

Critical Interventions into the Single Story of Africa

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Abstract

In this unit, students consider the single story that they hold about the continent of Africa and will work to replace it with multiple, diverse, and more complete stories. They will do this by listening to a wide variety of music from the continent, learning about African histories, and creating a project that tells a specific story about the continent that is sourced from African voices. Students will also consider larger questions about how our perspectives and biases are shaped by narratives and culture. Through this process they will also gain awareness of the narratives that influence their own thinking.

Keywords

Africa
Music
Single story
Narrative
Perspective
Bias
African-American history
Identity
Culture
Project based
Stereotypes
Storytelling

Content Objectives

Problem Statement

I teach a full year African-American history course to 9th graders at an inquiry and project based school. At my school, we have grade-wide themes and essential questions that help drive the curriculum in all courses. For 9th grade, the theme is identity and the essential questions are: who am I? How do I interact with the environment? How does the

environment affect me? This is an important piece of context for the unit I will create as it centers questions of identity and will ask students to engage in inquiry in a project-based format.

I approach the curriculum for the course both thematically and chronologically by identifying themes and essential questions for key periods in African-American history. I've always started the course with a unit that focuses on Africa. When I started teaching the course I lacked confidence in my own knowledge and understanding of the African continent. Over the years, I've taken courses, read books, and travelled for my own educational purposes. The TIP seminar, "Music of Contemporary Africa" taught by Dr. Carol Muller, has been a perfect opportunity for me. Learning about the continent of Africa through music has provided me with so many rich and specific case studies that I can bring to class. One of the challenges of trying to engage students in African histories within one unit is just the sheer amount of options there are for creating curriculum. We have limited time in this first unit and I want students to understand both the depth and breadth of African histories. In the end, I also want to make sure that they have many more stories about Africa in order to counter the power of the single story in the imagination of non-Africans.

The first unit changes a bit every time I teach it but it has always started with Chimamanda Adichie's *Danger of Single Story* TED Talk. It is one of our guiding and threaded concepts in the course because it gives us an accessible starting point for anti-bias work. Adichie describes several characteristics that make a story a "single story". A single story develops when something becomes the only story that is told. Varied and diverse experiences of a culture or people are erased by a single story. Single stories are about power: those that have more power in a society can control what becomes the single story. Someone can be both the victim and holder of single stories. We combat single stories by making sure multiple and diverse stories are told. Single stories can influence our thoughts and actions towards ourselves and others.¹

Thinking about the power of narrative not only helps us understand the development of dehumanizing systems of slavery and Jim Crow but also encourages students to consider the question: "what story or perspective am I missing?" when reading historical sources or learning about a new time period.

¹ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story," speech presented at TEDGlobal 2009, Oxford, England, July 2009, video, TED, July 2009, accessed June 21, 2021, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.

My students represent the racial, ethnic, economic, and educational diversity of Philadelphia. This is a gift and a valuable challenge. In their written reflections, students often talk about not wanting to offend others by saying the wrong thing. Many white students express not having experiences with race in their lives. Both of these comments reflect the need for developing racial literacy. At the same time, I have a few students of all races that are very knowledgeable and confident when talking about race and can push the conversation into areas that others would find uncomfortable. I also always have a few students who have immigrated from Africa or whose parents have immigrated. The challenge as a teacher is to provide the full range of students the opportunity to move along their racial literacy journey, no matter where they are. I have found that the “Danger of a Single Story” is useful for anyone on this journey as it helps us to think about the power of narrative in our own lives.

I have taught African-American history in Philadelphia for nearly a decade now. In that time I have observed an increase in students’ awareness that single stories of Africa exist and I think this is due to an increase in anti-bias teaching in elementary and middle schools and anti-bias content on social media. This is encouraging. Our work in the classroom is built on an educational foundation that often values context and leans towards seeing others not as deficient but as full of assets. Still, the power of the single story of Africa that is pervasive in television, movies, and social media means that we have to put in a lot of effort to learn and hold a more complex and diverse understanding of Africa and Africans.² In *Mistaking Africa*, Curtis Keim and Carolyn Somerville outline the powerful narratives at play when they describe “some of the ways that African difference is evoked in modern American popular culture”: troubled Africa, disease-ridden Africa, helpless Africa, unchanging Africa, exotic Africa, sexualized Africa, wise Africa, and superior Africa.³ Images and stories might easily come to mind when some of these narratives are named. The challenge in the classroom is to minimize the influence of the stereotypes and help students build skills and tendencies for questioning and critical thinking. And this must be done early and repeatedly.

When designing units, I consider their place in the larger context of the course year and the development of students. In *A Primer for Teaching African History*, Trevor Getz makes the case that an effective African history course “can serve as a critical intervention in students intellectual (and perhaps ethical) development” because African

² Curtis Keim and Carolyn Somerville, *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*, 4th ed. (New York, NY: Westview Press, 2017), 170.

³ Ibid, 64-72.

history is not only significant for its content but also for “the profundity of the philosophical and ethical lessons students can take away from our courses and the ways they can apply them toward understanding the world in which they live.”⁴ I very much envision this first unit to serve as a critical intervention that develops a productive understanding of African histories and that builds a foundation for anti-bias work throughout the school year.

Dr. Muller certainly designed our TIP seminar as an intervention. From the beginning she named many of the ways of thinking of Africa that are most common in the United States. We had the honor of reading the first chapter of a book that she is writing on the contemporary music of Africa and the first few lines acknowledges the potential stereotypes that the readers might hold and connects them to the world of music. It was wonderful to share the same goals Dr. Muller had. I especially valued learning about the ways music has been impacted by these single stories and then spending the whole semester countering that by collecting complex and rich narratives about the musical worlds on the continent. I would guess that many of my students would also be limited to the “stereotype that African music is all about drums and rhythms made by a people not as advanced as Europeans because they “lack” what Europeans value: “melody and harmony.”⁵ For this curriculum, I have redesigned the first unit of the school year to include music as texts. As 9th grade students in our school, I’m just getting to know them and their skill levels. I wonder if using music at the beginning of their high school experience will make the curriculum more accessible to many more students in a 9th grade first quarter unit. A unit like this can help build confidence at such a crucial moment in their high school career. In addition to being accessible, music can also provide an opportunity to explore rich essential questions that ask students to think critically about identity and their own racial and bias literacy. Some of those essential questions are: how does identity shape what you see? What is culture? How do your cultures shape what you see?

Unit Goals

Students will gain a deeper understanding of how culture and stories shape our perspective and biases.

⁴ Trevor Getz, *A Primer for Teaching African History*, Design Principles for Teaching History (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 27.

⁵ Carol Muller, *The Contemporary Music of Africa*, 1.

Students will understand how perspective impacts storytelling in history.

Students will understand that history is like a competition of truths.

Students will gain a greater depth and breadth of knowledge of African histories in order to counter the danger of the single story of Africa.

Unit Essential Questions

- What is culture?
- How do your cultures shape what you see?
- What does Africa mean to you?
- What does it mean to others?
- How do stories shape my perspective and biases?
- What does it mean to be a responsible storyteller and a responsible story consumer?

Unit Skillbuilding Goals

Students will be able to think and write historically. Students will complete a reading like a historian lesson that poses a central historical question that they need to answer with a set of primary and secondary sources.

Students will be able to evaluate music as a source. As with sourcing any primary or secondary source, students will identify who made the music, the purpose behind it, the perspectives included and excluded.

Students will be able to engage in meaningful and productive discussions. My approach to teaching students discussion skills is highly influenced by my colleague and educator, Matt Kay. In his book *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom*, Kay writes about building the ecosystem for successful race conversations. Part of this is to teach students to understand listening as a skill that they can work on and not in the academic or disciplinary sense, but with guidelines: listen patiently, listen actively, and police your voice. These guidelines are practiced early in the year and referred to explicitly in order to help build safety in the class. The ecosystem is also supported by giving time connection and gratitude with and between students, the

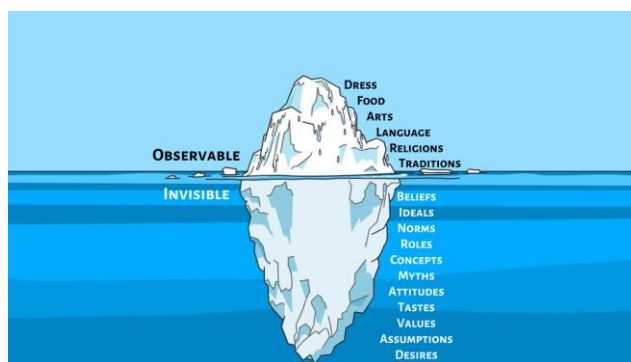
development of own interpersonal facilitation skills, giving structure to dialogic curriculum, and establishing a purpose of our conversations about race.⁶

Unit Content Goals

Understanding Culture and Difference

This unit is designed as the first major unit for a 9th grade African-American history course. Before this I usually spend a couple of weeks on a mini-unit that explores identity. So while the unit on identity asks students to think about how they understand themselves, this unit on Africa asks them to consider how they understand others. Looking at culture serves as a bridge between these two connected ideas.

The definition of culture that I would use in class is: “The customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group. As well as the values, beliefs, behavior, and material objects.” We unpack this by using the metaphor of an iceberg. Similar to identity and culture, from the waterline we can only see about 10% of an iceberg. In order to truly understand we must explore what is beneath the surface. In our mini-unit on identity, students create identity icebergs and in this unit we can create cultural icebergs to help us see what might be invisible to the eye. A quick internet search will immediately provide many visual examples of cultural icebergs that students can use to make their own for one of the many cultures that they belong to. Here are a couple of examples of visuals:



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⁶ Matthew R. Kay, *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom* (Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2018).

⁷ Svilenia Iotkovska, Cultural Iceberg, illustration, Sip of Culture, August 2, 2020, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://sipofculture.com/2020/08/02/the-dynamics-of-intercultural-communal-living/>.



After activities that get to a developing understanding of culture, we can delve into discussions that help students think critically about how culture impacts our perspectives and biases. To introduce this part of the unit, we might read an excerpt from *The Body Ritual of the Nacirema*, a satirical article written and published by anthropologist Horace Miner in 1956. His article criticizes how anthropologists write about cultures in an otherizing manner by writing about American culture in the same way. Someone might first read it without knowing this background and not come to recognize that they are reading about American culture. Indeed, Nacirema is a made-up term, American spelled backwards. After reading an excerpt from the original article, I would ask students their impressions of the Nacirema as a cultural group. To facilitate their reflection and discussion I would introduce terms that are used to help name how people might react to and process cultural differences: ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, and culture shock. After these conversations, I would reveal that the Nacirema article is actually about American culture. This would lead to a discussion about how perspective, bias, language, and storytelling impacted the way we interpreted the article.

The conversations that stem from the Nacirema reading provide fertile ground for more difficult discussions. For example, students can get a lot out of unpacking the idea of cultural relativism and how we might be able to examine cultures within their context and without judgements that stem from our own cultural standards. How can we critique morality and right and wrong under a cultural relativist lens? Are there universal standards that span all cultures? Should there be?

⁸ The Cultural Iceberg, illustration, Tacoma Arts Live, accessed June 22, 2021, https://tacomaartslive.org/images/education/lens_documents/At_Home_The_Iceberg.pdf.

The Danger of a Single Story

The unit's threads on understanding culture and difference continue with the next phase of our study: honest conversations about our perspectives on Africa. To facilitate this we watch the TED talk *The Danger of a Single Story*, which I previously described in more detail in the problem statement section. After watching the video, we ensure that we understand the concept through writing activities and small group discussions. Students are asked to outline the characteristics of a single story and to apply them to different groups and places that have strong single stories associated with them (Africa, young people, Philly schools, etc). In small groups, they also consider alternative stories of these groups that can help to burst the single story and what they can do to promote these alternative stories.

Establishing that anyone can both promote single stories and be a victim of them allows us to honestly discuss how we perceive Africa. Students are asked to reflect on the complexity in a form that we then use to analyze the perspectives and biases that we hold as a collective. Considering that students are still getting to know each other and classroom community is still being built, I give students encouragement to be honest in this way:

This form is anonymous because otherwise we may feel emotions that get in the way of us being honest. I hope that we can create a classroom community where we can be vulnerable enough to share ideas we are working on but may not be proud of. I hope that by being anonymous you will be honest and constructive. This honesty will allow us to have a more truthful exploration for anti-bias work in our classroom.

This is also important because we can get a better sense of all the perspectives and potential biases in our classroom. We each only have our own perspective as a starting point.

I will share answers with the class so make sure that you don't put any identifying information if you want your responses to be truly anonymous.

The survey could ask questions like this:

- Section 1: What are the first 5 words that come to mind when you read the word "Africa?"

- Section 2: What are/have been your sources of information on the continent of Africa? In other words, what sources have shaped your perspective? Try to name 5.
- Section 3: Trivia (ONLY use your BRAIN. Do NOT use the INTERNET or BOOKS)
 - How many countries make up Africa? (A: 54)
 - True or False: Homo Sapiens evolved in Africa. (A: True)
 - True or False: There are about 500 languages spoken across Africa. (A: False, approximately 1000-2000 languages)
 - True or False: The Sahara is bigger than the continental United States. (A: False, about the same size though)
 - True or False: Africa has approximately 15% of the earth's remaining mineral resources. (False, about 30%)
- Section 4: Reflection
 - What would you say is the single story told about Africa?
 - How would you describe your bias towards Africa?
 - At this moment, what does Africa mean to you?
 - What are questions that you have about Africa?

After our deep dive into the concept of the single story, I would more clearly establish one of the purposes of this unit which is to actively and repeatedly burst the single story of Africa that we have been conditioned to associate with such a diverse and multifaceted continent.

Music, Culture, and Africa: Afropop Worldwide Assignment

A question that came out of our TIP seminar that could bring together our conversations on culture, single stories, and Africa is whether or not music is a universal language. Dr. Muller explores this question in her work and helps us interrogate whether we should be “thinking about the human capacity for music, as either just a cultural product or a universally distributed human adaptation, and perhaps even evolutionary necessity.”⁹ Music allows my students to consider how Africa's deep human past can help us understand who we are today. For example, Dr. Muller outlines that there is a “growing body of research about the development of human musical capacity through the expressive engagement between mother and infant, a capacity generated across most

⁹ Muller, *The Contemporary*, 25-26.

human communities.”¹⁰ There are also archeological artifacts that speak to the relationship between ritual practice, musical capacity, and evolutionary necessities.¹¹

After introductory discussions around music, culture, and our understanding of Africa, I could ask students to complete an assignment that uses music to deepen their knowledge of the continent. Afropop Worldwide is a program that started out on radio in the United States in the 80s and has since then become available on the internet through podcasts and an online magazine. It explores the music of Africa and the African diaspora. I learned about this resource from the TIP seminar where it was assigned as weekly listening and which also became the foundation of my research for a seminar project.

Having students listen to Afropop episodes will allow them to engage with a story deeply because many of the episodes do a wonderful job of providing analysis, context, musical sound, and perspectives that would be difficult to replicate in an accessible way. The goals of this assignment would be for students to practice listening as a way of learning, express their learning through effective summary, and then pick a song to add to a class playlist. I would pull from the class playlist for a beginning-of-class song and presentation that we would do for the duration of the unit. Students would give a one-minute presentation on the song when theirs is played for the class. In this way, all students will be exposed to a wide breadth of music from the continent and each student would also have done a deep dive into at least one music story. Overall, through this assignment I would teach skills like listening, note-making, summary, and presentation. All of these are skills that I would ask students to continuously practice throughout the year and the Afropop assignment would be one of the formal assessment checks.

It is worthwhile for readers of this unit to learn about some of the Afropop Worldwide episodes that would serve students in an assignment like this. I will provide a couple of examples here along with their official descriptions.

Episode title: Botswana, Dumelang

“Botswana is a large, landlocked country in Southern Africa, a vast stretch of desert and savannah between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia with a population of only 2.2 million. While widely overlooked

¹⁰ Ibid, 28.

¹¹ Ibid, 29.

internationally for their music, over the past 20 years Botswana have steadily built a diverse and fruitful local scene that includes traditional choirs, hip-hop and kwaito, r&b and jazz and even heavy metal. While Franco, the biggest star in the country, packs stadiums with his Congolese-derived Setswana kwassa kwassa, Vee Mampeezy, Charma Gal and a host of aspiring stars champion a distinctly local fusion called house kwassa: a mix of rumba guitars, house beats and kwaito vocals. In this program we hear from Kabelo Mogwe of the popular cultural troupe Culture Spears; hip hop star Jujuboy; the metal band Skinflint; Afro soul singer Mpho Sebina and reformed house kwassa badboy Mingo Touch. We also head to a midnight recording session with young producer Zolasko and singer Naisi Boy and learn the insides of the Botswana music video industry with videographer Jack Bohloko.”¹²

Episode title: African Hip Hop: Senegal and Tanzania

“Hip hop has become language of youth worldwide. To understand what the younger generation is experiencing and talking about, you have to tune into the deeper meaning of hip hop. In Africa, hip hop is controversial. Some see it as a style that was African to begin with as in the image of "Boomerang" in the smash hit by Senegalese stars Daara J with whom we talk in this Hip Deep edition of Afropop Worldwide. Other Africans see hip hop as yet another invasion of American pop culture, crowding out local roots music. In the U.S. of course, hip hop represents a fundamental generational, racial, and class divide; 40 something baby boomers tend to tune out hip hop automatically. But this program says loud and clear: the best of African hip hop swings hard and distinguishes itself by the local sounds it incorporates. And these hip hop artists are fascinating commentators on the realities of developing countries in the 21st century-- from how their societies are governed to how the world is run. Get hip to African Hip Hop!”¹³

¹² Morgan Greenstreet and Lollise Mbi, "Botswana, Dumelang," May 28, 2020, in *Afropop Worldwide*, podcast, audio, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://afropop.org/audio-programs/botswana-dumelang>.

¹³ Sean Barlow and Banning Eyre, "African Hip Hop: Senegal and Tanzania," December 5, 2011, in *Afropop Worldwide*, podcast, audio, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://afropop.org/audio-programs/african-hip-hop-senegal-and-tanzania>.

The program creates several types of episodes. The episodes labeled as “Hip Deep” episodes may be consistently fruitful for students in an assignment like this. All of the Hip Deep episodes can be found on the website. The following is a description of this series from their website:

“Fourteen years ago, with support from the NEH, we created Hip Deep, a subseries integrated into the overall Afropop Worldwide program offering. Hip Deep programs build on the techniques and format developed for Afropop Worldwide, but are enhanced by rigorous academic and field research that translates into higher production values. Every episode of Hip Deep actively involves leading humanities scholars to illuminate a wealth of history, culture, politics, ethnic and spiritual contexts. Over 15 years, Hip Deep has produced over 110 humanities-focused programs and a wide range of supplementary Web resources (interviews, videos, text/photo features, podcasts), all easily accessible within the Hip Deep section of our website. Hip Deep amplifies Afropop Worldwide’s longstanding commitment to disseminate humanities themes to the general public through world music via a growing set of media pathways.”¹⁴

African Histories

As part of the unit’s critical intervention into students’ worldviews¹⁵ and the development of students’ ability to think like historians, this unit will cover case studies in African histories.

Before delving into case studies, I need to ensure that students have a general understanding of some eras of African histories so that they can practice the historical thinking skill of contextualization.¹⁶ One way to do this is through a whistle-stop tour that at the same time acknowledges the impossibility of covering so much content but that tries to highlight potential historical eras and characteristics that divide them. The following is an outline that could be used to guide this whistle stop tour.

¹⁴ “Hip Deep,” Afropop Worldwide, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://afropop.org/audio-programs/hip-deep>.

¹⁵ Getz, *A Primer*, 28.

¹⁶ Stanford University, “Contextualization Classroom Poster,” Stanford History Education Group, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/contextualization-classroom-poster>.

Rough Outline of African histories in the world that does not do it justice

- I. Ancient African history until the 1400s
 - A. Egypt - 3,000 year old ancient complex society
 - B. Egypt, Axum, Kush, Ghana, Songhay, Mali
 - C. Populations all over the continent: many small family based groups and other centralized societies like Egypt
 - D. Middle Ages: west African kingdoms/empires (Ghana, Mali, Songhai)
 - E. Trade routes and interconnection (migration, trade, religions)
- II. 1400 to 1800s
 - A. Continuation of complex societies, small family based groups, and other centralized societies
 - B. Trans-Atlantic trade in human beings
- III. 1800s to 1960s
 - A. European colonization in most parts of the continent; diverse experiences with colonization
- IV. 1960s to the present
 - A. Independence, decolonization

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A historical case study that serves as an intervention is that of the king of the Empire of Mali, Mansa Musa. He reigned from 1312 to 1337. The Empire of Mali was extremely rich and Mansa Musa was it's richest ruler. Using the *Reading Like a Historian* lesson plan on Mansa Musa, students will practice historical thinking skills by evaluating three sources and answer the historical question: was Mansa Musa the richest person ever?¹⁸ After our investigation, the reflection discussions can also firmly address the single story of poverty that is so often attached to Africa.

Another case study could be selected from two documentary series that offer comprehensive and in depth look at stories that students will find intriguing and new. *Africa's Great Civilizations* is a six-part series that covers 200,000 years of history.¹⁹ It is hosted by Henry Louis Gates Jr and published by PBS. *The History Of Africa with Zeinab Badawi* is a 20 part series that centers Africans telling their histories and was overseen by UNESCO.²⁰

A culminating assessment for this section of the unit could be a visit to the African galleries at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. The Penn Museum has recently redesigned the gallery based on feedback gathered from the previous Imagine Africa exhibit. The Penn Museum website states:

¹⁷ Jonas, Pearl. "Outline of African Histories." Slide.

¹⁸ Stanford University, "Mansa Musa," Stanford History Education Group, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/mansa-musa>.

¹⁹ "Africa's Great Civilizations," PBS, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/show/africas-great-civilizations/>.

²⁰ BBC News, "The History Of Africa with Zeinab Badawi," YouTube, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLajyiGz4JeyPq2lpEt2skZRhQsAspIQCP>.

“They are designed to deepen the conversation about African material culture, its representation in Western museums, and its connection to the African Diaspora....As with most Western museums, the foundational objects of this collection were created in or taken out of Africa during periods of enslavement and colonialism. Most of the Penn Museum’s Africa collections were acquired by curators, ethnologists, archaeologists, antiquarians, or travelers in the late 19th or early 20th centuries.”²¹

I see this as an opportunity to continue establishing a purpose for my students. As I continue to ask students to engage in difficult conversations about race, bias, and history, it is important that I establish a purpose for students to expend that emotional and intellectual labor that comes along with these topics. Matt Kay writes about this in *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom*. A proposition that helps ensure purpose would be designing “race conversations that encourage students to follow new lines of inquiry.”²² This means that we can help students see themselves as individuals that can contribute to ongoing conversations not when they are adults but right now. As part of a trip to the Penn Museum I would ask students to investigate the narratives being told and to contribute to the conversation that the museum is itself having with the public: what does decolonization mean for a museum whose collections were acquired during colonialism?

Culminating Project

The goal of the culminating project is to fight the single story by researching and telling many stories of Africa. Students will identify a theme and country or cultural group to focus their research. Through their research they will find a story that they can tell about Africa that is more complex than the single story that is told through the media in the United States. The themes are: history, teenagers, work, education, religion, city and rural living, natural environment, politics, family, fashion, arts & creative expression, customs/traditions, sports, wealth/resources, innovation/technology, and language. After finding a story to tell, students will do enough research to communicate that story in a creative way. Students will imagine that they are creating a piece of media for a specific audience. Some of the ways that they might tell their story are: a social media campaign,

²¹ University of Pennsylvania, "Africa Galleries," Penn Museum, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://www.penn.museum/on-view/galleries-exhibitions/africa-galleries>.

²² Kay, *Not Light*, 121.

visual art, personal essay, article, museum exhibit, infographic, children's book, movie trailer, or informative game (trading cards, game show, etc). Finally, to develop reflection and critical thinking, students will write a short essay that explains their research project, the topic they learned about, and how and why they chose to represent that topic in the format of their choice. They will also analyze the essential questions and how their project addresses the single story of Africa. At the end of the project process, we will share our projects with the class, expanding the stories that we all have of Africa and combating the single story that is dominant in our minds.

An important process goal for this project is for students to seek sources that allow for many African perspectives to be their teachers and storytellers. Keim and Somerville emphasize this: "The first step to understanding African difference is to "listen" to African cultures and attempt to discover Africa in its own words and its own context. We should work at understanding how Africans conceive of reality and how that reality has been shaped by their environments and histories."²³ The practice of listening to the perspectives of the people whose stories we want to know about is a valuable skill and intervention for how we can better understand our world.

Teaching Strategies

Discussions

Students will build understanding through a dialogic environment in partnered, small group, and whole class settings. Discussion allows students to process information and to challenge each other's thinking.

Reading Like a Historian

The Stanford History Education Project (SHEG) created this approach to history education that asks students to think and write like historians. Students are presented with a historical question that requires primary and/or secondary sources to answer. The teacher curates a set of sources (often excerpted and modified for student accessibility) that students use to answer the historical question. Students are asked to apply sourcing and corroboration techniques before coming to a conclusion. I would use some lessons from SHEG's database.

²³ Keim and Somerville, *Mistaking Africa*, 171.

Community Building

As noted before, this unit and course involves hard conversations about race and identity. When students decide to share ideas with the class, I want to make sure that they feel listened to and that their ideas and experiences have value. Not only does the community need to practice listening but they also need to be able to trust each other. As Kay notes, “building a classroom community helps the students to celebrate the best of each other’s cultures. It lays the foundation of empathy that the heavier conversations depend on.”²⁴

To help build classroom community there are traditions we use to get to know each other and practice listening skills. One that I have used in the past is the “hot seat.” At the beginning of the first class of the week we spend 3-5 minutes asking one of our classmates questions about their interests, opinions, and experiences.

There are also opportunities to use the themes and content of the unit to create moments of connection. For example, there is a video in which Bobby McFerrin demonstrates the power of the pentatonic scale that we could try to replicate in the class to get to the question of universality of music.²⁵ Additionally, we could have friendly competitions in which we identify the countries of Africa. If we do this weekly we can keep a leaderboard and encourage each other to study and improve. There are several online resources for this type of activity.²⁶

Notebooking

As 9th graders, one of our yearlong skill building goals is to develop a personal and helpful note making style. To support this habit, students are required to have a notebook, and to write down a daily title and date. Students are also taught note making strategies and formats. Notebooks support student learning because they help them process and make meaning of class activities, content, and discussions.

Graphic Organizers

²⁴ Kay, *Not Light*, 32.

²⁵ "Bobby McFerrin Demonstrates the Power of the Pentatonic Scale," video, YouTube, posted by World Science Festival, July 23, 2009, accessed June 23, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne6tB2KiZuk>.

²⁶ "Africa: Countries Map Quiz Game," Seterra, accessed June 23, 2021, <https://online.seterra.com/en/vgp/3163>.

Students are provided with graphic organizers to help them process complex, multi-step activities that also require skill building. For this unit, graphic organizers would be provided for reflection on the *Danger of Single Story* TED Talk, the Mansa Musa Reading Like a Historian lesson, Afropop Worldwide activity, and the culminating project.

Music Listening Activity

Students free write while listening to a song over and over again to engage with the ideas, emotions, and associations that they make with music that they may not be familiar with. Dr. Muller has used this activity and has reported that after a couple of listens students are able to hear with more specificity and curiosity.

Classroom Activities

Lesson Plan # 1: Danger of a Single Story

Materials needed

- Link to the “Danger of Single Story” TED Talk:
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story
- Presentation slides that include images, definitions and instructions that will be used during the lesson. (See Appendix B)
- “Danger of Single Story” graphic organizer (See Appendix C)

Timeline for completion

Students may watch the TED Talk as part of a homework assignment before this lesson or as part of the previous class activities. Otherwise, this lesson was created for a 65 minute class period.

Stated objectives

Students will practice taking detailed notes and in the process experimenting with their own personal notebook style.

Students will collaborate in groups to strengthen their understanding of the single story concept.

Students will apply their understanding of the single story concept.

District, state, and national curriculum standards addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

Evaluation Tools

Students will submit a picture of their “Danger of Single Story” notes.

Students will be evaluated based on large and small group discussion. Teacher will visit students that did not participate in large group discussions when they are in small groups to check for understanding.

Students will complete the “Danger of Single Story” graphic organizer and will share in a large group discussion.

A step-by-step guide to completion

1. Before class, students watch and submit notes for *The Danger of a Single Story*.
2. Students prepare notebooks for class.
3. Teacher celebrates images of notes that students submitted for homework.

4. Debrief discussion of the TED Talk
 - a. What is a single story? What are the characteristics of a single story?
 - b. Why is a single story dangerous?
 - c. What stuck out to you? What was important or interesting?
5. Students work in small groups to further debrief the TED Talk. They will complete the steps outlined in the graphic organizer.
6. Students return to a large group to review 2 and to share their responses to parts 4-7 of the graphic organizer.
7. Final reflection: What is an idea that you are taking with you?

Lesson Plan # 2: Perspective, Bias, & Evaluating Sources

Materials needed

- Presentation slides that include images, definitions and instructions that will be used during the lesson. (See Appendix D)
- “Evaluating Sources” graphic organizer (See Appendix E)

Timeline for completion

This lesson follows a lesson on the *Danger of a Single Story*. This lesson is designed to be completed within one 65 minute class period.

Stated objectives

Students will be able to apply their understanding of perspective and bias.

Students will be able to evaluate the reliability of a source for a historical question.

District, state, and national curriculum standards addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.10

By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

Evaluation Tools

Students will be evaluated based on large and small group discussion. Teacher will visit students that did not participate in large group discussions when they are in small groups to check for understanding.

Students will complete the evaluating sources graphic organizer and will apply their understanding to a quiz in the next class period.

A step-by-step guide to completion

1. Students prepare notebooks for class.
2. Teacher reviews definitions of perspective and bias.
3. Teacher asks students to apply definitions of perspective and bias to two comic illustrations; the teacher leads discussion.
4. Short teacher-led discussion that connects perspective and bias to the single story concept: How do single stories impact our perspective and bias?
5. Application of perspective and bias to historical thinking:

- a. Teacher explains that we'll be practicing historical thinking when it comes to evaluating sources for reliability.
- b. Sources provide a perspective (and maybe a bias) that historians use to tell stories, or narratives. Explaining reliability (trustworthiness) of a source depends on the question being asked.
- c. What things should you consider when evaluating the reliability of a source for your question? (make a list with students)
- d. Students complete the "Evaluating Sources" activity in small groups.
- e. Teacher checks for understanding and application of perspective and bias by reviewing 2-3 questions about the activity in a large group.
- f. Explain to students that there will be a 2-question quiz on evaluating sources of reliability. They must apply the concepts of perspective and bias. The quiz will take the same question format as the activity they just completed.
- g. Homework is to prepare for the quiz by comparing their answers from today's activity with answers provided by the teacher. What did they miss? What are questions they could have asked to evaluate reliability?

Lesson Plan # 3: Is music a universal language?

Materials needed

- Link for the "Bobby McFerrin Demonstrates the Power of the Pentatonic Scale" video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne6tB2KiZuk>
- Link for a song that students listen to as they free write
- Graphic organizer for the Afropop Worldwide assignment (See Appendix F)

Timeline for completion

This lesson was created for a 65 minute class period.

Stated objectives

Students will practice active and patient listening as they free write while listening to a song multiple times.

Students will consider how music can help us understand ourselves and others.

District, state, and national curriculum standards addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

Evaluation Tools

Students will free write in their notebooks.

Students will discuss in small and large groups.

Students will show understanding of the Afropop Worldwide assignment by completing the first steps in the process.

A step-by-step guide to completion

1. Teacher attempts to guide student participation in pentatonic scale activity that Bobby McFerrin uses in this video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne6tB2KiZuk>
2. Teacher leads students in a music listening and free write activity. Teacher plays a song 2-3 times and each time asking students to write any thoughts, reactions, emotions, or associations that they experience while listening. One potential song to play might be “Mesdames yo ce lamp” by Altiery Dorival. It will come up in a later presentation.
 - a. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEiS_9JHIE0&t=17s
 - b. Teacher leads a debrief discussion. How did their freewrite change with each listen?
3. In small groups, students discuss: Is music a universal language?
4. Students discuss the prompt as a whole class.

5. Explain to the students that music is a potential window into understanding other cultures, places, and people. We're going to explore music as a way to collect stories of Africa beyond the single story.
6. Introduce to students the Afropop Worldwide assignment. Walk through the graphic organizer.
7. Teacher models how to summarize an Afropop Worldwide assignment. (See Appendix G for a model created by the writer of this curriculum for her TIP seminar.)
8. Allow students time to begin the assignment and support students who need help picking an Afropop Worldwide episode to listen to.

Resources

Annotated Bibliography for Teachers

"Africa's Great Civilizations." PBS. Accessed June 22, 2021.

<https://www.pbs.org/show/africas-great-civilizations/>.

Teachers can use this documentary series to strengthen their own knowledge of African histories and also to determine case studies they might want to teach in class.

Barlow, Sean, and Banning Eyre. "African Hip Hop: Senegal and Tanzania." December 5,

2011. In *Afropop Worldwide*. Podcast, audio. Accessed June 22, 2021.

<https://afropop.org/audio-programs/african-hip-hop-senegal-and-tanzania>.

Teachers can listen to this episode as an example of the work put out by Afropop Worldwide.

BBC News. "The History Of Africa with Zeinab Badawi." YouTube. Accessed June 22, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLajyiGz4JeyPq2lpEt2skZRhQsAspIQCp>.

Teachers can use this documentary series to strengthen their own knowledge of African histories and also to determine case studies they might want to teach in class.

Getz, Trevor R. *A Primer for Teaching African History. Design Principles for Teaching History*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018.

Teachers can use this book to interrogate the purpose and approach to designing curriculum about African histories.

Greenstreet, Morgan, and Lollise Mbi. "Botswana, Dumelang." May 28, 2020. In *Afropop*

Worldwide. Podcast, audio. Accessed June 22, 2021. <https://afropop.org/audio-programs/botswana-dumelang>.

Teachers can listen to this episode as an example of the work put out by Afropop Worldwide.

"Hip Deep." Afropop Worldwide. Accessed June 22, 2021.

<https://afropop.org/audio-programs/hip-deep>.

This website provides a list of all the "Hip Deep" episodes created by Afropop Worldwide. It is a helpful resource for students as they select an episode to listen to.

Kay, Matthew R. *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2018.

Teachers can use this book to interrogate their own teaching practice when it comes to conversations about race and identity.

Keim, Curtis, and Carolyn Somerville. *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Westview Press, 2017.

Teachers can use this book to interrogate cultural assumptions and biases about Africa.

Muller, Carol. *The Contemporary Music of Africa*.

This book is not yet available to the public but when it is available will be a valuable resource on the music of Africa.

Stanford University. "Contextualization Classroom Poster." Stanford History Education Group. Accessed June 22, 2021. <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/contextualization-classroom-poster>.

The Stanford History Education Group has a series of resources on historical thinking skills. This resource in particular outlines the skill of contextualization and can be used to teach and frame expectations of student work.

Stanford University. "Evaluating Sources." Stanford History Education Group. Accessed June 23, 2021. <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/evaluating-sources>.
The Stanford History Education Group has a series of resources on historical thinking skills. This resource in particular provides an activity for helps students evaluate the reliability of sources.

University of Pennsylvania. "Africa Galleries." Penn Museum. Accessed June 22, 2021. <https://www.penn.museum/on-view/galleries-exhibitions/africa-galleries>.
This website provides teachers with a description of the Africa Galleries of the Penn Museum. It also outlines the approach the Penn Museum has taken in it's design.

Annotated Reading List for Students

Ngozi Adichie, Chimamanda. "The Danger of a Single Story." Speech presented at TEDGlobal 2009, Oxford, England, July 2009. Video. TED. July 2009. Accessed June 21, 2021. https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.
This TED Talk is the foundation for this unit. Adichie describes the concept of the single story.

"Who Are The NACIREMA?" AFS-USA. Accessed June 23, 2021. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eIJF9PYwDlvavZJHyTI6O6vVbvE8pMH/view>.
Students will read pages 3-4 of this PDF which contains the excerpt to the original full length article, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" that was originally published in 1956 by Horace Miner in *American Anthropologist Magazine*.

Annotated List of Materials for Classroom Use

"Africa: Countries Map Quiz Game." Seterra. Accessed June 23, 2021. <https://online.seterra.com/en/vgp/3163>.
This website provides an online map quiz game that times users as they identify African countries.

"Bobby McFerrin Demonstrates the Power of the Pentatonic Scale." Video. YouTube.

Posted by World Science Festival, July 23, 2009. Accessed June 23, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne6tB2KiZuk>.

This is an intriguing video that helps us understand the relationship between music, culture, and the brain.

Iotkovska, Svilenka. *Cultural Iceberg*. Illustration. Sip of Culture. August 2, 2020.

Accessed June 22, 2021. <https://sipofculture.com/2020/08/02/the-dynamics-of-intercultural-communal-living/>.

This website provides an image of the cultural iceberg that can be used to guide students in the creation of their own cultural icebergs.

The Cultural Iceberg. Illustration. Tacoma Arts Live. Accessed June 22, 2021.

https://tacomaartslive.org/images/education/lens_documents/At_Home_The_Iceberg.pdf.

This website provides an image of the cultural iceberg that can be used to guide students in the creation of their own cultural icebergs.

Stanford University. "Mansa Musa." Stanford History Education Group. Accessed June 22, 2021. <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/mansa-musa>.

The Stanford History Education Group has a series of resources on historical thinking skills. This resource in particular provides a lesson that explores the question: Was Mansa Musa the richest person ever?

Appendix A

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.10

By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9-10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

Appendix B

Today's Agenda

WELCOME TO CLASS

NOTEBOOK TITLE
Single Story

- 1) As the song plays:
 - a) Put notebook title in your Table of Contents
- 2) Debrief "The Danger of Single Story"
- 3) Small group discussion
- 4) Large group discussion

Guiding Questions

- What is the danger of a single story?
- What can we do to make single stories less dangerous?

Title: *The Danger of the Single Story*

By Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

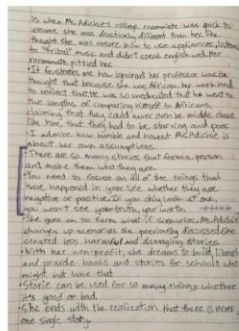
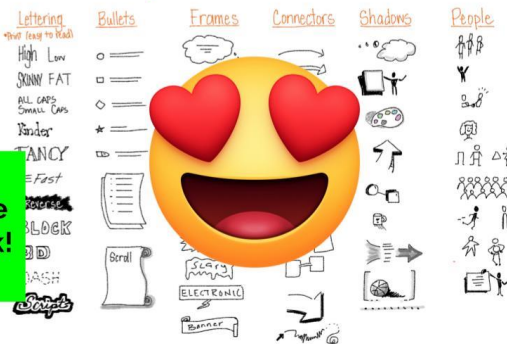
Guiding questions:

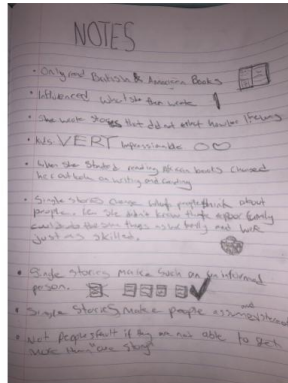
- 1) What is a single story? What are the characteristics of a single story?
- 2) Why is a single story dangerous?
- 3) What stuck out to you? What was important or interesting?



Lists of Visual Tools

**Let's
celebrate
your work!**





Danger of Single Story

Work on Group Discussion Graphic Organizer



6 Characteristics of Single Stories

- 1) A single story develops when something becomes the _____ story that is told.
- 2) _____ experiences of a culture or people are _____ by a single story.
- 3) Single stories are about _____; those that have more _____ in a society can control what becomes the SINGLE story.
- 4) Someone can be both the _____ and _____ of single stories.
- 5) We combat single stories by making sure _____ stories are told.
- 6) Single stories can influence our _____ and _____ towards ourselves and others.

Groups share parts 4-6



Final reflection: What is an idea that you are taking with you?



Appendix C

“Danger of a Single Story” Group Discussion

Group members:

Link: Danger of a Single Story transcript

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=en

Video: Danger of a Single Story

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

INSTRUCTIONS: Everyone in the group needs to contribute to the thinking in this

document. Work with one another to determine what gets recorded. Move through each part together.

Your whole group can work on the same document.

Part 1. Discuss your reactions to the TED talk. What was important to you? What stuck out to you? Summarize here.

Part 2. What are the characteristics of a single story? (Replace the underlines with the missing word/idea. Feel free to move/add words to ensure your sentence makes sense.)

- 1) A single story develops when something becomes the _____ story that is told.
- 2) _____ experiences of a culture or people are _____ by a single story.
- 3) Single stories are about _____: those that have more _____ in a society can control what becomes the SINGLE story.
- 4) Someone can be both the _____ and _____ of single stories.
- 5) We combat single stories by making sure _____ stories are told.
- 6) Single stories can influence our _____ and _____ towards ourselves and others.

Part 3. Discuss with your group: write down several examples of “single stories” that are told about:

Africa:

Poor people:

Women:

Young people:

Philly Schools:

Others: _____

Part 4. Focusing In: Pick one of the single stories above and describe it in more detail. Where does this single story appear? How old is it? Who tells this story? What is the impact of the story on the people who the story is told about?

Part 5. Moving to anti-bias: What are alternative stories of this group that can help to burst the single story? What other stories need to be told to reduce the “danger of a single story?”

Part 6. Action What can you do to promote these alternative stories? Where can you tell it? How?

Part 7. Prepare to share with the class. Prepare to share a 1 minute summary of your answers for Parts 4 through 6. Who will volunteer to unmute themselves and share with the whole class?

Appendix D

Today's Agenda →

WELCOME TO CLASS!

NOTEBOOK TITLE

Perspective, Bias, and Evaluating
Sources

- 1) As the song plays:
 - a) Put notebook title in your Table of Contents
- 2) Perspective & Bias
- 3) Evaluating sources for trustworthiness

Guiding Question

- How does your perspective and bias impact how you understand the world around you?

Perspective:

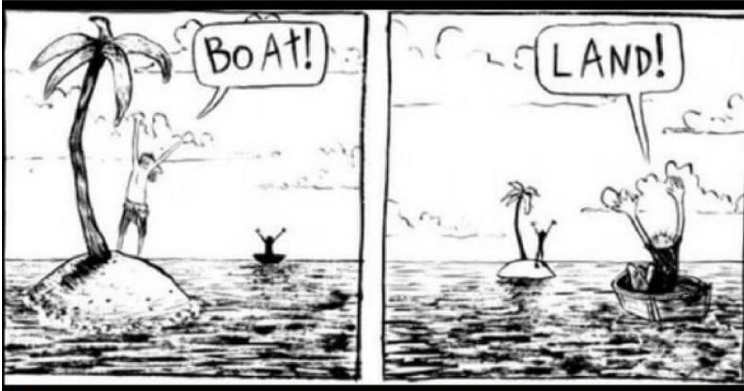
A point of view.
Perspective is shaped by an individual's experience, their ability to see, hear, understand, and focus on the thing they are perceiving.

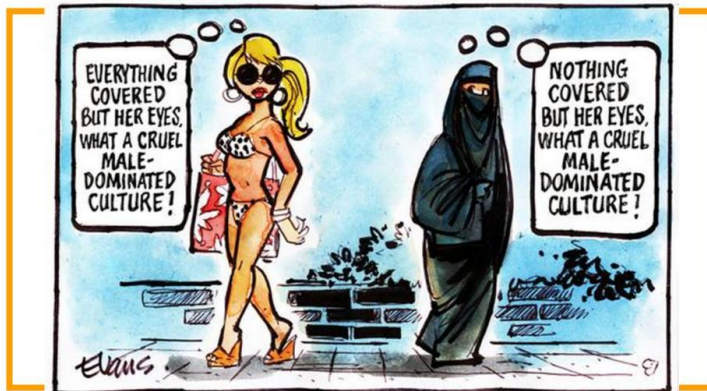
Everyone has a perspective.

Bias:

A tendency of one's mind to have an opinion for or against something in a positive OR negative way. Bias can operate consciously OR unconsciously. Bias can change over time.

Your *perspective* could possibly be shaped by your bias. What you expect to see can shape what you (do or don't) see.





“So that is how to create a single story, show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become.”

Let's Practice the fine art of sifting through perspective and bias

GROUP ACTIVITY: [“Evaluating Sources” Activity.](#)

- Focus on the perspective, and the possible bias, of each source
- **RELIABILITY (trustworthiness) of a source DEPENDS ON THE QUESTION BEING ASKED**
 - **Example:**
 - Ms. Jonas is a very reliable source when it comes to the question: “How can teachers travel for free?”—I have spent a lot of time doing research and applying to programs. One bias I have is that I think travelling is a worthwhile way for teachers to develop professionally.
 - Ms. Jonas is a totally unreliable source when it comes to the question: “Who’s got the most popular TikTok account at SLA?”—I don’t have TikTok or much knowledge about how to evaluate TikTok popularity. One bias I hold related to this question is that I don’t think comparing each others’ popularity is a good use of time.

Sources provide a perspective (and maybe a bias) that historians use to tell stories, or narratives.

Make a list in your notebook

What things should you consider when evaluating the reliability of a source for your question?

Did we miss anything?

What things should you consider when evaluating the reliability of a source for your question?

- Who created this?
- What is the author's perspective? What is their potential bias?
- Why was it created? Who is the intended audience?
- When was it created?
- Where was it created?

Next class: 2 question quiz evaluating sources

Homework: practice and review



Appendix E²⁷

African-American History

⋮ Evaluation of Sources ⋮

Let's practice! For each central historical question evaluate the reliability of each source.

(1) Historical Question: Who was present at the signing of the Declaration of Independence?

____ **Source 1:** Hollywood movie about the American Revolution made 2001.

____ **Source 2:** Book written by a famous historian who is an expert on the American Revolution, published in 1999.

**Which do you think is more reliable (consider potential perspective and bias)?
Why?**

(2) Historical Question: Did slaves build the Great Pyramid at Giza (in Egypt) in 2500 BCE?

____ **Source 1:** The section about the Great Pyramid in *The Histories* written by the Greek historian Herodotus in 440 BCE. Herodotus spent much of his life traveling to collect information for his book. He based his history book on the stories that the people in the places he visited reported to him.

²⁷ This assignment was inspired by one developed by the Stanford History Education Group. Stanford University, "Evaluating Sources," Stanford History Education Group, accessed June 23, 2021, <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/evaluating-sources>.

____ **Source 2:** High school history textbook published in 1959.

Which do you think is more reliable (consider potential perspective and bias)?
Why?

(3) Historical Question: Was Mansa Musa (a king from the Kingdom of Mali in West Africa) the richest person ever? He lived from the year 1280 to 1337.

____ **Source 1:** An account by Al-Umari. He was an Arab historian from Damascus, Syria. He visited the city of Cairo in Egypt several years after Mansa Musa passed through there on his pilgrimage in 1324. He then wrote this account of Mansa Musa's visit, as told to him by the people of Cairo.

____ **Source 2:** The following is an excerpt from a blog post that appeared in *The Huffington Post* on October 17, 2012. It describes a study on the wealthiest people in world history done by Brian Warner, the founder of *Celebrity Net Worth*, an online publication that investigates the lifestyles of the rich and famous.

Which do you think is more reliable (consider potential perspective and bias)?
Why?

(4) Historical Question: How did Ethiopia defeat Italy at the Battle of Adwa? (*The battle was fought between Ethiopia and Italy on March 1, 1896. It lasted one day, and was a decisive victory for Ethiopia.*)

____ **Source 1:** Documentary made by an Ethiopian filmmaker in 1999.

____ **Source 2:** Government documents that give the orders by Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia on the day of the battle.

Which do you think is more reliable (consider potential perspective and bias)?
Why?

(5) Historical Question: What happened at the start of the Women's War of 1929? (*The Women's War was a set of protests by Nigerian Igbo women against tax policies by the British colonial government on Nigerian women.*)

____ **Source 1:** Margery Perham was a British historian who studied African history. She travelled to Nigeria (though not during the Women's War) and wrote a book about Colonial Nigeria in 1937.

____ **Source 2:** In 1930, the British government assembled the Commission of Inquiry to investigate what happened during the Women's War. The commission interviewed 485 participants and witnesses. The source is a transcript of an interview with Nwanyoji, a participant in the rebellion.

Which do you think is more reliable (consider potential perspective and bias)?
Why?

(6) Historical Question: Why was Patrice Lumumba assassinated on January 17, 1961? (*Lumumba helped lead the Republic of Congo from colony of Belgium to independent nation.*)

____ **Source 1:** Patrice Lumumba's independence day speech on June 30, 1960.

____ **Source 2:** The Belgian Commission Report. A committee to investigate the possible involvement of Belgium in the assassination of Lumumba was formed in 1999. The committee produced a 20-page report in 2001.

Which do you think is more reliable (consider potential perspective and bias)?
Why?

Appendix F

Graphic organizer for the Afropop Worldwide assignment:

Step 1: Browse through [this list](#) of over 100 episodes, write down 3 that you are interested in listening to. Don't forget to include their links.

Step 2: Pick one episode from your list and start listening. As you listen, write down notes in your notebook that capture the main ideas and your own reflections. You might want to have two sections in your notebook, one labeled "main/big ideas" and the other "My reflections/reactions." As you listen also write down any songs that you might want to add to our class playlist. Submit a picture of your notes.

Step 3: Write a 150-200 word summary of the main ideas in the Afropop Worldwide episode that you listened to.

Step 4: Write a 100-200 word reflection. What did you learn? What are some questions that you have? How did this episode impact your understanding of Africa?

Step 5: Submit your summary, reflection, and the name, title and link to one song that you would like to include in the class playlist.

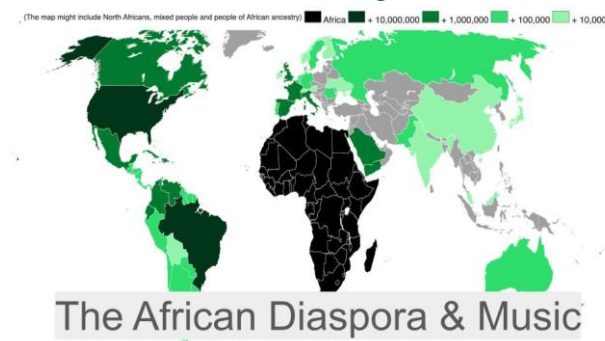
Step 6: Prepare what you would say during one-minute presentation of your song. Your presentation can include background information to the song and the reasons why you chose it.

Appendix G

A playlist presentation for the spring 2021 TIP seminar: “Listening to the Music of Contemporary Africa: History, Politics, and Human Origins”

Link:

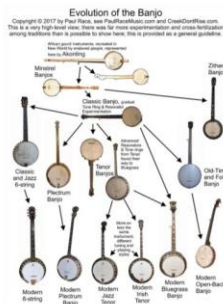
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jGDajXnhOhApWnmtpNjYCcc_ejX8UWd7OvmNIVuG7DQ/edit#slide=id.gd65203df7f_0_0



Some questions I'm thinking about...

- What is the relationship between sound and human/cultural development?
- How does culture and music adapt to oppression, new contexts, individuals, and cultures?
- How can we know our cultural roots, connections, origins?
- What is the relationship between music and identity?
- What does cultural exchange, appropriation, and labeling look like in music?
- How does globalization impact how we think about musical expressions?

Black History of the Banjo



Ngoni: one of many names for a type of West African Lute Instrument



"Kaira," traditional music from Mali, performed on the n'goni by Moussa Diabaté

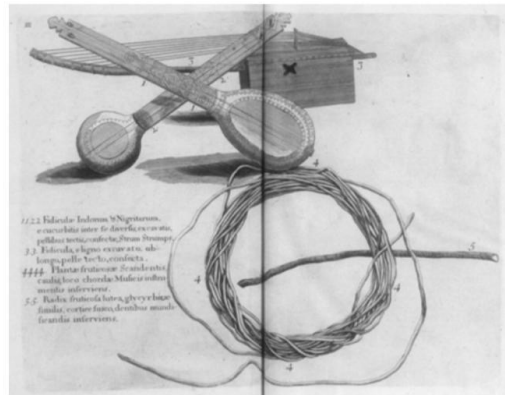
More Ngoni



Bassekou Kouyate at G8

"This is one of the earliest existent accounts of the banjo in the Americas, courtesy of the Scots naturalist Sir Hans Sloane, who visited Jamaica in 1687 and published his book in 1707. Already, you can see the differences between these 'strum strumps' and their West African cousins like the *akonting* and the *ngoni*: the banjo's flat fretboards and friction-based tuning pegs, borrowed from European instrument making. You can't see it in this drawing, but early banjos also had cultural and spiritual symbols on them, like cross-shaped sound holes on the side of the gourd's resonating body."

- Afropop Worldwide



Haiti: Twobadou



Altiery Dorival -
Mesdames yo ce lamp



"This is a video from 1928 of what appears to be Ina Rae Hutton's Ingenues. You can see at this point white people were quite comfortable with the banjo."

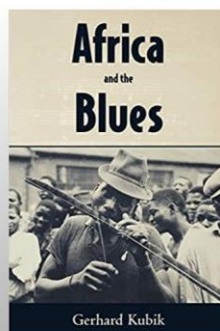
<https://afropop.org/audio-programs/the-black-history-of-the-banjo>

Minute 39-44ish
Racialization of the banjo

Carolina Chocolate Drops "Cornbread and Butterbeans"



Afropop:
Africa &
the Blues



Trait by Trait Analysis

- Transmission of musical traditions through families
- Different freedoms for enslaved ppl in places like Brazil vs US
- Louisiana Purchase, migration from Eastern seaboard to more southern territories - cultural developments
- Negotiation of genres and experimentation, European country folklore & the three common chords (G, C, D)
- Absence of asymmetric timeline patterns such as "kon, kon, kolo, kon kolo"

Slide guitar technique, West African savanna tonality



Podcast clip: 6:27-10:41

Fiddle interacting with vocal in pentatonic mode



Podcast clip: 11:10 - 16:31

Tikar women, 1964, from central Cameroon compared to "Hardworking Woman" by Mississippi Matilda in 1936



Podcast clip: 26 - 27:42
Timeline pattern missing from early forms of
African-American Music

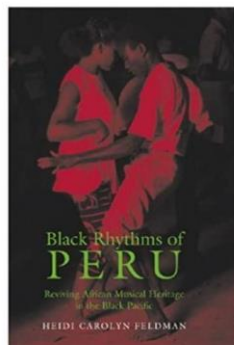
Gerhard Kubik "Africa and the Blues" page 203

"The people who were transferred from the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, and elsewhere to Mississippi and the other new southern territories during the first decades of the 19th century were carriers of the neo-African musical culture that presented a selection of traits from quite distinctive African regions. Under the new social circumstances, it then turned out that individual music has a better chance of surviving in the social climate where the African community spirit had been targeted for suppression. The new forms also expressed the new mood. In this process, culture traits from the west central Sudan belt gained wide currency in rural areas of the deep South, because they responded best to the new sociopsychological situation. Among the various new traditions that arose one was the blues. The bearers of these developments, however, were probably a minority within the population of African descendants on the farms. But their stylistic seeds began to sprout, while others seeds were doomed."

Role of the Individual in Musical Developments

"It is normal that individuals determine history's direction—be it political or art history. It is not the museum. In European art history, this was acknowledged long ago, and there is no reason why Africa should be an exception. For this reason I was warning readers in my book about mapping population numbers against successful cultural traditions. Sometimes it is a minority culture that makes a breakthrough and then becomes the majority culture. There is good reason to assume that many of the Arabic-Islamic stylistic traits that were processed in the Bentonia style—and generally in the Mississippi Delta blues—were introduced by a few individuals who had perpetuated a certain way of declamatory singing, wavy, ornamental intonation and pentatonic tonal systems within their families."

The Music of Black Peru: Cultural Identity in the Black Pacific



Late 19th/Early 20th Century Criollo Culture



- Lima
- Synchronization
- Cultural identity
- Lean into criollo identity; loss or rejection of black identity



W.G.: What's the big picture here? What are some of the over-arching themes behind the Afro-Peruvian revival?

H.F.: I'm not sure that the revivalist concern is exclusive to Peru. I think there have been revivals in many countries around the world. Revivals tend to happen at a time when it's important to get something back that was lost. Or at a time when perhaps a particular group feels that its past is slipping away from it. Or perhaps at a time when conditions make it possible to revive something.

For specific reasons that maybe had to do with criollo nostalgia that was invoked by the waves of Andean migrants coming to Lima. José Durand wanted to revive black Peruvian songs as part of a way of reviving the colonial era. The agenda of Nicomedes Santa Cruz and Victoria Santa Cruz and Peru Negro and the next waves of the revival were very different.

It was more about reconnecting to the African Diaspora. And here I think it might be appropriate to touch upon what I term the concept of the "Black Pacific," which is a way that I conceptualize the African Diaspora in Peru and perhaps a reason why there's that sense of tugging at the chest about the music of the revival. Why it's so important to come up with the authentic version. What's the difference? It's a show.

You can just create what you want. But no, it was very important to the leaders of the Afro-Peruvian revival to reclaim that past. I think it was exceedingly important for Peruvians of African descent.

There was not really a sense of diasporic consciousness. Scholars of diaspora say that to be in diaspora, it's not just the physical separation from your homeland; you have to actually have a state of mind that connects you to your homeland. A longing to return. A sense that you are in diaspora, that you have been separated from your homeland. That's something Black Peruvians didn't have at that point.

I think being part of this Black Pacific condition, there are many critics of the Afro-Peruvian revival. People that I met when I was doing my research in Peru who would say, "Why would you want to study that music? That was all made up in the 1960s. None of it is authentic."

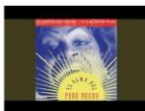
I think this is a way to trivialize the fact that traditions are invented. They may be more or less invented due to the circumstances that are faced by groups who need to have those traditions. More may have been forgotten about black Peruvian music than some of the musics in some of those other places. So, maybe Afro-Peruvian music is very invented.

But that very-invented music is still black Peruvian music and it really carries with it the unique way that black Peruvians re-imagined their past and identity that became the identity that elevated black Peruvians to the main stages of Lima in the 1960s. It really was the first movement to recognize that black Peruvians had ancestors that came from Africa who contributed to the culture of coastal Lima and it paved the way for groups that didn't come along until the 1980s and 1990s that were the first movements for civil rights for blacks in Peru.

Revival of Afro-Peruvian identity 1950s-60s



Landó Music
"Samba Malatú" - Lucila Campos



"Landó" - Peru Negro

Nicomedes Santa Cruz
"Ritmos Negros del Perú"

