groups leading to cliques - Moody; Sensitive - Impulsive - Seeking to belong to a group	- Empathetic - Peers more important than teachers - Becoming more reasonable - Enthusiastic	- Quiet - Flaring anger - Feelings easily hurt and can easily hurt other's feelings - Worries about school work - Rise in peer pressure	- Loud - Do not respond well to adult lectures -
In the Classroom	- Motivated by opportunity to learn in new genres (i.e. music, foreign language, art) - Turned off by traditional modes of learning through textbooks and worksheets - Learns well in cooperative groups - Enjoys research, interviews, and bibliographies	- Can be both playful and serious, enjoying games and discussions - Increased interests in current events, politics, social justice - Long assignments due over an extended period of time become more reasonable - Can help peers significantly	- Self-evaluation of work beneficial to balance teacher evaluation - Will not do as well in cooperative group as 12's and older teens - Interest in man's inhumanity to man	- Will engage more in small group discussion - Interested in the meaning of words - Enjoy research and putting together reports - Enjoy and do well with lengthier project assignments - Interests in talking about current events

(Wood, 1997, p. 117-180).

Teaching Early Adolescents

Learning that seeks to engage early adolescents successfully incorporates activities that align with the social, emotional, and cognitive capacity. In addition, adolescents thrive when content is interesting and stimulating. This applies both in the general education classroom, as well as the art education classroom. When educators are genuinely committed to the content area and showing excitement, early adolescents are more likely to invest in the art (Hathaway, n.d., p. 18). Through this emotional behavior, the educator is modeling what being fully immersed in your learning looks like. Integrating a variety of inquiry activities into early adolescent learning assists them in making sense of new information and boosts the attraction for them as well (Stevenson, 2002, p. 155).

As students, early adolescents seek to have their voices be fully heard and have the space to experiment ideas. Some of the ways an educator can reach this need is by offering students choices in the ways they can access the content based on their learning strengths and interests. Another recommendation is utilizing cooperative groups in your classroom. As previously stated in the Typical Growth Development chart, majority of children of early adolescent ages benefit from peer groups being integrated in their learning. Success in cooperative groups lies in clear work expectations and support from the educator (Stevenson, p. 154). Support includes tools to organize generated ideas, establishing group norms, and relevant prompts to guide thinking.

Overview

Art Power!: Exploring The Black Arts Movement is made up of a series of group experiences that eventually lead up to the implementation of an individualized research project for the students. The amount of creatives who have participated in Black Arts Movement is plentiful so this allows students the room to search for artists who interest them. The flow of this curriculum guide is as follows:

Field Trip to The Studio Museum in Harlem

Whether through in-person visit to the museum, or presentation in class of art objects, students are given the opportunity to engage directly with art of this time. The visual and conceptual characteristics of observed art objects will serve as a foundation for learning opportunities about the Black Arts Movement.

Introducing the Black Arts Movement

The lesson plans of this section will seek to provide students with the historical context of which their own research will live. Through various primary resources and relevant an engaging documentary film of the time period the characteristics of the Black Arts Movement will come to life.

Field Trip to the Schomburg Center

The second field trip students will learn about the history of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and investigate the value of African diaspora research. In addition, students can look at art objects and archival material from the focused time period through the two exhibitions on view for the fifty year anniversary of the birth of the Black Power Movement. This includes *Black Power!*, an exhibition highlighting the accomplishments and principles of the Black Panther Party and *Power in Print*, which analyzes the literary aesthetic and art of the Black Power Movement.

Model Research

In order to provide students with the appropriate support to embark on their own research in pairs, the educator will actively model the steps. Giving students the opportunity to brainstorm, find questions, organize thoughts and engage in meaningful discussions will allow the project to be student-centered.

Independent Research

Early adolescents vary in their productiveness when collaborating with their peers. Through offering students the choice to work in pairs or independently, students can make a decision that best works with their learning style. Looking at the possible artists and places to investigate gathered as a whole class, students will conduct their own research.

Culminating Timeline

Students will be able to decide on an important event or date for their researched artist and create an accompanying artwork to be displayed. The timeline serves as a visual representation of all the richness of the time period between the 1960's and early 1970's for art and culture.

About the Highlighted Institutions

The Studio Museum in Harlem was founded in 1968 by a diverse group of activists, community artists, and philanthropists. The group saw that there was a need for a museum space that celebrated and promoted the art of artists of African descent because of the homogeneous nature of the art world at the time. The mission of the cultural is as follows:

> The Studio Museum in Harlem is the nexus for artists of African descent locally, nationally and internationally and for work that has been inspired and influenced by black culture. It is a site for the dynamic exchange of ideas about art and society. ("About Studio Museum", 2017)

In addition to art and ideas of artists of African descent, Studio museum in Harlem has been focused on the development of artists and arts education ("About Studio Museum," 2017). An example of this initiative in action is the *Artists-in-Residence* program. Today this residency program has served a pivotal role in the careers of over one hundred emerging artists of African or Latino descent.

The history of The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture begins with The Division of Negro Literature, History, and Prints in 1925. The library branch opened in response to the growing community around it in Harlem. Just a year later, The Division reached international acclaim with Arturo Alfonso Schomburg's donation of his entire personal collection (New York Public Library,n.d.). Today, the Schomburg, a valued part of the New York Public Library System, is dedicated to the preservation of materials on the African Diaspora experience through art and artifacts, manuscripts and rare books, and reference collections.

The Studio Museum in Harlem and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture are the foundation for the research of this educator resource. From these two cultural institutions, there is a common mission of promoting and protecting artifacts of the international and national Black Experience from the past to present.

Historical Background

The Rise of 'Black Power'

By the early 1960's the Civil Rights Movement had achieved the major success of desegregation of schools and public transportation, and the passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights act. But amidst life for African Americans in the urban communities, including neighborhoods in Los Angeles and New York City, there was a rising frustration with their daily realities. This include poverty, police brutality, institutionalized racism, housing discrimination, and unemployment. During the late 1960's, city neighborhoods

were booming with protests and uprisings in response to the injustices facing their community with no support from the United States Government. Heated with frustration, many African Americans began to doubt that nonviolence was going to bring the social change they needed.

In wake of the assassination of Malcolm X, students Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party for Self Defense in 1966. The 'self-defense' addition to their original name, made it clear that the Black Panther Party was not following the same nonviolent Civil Right's philosophy that has until then dominated. Newton called for African Americans to actively stand up and stop the multiple forms of oppression they were facing. Members of the Black Panther Party saw the revolution requiring the use of arms to protect their communities from violent oppressors (Menkart, Murray, & View, p. 36). While often pigeon-holed as militants, the Black Panthers had also developed a series of successful social programs in hopes of bettering the lives of the working class across the United States. Their mission was clear: attend to the needs of all those who were economically, politically, financially, and racially constricted and advocate for their voices to be heard.

In 1966 as well, civil right leader James Meredith plans a solo 220-mile March Against Fear from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi. The march would demonstrate the active racism still living in the South despite the previous successes of the Civil Rights Movement. On just the second day, Meredith is shot multiple times by birdshot bullets from a white sniper and is unable to continue the march. In honor of Meredith's brave demonstration, civil rights leaders and organizations came together to

continue the march. Among the leaders were, Stokely Carmichael, new chairman of the

Students Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and Southern Christian Leadership

Conference's Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. On June 16, 1966 after just being released from

jail, an experience all too common for activists, Carmichael first introduces the phrase

'Black Power' in a rally speech. An excerpt from the speech is as follows (Bausum, 2017, p.

72):

> "This is the 27th time I have been arrested, and I ain't going to jail no more. I ain't
>
> going to jail no more. The only way we gonna stop them white men from whuppin'
>
> us is to take over. We been saying 'Freedom Now' for six years and we ain't got
>
> nothin'. What we gonna start saying now is 'black power.'"

Similarly to the African-Americans protesting in urban areas in the North and West,

Carmichael and others in Mississippi that evening were growing angry with the lack of

evidence for social progress. In this memorable speech after chanting "We want black

power!", Carmichael reassures the crowd that wanting power for themselves is nothing to

be ashamed of (Bausum, p. 72).:

> "That's right. That's what we want. Black power. And we shouldn't be ashamed of
>
> it. We have stayed here, and we've begged the president. We've begged the federal
>
> government. That's all we've been doing. Begging. We've done nothing but beg.
>
> We've got to stop begging and take power."

The phrase 'black power' meant drastically different things for different communities.

Many white journalists used these polarizing feelings to spread that 'black power' was an

anti-white philosophy that will inspire violence (Bates, 2014). But for many black people, it expressed a need for social, political, and cultural self-determination.

Creating a Black Aesthetic

Just as the assassination of Malcolm X inspired Huey Freeman and Bobby Seale in Oakland, artists in the Northeast were responding strongly as well. The Black Arts Movement was pioneered by poet Imamu Amiri Baraka, formerly known as LeRoi Jones, and writer Larry Neal. The pair came together to form the Black Arts Repertory Theatre School in 1965. The space served as a creativity hub for performance art, writing classes, music, philosophy, and poetry (Boone, 2016). Although the school closed shortly after its beginning due to lack of funding, the call for a self-determination in the arts did not fizzle along with it.

Neal and Baraka worked together along with others to write and promote their philosophy on the creativity of the black artists in their social and political climate. Neal (1968) argued that the Black Arts Movement is the spiritual and aesthetic sister to the Black Power Movement. Both movements emphasized that the individual cannot act in isolation of their own community and its' needs. Also, members of both movements felt that self-love and self-protection was key to the survival of African Americans in the United States during the late 1960's and 1970's.

Many African-American artists during this time felt they needed to break free from the Western aesthetics that were being forced upon them, Neal writes, "To accept and abide by this Western Aesthetic is to accept and give value to a system that does not

value you," (Neal, 1968). This revolution in creativity would be focused on the ideas, needs, and aspirations of the African American. Through this art, artists are able to define themselves and the world on their own terms. Literary figures, visual and performative artists were looking at the greats of "free jazz" like Ornette Coleman and Sun Ra as models for their own avant-garde movement (Smethurst, 2003, p. 262). In 1968, Neal and Braka published an anthology of writings by scholars and activists, *Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writing.* The publishing of this book, highlighted the need to be one's own promoter and critic of aspects of your culture, a key goal of the Black Arts Movement. It was through Neal's theorizing of this art as a continuum of African American folk culture, popular culture and "free jazz" that we are able to deeply understand the motive for this cohesive movement (Smethurst, p. 267).

Lesson Plans

Review of Standards

Common Core Literacy in History/Social Studies

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source;
provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course
of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier
events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and
secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source;
provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or
opinions.

New York City Department of Education's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Visual Arts

Grade 8 Benchmark: Making Connections Through Visual Arts

Students recognize the societal, cultural, and historical significance of art; connect the visual arts to other disciplines; apply the skills and knowledge learned in visual arts to interpreting the world.

Grade 8 Benchmark: Developing Art Literacy

Students hone observation skills and discuss works of art; develop visual arts vocabulary to describe art making, the tools and techniques used to produce art, and the elements and principles of design; read and write about art to reinforce literacy skills; interpret artwork by providing evidence to support assertions; reflect on the process of making art.

Looking at and Discussing Art

Examine a work of art over an extended period of time. Keep a record of observations as evidence of the way a viewer's perceptions deepen over time.

Reading and Writing About Art

Examine a work of art as a primary document; based on visual evidence, write hypotheses about the time period, culture, and/or the political climate.

Portraiture as Agency: Visiting the Studio Museum in Harlem

Thematic Question:

Why might artists choose to represent themselves and their community?

Students will be able to ...

- Engage in inquiry based discussion

- Develop interpretations around a work of art

- Identify connections between art objects

- Describe an artist's style

Materials and Resources

- Image of *Child Adorned (Ognissanti Madonna)*, Giotto (c. 1310)

- Image of *Blood (Donald Formey)*, Barkley Hendricks (1975)

- Image of *Lawdy Mama*, Barkley Hendricks (1969)

- Biography and art of Barkley Hendricks:

  http://www.jackshainman.com/artists/barkley-hendricks/

Activity

1. Have students gather in front of *Lawdy Mama* and silently observe the artwork. Invite students to share what they notice. As students share, consider paraphrasing for the whole group to hear any connections among their responses.

2. After discussing observations and likely interpretations of the portrait, guide students' attention to the background of the figure. Consider the following prompts:

   ○ Why might the artist choose this background?

   ○ How might this background choice influence how we view the figure?

3. Pass out reproductions of Giotto's *Child Adorned* to small groups. While in groups, encourage students to compare the two artworks.

   ○ What are the similarities and differences between *Lawdy Mama* and *Child Adorned?*

4. Share with students that artists are often inspired by many things at once including historical artworks of other cultures. Have students turn and talk:

   ○ Where else do artists get their inspiration from?

   ○ Where might Barkley Hendricks got his inspiration for *Lawdy Mama*?

5. Reveal Hendricks' interest in representing the often underrepresented black youth of the 1960's and 1970's. These portraits also were responding to political climate of the United States for African-Americans.

Reflection

Have students journal a reflection on their discussions at Studio Museum. Consider the following prompts for deeper thinking about themes that will support their research later.

- How might it feel to see yourself in an artwork?

- Why might artists choose to represent people of their community?

- How can art be seen as a communication tool?

In Search of Justice: The Social and Historical Context

Students will be able to...

- Discuss the social and political climate from the perspective of African Americans in the United States

- Identify the events leading to the birth of the Black Power Movement

- Discover themes within the documentary film, *Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975*

Materials:

- Lyrics and MP3 of Marvin Gaye's *What's Going on* (1971)

- Film: <u>Black Power Mixtape 1967- 1975</u> (2011)

- K.W.L. Chart Template

Activity

1. Distribute the lyrics to Marvin Gaye' *What's Going On*. While in small groups encourage students to analyze the lyrics.

   - What are the big ideas or themes of this song ?

        ○   What emotions might Marvin Gaye be feeling ?

2. As a whole class, have students share highlights from their discussions while you chart their ideas. Acknowledge any patterns or connections that arise from students' responses.

3. Display a "What We **K**now, What We **W**ant to Know, and What We **L**earned" (KWL) chart. Express to students that in order to study the artists of this time period with understanding, we first need an understanding of the historical context.

4. Have students work independently to take notes on the first two columns of the chart in reference to the big idea: African American Experience During the 1960's and 1970's. While students are working on their KWL notes, play *What's Going On* as work time music.

5. Watch the first hour and ten minutes of the film, *Black Panther Mixtape 1967-1975* . Encourage students to take notes of dates, events, and peoples.

Reflection

1. Independently, students will return to their K.W.L. charts, and fill in last column of their charts after watching the film.

2. As a whole class, students will share out things that were: surprising, interesting, or new that stood out to them from the film.

3. Explain to students that although the Civil Rights Movement during the early 1960's was able to achieve several major goals, many African- Americans who

lived in urban areas of the United States realized these nonviolent efforts of the Civil Rights Movement hadn't done enough. These communities of African-Americans living in the North and West, were still facing poverty, police brutality, racism, housing discrimination, and unemployment which led to their increasing frustrations. Independently, have students reflect on the possible role of art for African Americans during this time.

Recreating Aesthetics: The Black Arts Movement

Students will be able to...

- Identify the characteristics of the Black Arts Movement
- Discuss the interests and concerns of Black artists during this time
- Identify the differences in styles among artists

Materials:

- Video: *Rome*, Ornette Coleman, (1975), https://youtu.be/FlY8puv3-tw
- Image of Faith Ringgold's *Black Light Series: Black Art Poster* (1969) and *Love Black Life* (1969)
- Sound clip of Faith Ringgold speaking on her early artworks, https://archive.org/details/ArtistFaithRinggoldOnAmericanPeopleBlackLight (2011)
- Larry Neal's *Black Arts,* Drama Review (1968), http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/docs/blackarts_neal.html

Discussion

1. Display *Black Art Poster*, give students an opportunity to observe silently. Ask students to share what they notice.
   ○ Where might Faith Ringgold have gotten her inspiration?
2. Display *Love Black Life*, and play the audio of Ringgold's interview. Have students turn and talk about the following:
   ○ What new information did we learn about being an artist in the 1960's?
   ○ How did this interview add to what we think Faith Ringgold is interested in?
3. Explain to students that African American artists during this time were looking to create art that was based on their own ideas, communities, and experiences.

Reflection

1. Introduce Larry Neal as one of the founding writers and theorist of the Black Arts Movement. Display and distribute the following excerpts from Neal's *Black Arts*:
   ○ The Black Arts Movement is radically opposed to any concept of the artist that alienates him from his community. Black Art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept. As such, it envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America. In order to perform this task, the black Arts Movement proposes a radical reordering of the Western cultural aesthetic. It proposes a separate symbolism, mythology, critique, and iconology. The Black Arts and the Black Power

concept both relate broadly to the Afro-American's desire for self-determination and nationhood. Both concepts are nationalistic. One is politics; the other with the art of politics.

- ○ A main tenet of Black Power is the necessity for Black people to define the world in their own terms. The Black artist has made the same point in the context of aesthetics. The two movements postulate that there are in fact and in spirit two Americas—one black, one white.
- ○ The Black artist takes this to mean that his primary duty is to speak to the spiritual and cultural needs of Black people.

2. In pairs, have students choose an expert to reflect through discussion and writing to the following prompts:
   - ○ What is the artist role in their community?
   - ○ How does the Black Power and Black Arts Movement relate to one another?

Model Research

Students will be able to...

- Generate possible research topics
- Evaluate resources
- Work as a cooperative learning group
- Organize information

Materials

- Access to web and text resources

Features of the Research Project

The following lists the steps and accompanying critical questions for conducting research. Each step will be embarked upon as a whole class, modeling for students the process of researching and sharing that newly gained information. Also, this process provide students with practice searching and choosing resources from a variety of places.

1. Choose a Topic of Interest

   ○ What makes a good research topic?

2. Create a "Clues List" of keywords

   ○ What are the words that will help us find the best resources?

3. Locate Appropriate Resources

   ○ What kind of sources will I need to get the big picture? Information specific to our topic?

4. Gather Notes from Sources

   ○ What is the most important information from each source?

5. Create an Essay Outline

   ○ What are the subtopics of our research?

6. Code Notes

   ○ How can we organize our notes to fill our outline?

7. Put Organized Information Together in Form of an Essay

Defining Community: Visiting the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Thematic Question:

How did the Black Power Movement create and promote community?

Students will be able to...

- Describe the features of the culture of the Black Panther Party

- Identify the themes of the Black Power Movement

- Engage in discussions around primary sources and artifacts

Discussion

1. Have students gather in front of H. Rap Brown's letter from prison (1968). In small groups have students come up to the read the letter. Provide definition of the concept "redress of grievances" in relation to one's right to petition the government.

   - What are the big ideas of H. Rap Brown's letter?

   - What is change is he calling for?

   - How is poetry used in this letter?

2. In small groups, have students explore the *Black Power!* exhibition and choose an object that stands out them. Students will take notes on their object by doing the following:

   ○ Sketch and/or describe your object

   ○ How is this object important to the Black Power Movement?

   ○ How might this object relate to the big idea of community?

3. Returning as a whole class, groups may volunteer to show their object and share their responses to the previous questions.

Independent Research

Students will be able to …

- Work in pairs to conduct research

- Gain a deeper understanding about an artist or event

- Independently evaluate the relevance of a resource

- Create a collaborative essay

Discussion

1. Have students share people or events that they are interested in researching and generate a list visible to the class. Add any artists or events that was not said but students were introduced to previously.

2. Students will choose partners or work independently based on similar research interests and compatible learning styles.

Activity

1. Students will work in pairs or remain independent and go through the same research process they experienced through the Model Research.

2. In the beginning, collaborate with students to create social and academic norms for working in groups. Document the suggestions that are proposed, this document will serve as a support throughout the collaboration process.

3. Check-in with students frequently on research progress and possible need for additional support.

Reflection

1. Offer students a variety of ways to present their highlights and findings from their independent research studies. Some presentations could be a:

   a. Skit

   b. Slideshow

   c. Flyer or handout

   d. Video

   e. Mixtape or playlist

   f. Design for a mural or community art project

Culminating Timeline

Students will be able to...

- Create a portrait

- Incorporate geometric shapes into an artwork

- Collaborate with peers in art-making

Materials

- Rulers

- Stencils of shapes

- Color pencils

- Colorful tape

- Pencil

- Cardstock

- Bold Marker

- Example of Rico Gatson's icon portraits

- Biography of Rico Gatson: https://www.artsy.net/artist/rico-gatson

Discussion

1. Share with students that contemporary artists today are looking to the Black Arts Movement and Black Power Movement for inspiration. Display an image of one of Rico Gatson's icon portraits. Discuss the artwork as a whole group.

   ○ What do you notice?

   ○ What are you curious about?

   ○ What does this remind you of?

2. Introduce to students that they will create an artwork that will represent the topic of their research using Rico Gatson as inspiration. Encourage students within their pairs to create a double portrait of their artist, or movement. Students may incorporate a symbol or significant object to represent their topic in addition to a typical portrait.

3. Have students choose an important date related their research study to highlight. By choosing a date, students will be helping the building of their classroom timeline.

Activity

1. Distribute art making materials to students and keep an example of Rico Gatson's work visible to all students.

2. Encourage students to draw their portraits and symbols large enough to be seen from far away on the walls.

3. Have students fill out a small index card with their date written large and bold.

4. Display timeline portraits in chronological order around the classroom. Lead students on a brief gallery walk, so that students can see the work of their peers. Returning to the whole group, have students share what they noticed during their gallery walk. Encourage the sentence starter, "I saw an artists who…"

Additional Resources

Web Articles

New York Public Library, (2017). "Black Power Resource Guide"

http://nypl-research.demo.libguides.com/blackpower

In conjunction with The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture's celebration of the 50 years since the beginning of the Black Power Movement, the New York Public Library created this library guide. The guide is divided in the same thematic categories as the *Black Power!* exhibition. Under each theme, one would find a plethora of resources available at home or at a New York Public Library branch.

Poets, (n.d.). "A Brief Guide to the Black Arts Movement"

https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/brief-guide-black-arts-movement

Poets.org offers a brief description of the Black Arts Movement, specifically looking at the literary figures. This site can be helpful for students researching poets and looking for biographies and samples of their work.

The Studio Museum in Harlem, (2008). "Collection in Context: Four Decades."

https://www.studiomuseum.org/exhibition/collection-in-context-four-decades

Information about a past exhibition at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Along with photos and artists listed from the show, the website may help students understand the nature of exhibitions at Studio Museum.

Media

Google Arts & Culture, (2017). "Ready for the Revolution."

https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/tgIircaDvDqQLg

An overview of the community engagement tools of the Black Panther Party. This slideshow could serve as a great support for preparing students for their Schomburg visit.

PBS, (2015). "Music is the Message."

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/black-power-mixtape_music-html/

This music playlist works well as a partner to the film, *Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975*. In addition, music can be played during in-class working periods.

Smithsonian Institution, (n.d.). "Smithsonian Learning Lab: The Black Arts Movement."

https://learninglab.si.edu/collections/the-black-arts-movement/aVTucDpJNfJhm3es#r

A work in progress learning guide that includes photographs, art objects and artifacts that can support students learning about the Black Arts Movement.

Texts

Bracey, J.H., Sanchez, S., & Smethurst, J.E. (2014). *SOS- Calling All Black People: A Black Arts Movement Reader*.

A volume of key writing about the history, goals, and issues of the Black Arts Movement written during the 1960's and 1970's. This book also does a thorough job of describing the wide variety of artists working within this narrative and displaying the legacy of the movement.

Magoon, K. (2013). Fire in the Streets. Aladdin.

An young adult fiction novel, that takes place in Chicago in 1968 and follows adolescent Maxine's journey to fit into the Black Panther Party. This novel could serve as an introduction or extension of this curriculum guide.

Robson, D. (2008). *The Black Arts Movement*.

Similar to a tradebook, Robson includes information on Black Nationalism, Black Arts Movement, the legacy of the movement and possible controversies. Students will find the language and layout of each chapter highly accessible.

Williams-Garcia, R. (2012). *One crazy summer*.

A moving and funny children's fiction novel following a three sisters from Brooklyn and their summer in California visiting their estranged mother. Rather than spending time in amusement parks and beaches, their mother has them go to a day camp run by Black Panthers. This novel serves as a great historical fiction for students to hear a narrative of the 1960's and 1970's from the perspective of children.

Applications

The content of this curriculum guide can be expanded over an extended period of time, allowing students to engage more deeply with the material. One of ways to expand this introductory experience is incorporating historical fiction into the curriculum to serve as the foundation. The knowledge gained from the historical fiction and supportive materials from the educator will help students in their understanding about the Black Arts Movement. Another way of expanding students' experience is looking at the list of artists, and choosing a few of them from various disciplines to learn about as a class. By looking at works by a variety of artists, as opposed to a single artist, students can build a greater understanding of how different people approached the Black Arts Movement. This artist study suggestion could be beneficial as an alternative for the independent research project. Depending on the strengths and learning styles of your students, the ways of which they explore new artists and events may vary.

Reflection

In researching and preparing for the development of this curriculum guide, I was faced with both challenging and inspiring moments. Many of the challenging aspects came from the lack of resources available for children explicitly regarding the Black Arts Movement. I found it strange that the political climate of the 1960's and 1970's was so frequently discussed in isolation of the concurrent cultural revolutions. It is my belief that through the lens of art we are given an additional perspective of what a moment in history was like for people. Another challenge I faced was having to condense the plethora of artists of African descent active during this period. In my research it seemed that many of the same areas demanding social equality, were also booming with creativity. So although I could not highlight every artists making amazing work, the challenge supported my belief that this time period is rich for student research. As someone of African descent, I found my research to be profoundly inspiring and relevant. The call for self-determination and power to tell one's narrative has not dissolved at the end of the 1970's and for that reason this curriculum holds value to me. I have also enjoyed that through the structure of a curriculum guide,flexibility and expansion are possible for the educator. My research on the role of the arts during the Black Power Movement and how the history can be accessible to *all* children has only just begun.

Appendix

Possible Research Topics

Political and Cultural Figures and Groups

Stokely Carmichael

Angela Davis

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

AfriCOBRA

Literary Figures

Last Poets

Nikki Giovanni

Larry Neal

Carolyn Rodgers

Jayne Cortez

Askia Toure

James Stewart

Imamu Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones)

Sonia Sanchez

Gwendolyn Brooks

Ed Bullins

Lorraine Hansberry

Toni Cade Bambara

Music

Sun Ra

Ornette Coleman

Cecil Taylor

John Coltrane

James Brown

Nina Simone

Max Roach

Katherine Dunham

Abbey Lincoln

Events

Assassination of Malcolm X

The 1966 World Festival of Negro Arts

March Against Fear

Places

Harlem Black Arts Movement	LeRoy Clarke
Harlem Bookstore	Norman Lewis
Black Arts Repertory Theatre	Mel Edwards
The New Lafayette Theatre in Harlem	Alma Thomas
Liberation Schools	Elizabeth Catlett
Art & Soul Museum	David Hammons
Concepts	Barkley L. Hendricks
Black Power	Dindga McCannon
Black is Beautiful	Sam Gilliam
Black Nationalism	Senga Nengudi
Black Aesthetics	Jae Jarrell
Free Jazz	Wadsworth Jarrell
Visual and Performative Artists	Nelson Stevens
Benny Andrews	David Driskell
Betye Saar	Alvin Hollingsworth
Faith Ringgold	Jeff Donaldson

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    Movement. Retrieved May 04, 2017, from

    http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/03/10/287320160/stokely-carmichae

    l-a-philosopher-behind-the-black-power-movement

Bausum, A. (2017). The March against Fear: the last great walk of the civil rights

    movement and the emergence of Black power. Washington, D.C.: National

    Geographic.

Dwyer, M. C. (2011). *Reinvesting in arts education: Winning America's future through*

    creative schools. Washington, D.C: President's Committee on the Arts and the

    Humanities.

Frederick, C. (2016, September 21). On Black Aesthetics: The Black Arts Movement.

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Hathaway, W. (n.d.). *Art education: Middle/junior high school.* Reston, VA: National Art

    Education Association.

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    http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/james-meredith-shot

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    teaching: a resource guide for K-12 classrooms. Washington, D.C.: Teaching for

    Change and the Poverty & Race Research Action Council.

Neal, L. (1968). The Black Arts Movement. Retrieved May 06, 2017, from

http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/docs/blackarts_neal.html

NYPL Locations. (n.d.). Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Retrieved April

25, 2017, from https://www.nypl.org/locations/schomburg

Salaam, K. Y. (n.d.). Historical Overviews of the Black Arts Movement. Retrieved May 05,

2017, from http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/blackarts/historical.htm

Smethurst, J. (2003). "Pat Your Foot and Turn the Corner": Amiri Baraka, the Black Arts

Movement, and the Poetics of a Popular Avant-Garde. African American

Review,37, 2-3,

261-270.

Stevenson, C. (2002). *Teaching ten to fourteen year olds*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

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2017, from https://www.studiomuseum.org/exhibition/circa-1970

Studio Museum in Harlem. (n.d.). History. Retrieved April 25, 2017, from

https://www.studiomuseum.org/about/about

Wood, C. (2015). *Yardsticks: Children in the classroom, ages 4-14*. Turners Falls, MA: Center

for Responsive Schools.