



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2009 Volume II: American Voices: Listening to Fiction, Poetry, and Prose

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## **The Great African/African-American Intellectual Tradition for Liberation: Resistance Past, Present and Beyond**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 09.02.04, published September 2009

by Artnelson Concordia

I see in teaching the history of Civil Rights, the opportunity to inspire my students to take the lessons from this period for their benefit by helping them uncover the symptomatic nature of their immediate problems as part of a larger system. Historical, structural and cultural reasons underlie many of the problems faced by my students. This provides an opportunity to free them from the burden of the narrative that their lack of performance is somehow intrinsic to their race.

In their exploration of Civil Rights history, they will see that the positive values of self-determination, sacrifice, responsibility to self and community, intellectual discipline, creativity, faith in humanity, resistance to oppression, love of life and commitment to justice, run deep and permeate the fight for civil rights. And as a result of this fight, all people are the beneficiaries of this rich legacy. As they enter broader society, I wish for these lessons to provide concrete, relevant and convincing arguments to move them to reverse the tragic irony of self-destructive behavior and motivate them to excel academically.

(Developed for U.S. History, grade 11; recommended for U.S. History, grade 11)

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