



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

*to strengthen teaching in public schools®*

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2011 Volume IV: The Big Easy: Literary New Orleans and Intangible Heritage

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## **The 1921 Tulsa Race Riot and Its Legacy: Experiencing Place as Text**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 11.04.08, published September 2011

by Shanedra D. Nowell

In this unit on the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot, students will gain a new understanding of their city by exploring its past, present, and future through history, local narratives, art, monuments, maps, and museums. Designed for secondary social studies courses, the unit tells the story of the Tulsa Race Riot and offers new meaning to the phrase "place as text" by walking students through: Pretext (Tulsa's beginnings), Plaintext (one tale of the riot), Intertextuality (multiple perspectives of the riot), Subtext (the social climate of the 1920s), Context (visiting Greenwood, where the riot took place), and Creating Texts: Maps of Desire and Civic Action (taking up the charge to change the city). Using collaborative learning activities, teaching analysis skills, writing, and field studies, students will gain a new perspective of Tulsa, see its intangible heritage, and understand its long-standing racial divide. With their newfound, expanded knowledge of the city, students can take up the challenge to change their city through civic action projects and economic development plans that create more equal opportunities for all Tulsa citizens.

(Developed for High School AP Human Geography, grade 9; recommended for High School Oklahoma History, U. S. History, Geography, and Current Events, grades 9-12)

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