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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2023 Volume IV: Environmental Justice

Colored: An Introduction to Environmentalism

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This 2-4-weeks unit 1. humanizes Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, BIPOC's voices. 2. dispels blaming victims for atrocities committed against them, and 3. provides lessons about Racism, Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice, concepts closely linked and what my students (Ss), my colleagues, and I may have encountered or could encounter in our lifetimes: this idea of the disposable "others". In your own life, what inspires you to continue or persist after experiencing setbacks and not fully your goals? Courage, a major theme, considers how the marginalized disrupt "specified ignorance," stand on principle(s), and are courageous, while the "majority" miserably fail; illustrates how small acts can have big impacts. Color is a metaphor for how historically the "majority" painted communities red and dangerous, created dark fallacies about them while drawing lines that prevented them from voicing concerns, and having a place at the table where decisions were made about and for them through single narratives meant to still voices. Eppur si muove, and yet it moves.

Key Words: Environmental Justice, Racism, Environmental Racism, Disposables, Perspectives, Grassroots Movements, Choice Boards, Socratic seminar, Art, Poetry, Documentaries

(Developed for AP Literature and Composition, grades 11-12, and English, grade 11; recommended for AP Literature and Composition, grades 11-12, and English, grade 11)

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