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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2021 Volume II: Race, Class, and Gender in Today's America

Giving Voice to the Silenced

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by Kaitlin M. Waldron

We rarely find historical events that highlight those who have had no voice, the oppressed, the downtrodden, the women. The purpose of this unit is to provide a voice to those who are continuously looked over: Immigrants, Indigenous people, African Americans and specifically women who fall into three of those categories. The unit uses excerpts from five texts: *Esperanza Rising*, *House on Mango Street*, *We Are Not Free*, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, and *Ghost Boys*. Using those texts, students will close read the text excerpt, answer questions that align with it and then get started on their content knowledge. Following the content lessons, the students will read biographies or primary source documents for women who could have lived during the times and events from the readings. The story of Emmitt Till in *Ghost Boys* will look at his story and the accusers recantation. The unit is written to align with the 7th grade American History curriculum from 1865 to the present. Many of the students that I teach are struggling readers and English Language Learners. They text is able to be read to them or they have the option to read through it themselves, passages are capped at three to four paragraphs.

(Developed for American History, grade 7; recommended for American History, grades 6-12)

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