



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

*to strengthen teaching in public schools®*

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2022 Volume III: The Social Struggles of Contemporary Black Art

---

## **Art as Advocacy: Explorations into Literary and Visual Art to Provoke Change**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 22.03.04, published September 2022  
by Perrine Punwani

Given the loss of funding for the arts in many schools, it is imperative that other subject areas provide young people with opportunities to meaningfully engage in art. This unit dives into contemporary art from the United States and around the world that has been used to advocate a message. Students will begin by reading an essay about the dangers of silence by Audre Lorde, considering poetry from two writers, informational texts, and several works of visual art and new media. Throughout the unit, they will learn how to make meaning of art for themselves by internalizing thinking routines and building confidence in skills as critics and consumers of art. Further, they will study the creation of a historic art collective and its principles of design. Students will then apply this knowledge to create their own artist collectives and their own art based on the principles they collaboratively create. Their final audience for their art will be local and national changemakers who will be invited to an exhibit of their work.

(Developed for English Language Arts, grade 8; recommended for Visual Arts, Social Justice, English Language Arts, and Social Studies, grades 8-12)

---

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit [https://teachers.yale.edu/terms\\_of\\_use](https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use)