



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2026 Volume IV: Resistance from Aristotle to Star Wars

Anti-Inclusivity Ain't Beautiful: The Art of Seeing, Knowing, and Being

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This curriculum unit engages students in an inquiry-based exploration of resistance through visual arts. Over the course of five to seven weeks, high school visual art students investigate how artists have challenged dominant narratives, affirmed identity, documented lived experiences, and imagined inclusive futures. The unit begins with students collaboratively developing a working definition of resistance that is revisited and refined throughout the learning experience. Students examine historical and contemporary examples of resistance while recognizing that resistance can take many forms, including advocacy, celebration, cultural preservation, joy, identity affirmation, and community building.

Instruction is organized around four interrelated components that emphasize observation, critical thinking, writing, discussion, and creative expression. The culminating project invites students to develop an original artwork guided by the visual works of artists such as Amy Sherald, Titus Kaphar, Barbara Kruger, Kehinde Wiley, Nick Cave, and Bisa Butler—with an end game of conjuring a new social contract that decolonizes ways of seeing, knowing and being. Such an approach could broaden traditional conceptions of resistance by recognizing artistic production as a form of civic engagement, social critique, and cultural transformation. Their work should not simply illustrate a political position, but instead demonstrate—through research, conceptual development, and visual experimentation—a response to contemporary issues related to inclusion, exclusion, institutional power, and resistance.

(Developed for Digital Arts and Design and AP 2D Art and Design, grades 10-12; recommended for History, grades 8-12)

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