

SOME GIRLS

A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY RAQUEL CEPEDA AND HENRY CHALFANT



9-12TH
GRADE CURRICULUM



public art films

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STUDENTS AT THE HARVARD GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,
CLASS OF 2018

#SOMEGIRLSDOC

COMPANION CURRICULUM

public art films



Lizzie M. Suarez
CURRICULA DESIGNER

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INTRODUCTION

SOME GIRLS is a feature documentary that explores issues of identity within the Latinx-American community by focusing on a group of teenage girls in a Bronx-based suicide prevention program who feel rejected by mainstream America, but are transformed through an exploration of their roots. SOME GIRLS and its companion curriculum seek to illuminate the places that are often hidden or ignored within ourselves, our histories, and in present-day society. As educators, we recognize the deep value and importance of social-emotional learning, and believe it should be at the forefront of classroom instruction. Our curriculum supports students' exploration of the major themes in the film with guidance and materials for teachers and facilitators throughout.

STUDENTS AT THE HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, CLASS OF 2018

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FROM THE FILMMAKERS

We are grateful to the students at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, Class of 2018, for the comprehensive set of curricula they've created to accompany our film, *SOME GIRLS*. The documentary follows a group of troubled Latina teens from a Bronx-based suicide prevention program who are transformed by an exploration of their roots via the use of ancestral DNA testing, followed by a trip to the seat of the Americas. On that journey to modern-day Dominican Republic, the white supremacist narratives about American history they've been taught in school and the media, are challenged, leaving them free to reconstruct their own respective identities. What does it really mean to be American? And, more importantly, what does that look like?

SOME GIRLS also looks at how identity, gender, and mental health intersect. It's especially important, as immigrant and Latinx-American communities in North America are under attack by the current administration, that we challenge the binary narratives that are being propagated in our society.

We are hopeful that *SOME GIRLS* and the accompanying curricula will serve as bridge to engage, inspire dialogue, and given the realities we are living in now, as a tool to heal and move forward, united.

With our deepest gratitude,
Raquel Cepeda and Henry Chalfant



ABOUT THIS CURRICULUM

The curriculum set for *SOME GIRLS* was created to facilitate dialogue around identity, history, and healing in middle school, high school, and undergraduate spaces, in tandem with the film. There is a curriculum for each grade band with a number of activities that are part of one of three sequential modules: Identity, Herstory & History*, and Healing. Each module aligns with roughly a third of the film and will allow students to explore the multitude of identities within them, the history they have been taught, the history they have yet to discover, and how they can begin to question, reflect, and heal as individuals. For each lesson objective, we have also included its corresponding Common Core State Standard.

SOME GIRLS follows the lives of a group of young girls in a suicide prevention program. Topics in the film such as cutting, suicide, abuse, harassment, body image, and mental health can be triggering for students, or difficult to watch. Discussing the film and activities with your school counselor ahead of time can be a great way to set your classroom up for success. Find out if the counselor will be available when you are showing the film in case a student asks for a break.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If you have...

3 days: Show the film to students in thirds over three days. The curriculum activities were made to mirror the girls' journey through Identity, History, and Healing. Choose one activity from each module for students to complete prior to, or after, viewing the film. We recommend completing an activity from the Healing module after viewing the film as a way to help students process their emotions and key learnings.

1-2 days: Determine how much time you have to show students the film, then select the lesson plans that work best within your time frame. Consider the needs of your students and classroom makeup when determining which activities to complete. If you are showing the film over two days, you can show the film in halves and pick two activities from two separate modules. You can incorporate the module you were unable to use into your plans by giving one of the assignments as homework.

*Herstory – A reclamation of history that centers the perspectives of women and girls. Acknowledges both written and oral forms of history.

Letter to Teachers

Dear Teacher,

In building this curriculum, we wanted to highlight the importance of social and emotional learning (SEL) in classrooms as well as the inclusion of an ethnic studies lens in student instruction. While SEL refers to the process in which we acquire knowledge and skills needed to manage our emotions, we consider equally invaluable the incorporation of race and ethnicity studies through a lens of marginalized peoples. Having SEL and ethnic studies at the forefront of our classroom will not only build our students' empathy, coping skills, and critical thinking capacity, it will help to develop a sense of control over their identities and learning.

We recognize and value that every teacher brings their own perspectives to the classroom. The same is true of our students. As teachers, it is our duty to respect and honor the diversity that exists within the room, and to accent it. As fellow educators, questions we ask ourselves include: Are my classroom and school equipped with tools to help students empower themselves with knowledge? Do students feel represented in their learning? Are students positively able to identify with the teachers in the building in some capacity? Reflect upon your answers and consider ways it could impact your students' learning. As young people grow and experience emotional and physical changes, we must ask ourselves how we can best support them. While each of us is at a different point in our journey supporting students' social and emotional needs, we can continually improve our craft to ensure we are creating spaces conducive to students' learning, sharing, and expression.

Within each module, you will find lesson plans and activities that include a "Note to Teachers," where we offer suggestions on how to best plan for and facilitate discussions around Identity, Herstory/History, and Healing. You know your classroom best, so be empowered to make adjustments when working with your students.

We dedicate this curriculum set to every young person in your classroom - may they come to know their power and use it to reimagine their roles in this very complex world, and may you be there to support them.

Yours,

Sabrina Alicea, Ivonne Ortega, Diana Peña, Sophia Perlaza, Soraya Ramos, Salvador Sanchez, Claudia Tapia

Students at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Class of 2018

9TH - 12TH CURRICULUM



MODULE ONE

IDENTITY

MODULE 1 | ACTIVITY SET THE ROOTS OF IDENTITY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) HOW DID THE GIRLS' VISIT TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC HELP DEVELOP AND SHAPE THEIR IDENTITIES?
- 2) HOW CAN WE REFLECT UPON OUR OWN IDENTITIES?
- 3) WHAT DOES IDENTITY MEAN TO YOU? HOW IS IT SHAPED BY YOUR PEERS, FAMILY, HISTORY, AND SOCIETY?
- 4) HOW DOES THE CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION ABOUT DNA/HISTORY HERSTORY IMPACT THE GIRLS IN THE FILM AND THEIR IDENTITY?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) SET CLASSROOM NORMS FOR ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE SOME GIRLS CURRICULUM
- 2) STUDENTS WILL REFLECT ON THEIR PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE AS IT RELATES TO THEIR IDENTITY THROUGH EXAMINATION OF FAMILY, CULTURE, VALUES, GOALS, AND ENVIRONMENT
- 3) FACILITATE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM THROUGH COMMENTS AND POST-IT VALIDATIONS
- 4) TO GUIDE A REFLECTION OF THE PROCESS ONCE SELF-EXPRESSIVE ART IS COMPLETE

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

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

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

II. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

VOCABULARY

Ancestral DNA

A genetics test that helps a person find their roots and family makeup.

Curiosity Comment

When doing the gallery walk portion of the activity, students may place a “curiosity comment” on a Post-it and place it on another student’s tree. A curiosity comment may look like, “This sounds interesting, I would like to hear more,” or “I did not know this about you, I am curious to know more.”

Identity

Who you are as a person and what characteristics you have that distinguish you from others.

Trauma

An emotional response to a severe episode such as an accident or natural disaster. Emotional and physical

symptoms may present themselves after the event. Longer term responses include irregular emotions, flashbacks, headaches and/or nausea. Trauma can also be inherited and passed down from parents and ancestors.²

Validation Comment

When doing the gallery walk portion of the activity, students may place a “validation comment” on a Post-it and place it on another student’s tree. A validation comment may look like, “This is great!” “You are amazing” “I am impressed” as well as, “This must be difficult” “Do you need support?” or “You are not alone.” Validation comments are meant to affirm other students’ experiences.

2 DeGruy, J. (2005). Post traumatic slave syndrome: America’s legacy of enduring injury and healing. Milwaukie, Oregon: Uptone Press.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The development of one's identity can happen over time. As adolescents, students will try on different identities in different contexts. The sphere of influence for adolescents goes beyond just peers, and while peer acceptance is an aspect of adolescence, families also play a role in the adolescent's life. In this first module, students will explore their own identity through art. As you set up the activity, it is important to identify the vulnerable situation in which your students may be placed. It is also helpful to provide the limits of confidentiality to your students, as they may be sharing traumatic experiences that could require additional support from counselors and/or administration. Please provide students with the opportunity to walk out of the classroom and visit the school counselor if triggered by any portion of this activity (consult with your school counselor beforehand). The activity is meant to be strength-based and self-reflective. As the facilitator, you are responsible for setting up norms that create a space that is conducive to students' learning, sharing, and expression that will be revisited throughout the *Some Girls* modules.

TIME

1 class period

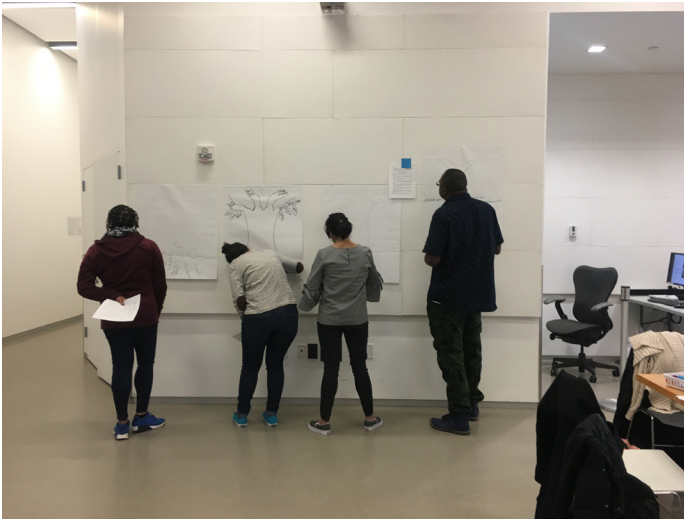
PREP

- Printed Tree of Life guide sheets (see Appendix A)
- Big Post-its (or large white paper for drawing)
- Multi-colored markers
- Timer/watch
- Post-its (regular size)
- Wall space and/or desks/tables for each
- individual student to post their individual identity tree

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY

1. The tree of life is a simple visual metaphor that represents one's identity through reflection of family and culture as well as other elements that make it up (i.e. past, present, and future). The Tree of Life is an activity to help reclaim your identity through reflection.
2. Set classroom norms to create a space that is conducive to students learning, sharing, and expression.
3. Classroom set up: Every student should have one Post-it easel pad (or paper of about the same size). The students are to select a space on the wall of the classroom and stick up their paper (if wall space is limited, you may have students use their desk/tables as alternatives). Students will then follow your instructions (Guide Sheet) by using colored markers. Below is a picture of what a finished set of "trees" will look like during a gallery walk.

SEE THIS ACTIVITY IN ACTION



ACTIVITY/GUIDE SHEET

Begin by asking students to draw a straight line about a third of the way up from the bottom of the sheet. This will be the ground.

THE ROOTS

Ask students to draw roots and write down where they “come from.” This can include (but is not limited to) culture, hometown, country, parents/guardians, or a club/organization that has shaped their identity.

THE GROUND

Ask students to write down things they choose to do on a weekly basis. These should be activities that are of pleasure and not forced.

THE TRUNK

Ask students to draw and write down their values and skills. You may ask the students to begin at the base of the trunk with their values and transition into skills towards the top.

THE BRANCHES

Ask students to draw and write down their hopes, dreams, and wishes for themselves. Members can also write “change:...” on things they’d like to see change. This can be long or short term. These can be personal, communal, or general for all of society. These should be spread throughout various branches.

THE LEAVES

Ask students to write down the names of significant individuals who have affected them in a positive way. This can include, but is not limited to, extended family, friends, pets, celebrities, heroes, authors, or characters, among others.

GALLERY WALK

Ask students to gather post-its and do a gallery walk for about 7 minutes and place “validation” or “curiosity” comments on others’ trees. Members may leave their name on the post it or remain anonymous.

REFLECTION

Ask members to return to their tree and process what they see for 3 minutes.

Adapted from Nathan B. Weller: *The Tree of Life: A Simple Exercise for Reclaiming Your Identity and Direction in Life Through Story*

<http://nathanbweller.com/tree-life-simple-exercise-reclaiming-identity-direction-life-story/>

CLOSING

After facilitating the Tree of Life activity with students, you should plan to debrief the activity through the discussion questions below. Students also have the option of journaling. For question 5, you can collect responses from students and reflect on them as you may wish to address them in future conversations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did you feel while drawing your tree of life?
2. How did it feel when you returned to your own art to find post-its of validation on it?
3. Is there anything you noticed from others' trees that stuck out to you?
4. Is there anything you found difficult about the activity?
5. Any questions or reactions to what we have or have not discussed yet?

JOURNAL/WRITING ASSIGNMENT

In the film we learned about different girls and their healing journey. Write a one-two page response to the following questions:

- a) How do you cope with challenges and/or strong emotions in your life?
- b) If you knew one of the girls in the film, what could you do to support them? Which resources could help?
- c) What else could the school do to meet your needs?

MODULE TWO

**HERSTORY
+ HISTORY**

MODULE 2 | ACTIVITY SET

RESEARCH YOUR HISTORY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) WHY ARE THERE FEW STUDENTS OF COLOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION?
- 2) WHAT IS THE VALUE BEHIND LEARNING OUR HER/HISTORY?
- 3) HOW IS THIS RELATED TO MASTER AND COUNTER-NARRATIVES?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL IDENTIFY THE VALIDITY AND IMPORTANCE OF THEIR RESEARCH GIVEN THE EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE HISTORY AND IDENTITY
- 2) STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT RESEARCH REGARDING THEIR FAMILY HER/HISTORY
- 3) STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS TO INFORM A FAMILY TREE
- 4) STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT RESEARCH ON A PART OF THEIR IDENTITY AND SET IT IN HER/HISTORY USING A TIMELINE

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- I. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1 AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1**
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- II. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2 AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2**
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- III. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12**
Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- IV. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3 AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3**
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- V. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9 AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9**
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

VOCABULARY

Contextualize

To analyze a word or event in terms of the words or concepts surrounding it

Counter-narrative

The telling of history from the perspective of marginalized groups, or those who have been excluded from history-making

Critical Thinking

The objective analysis of facts to form a judgement. The thinking requires people to think beyond the arguments and not accept them at face value.

Educational pipeline

A student's trajectory and pattern of progress from kindergarten through college

Master Narratives

The telling of history from the perspective of the dominant culture. Example: White, Eurocentric culture in the United States

Personal narrative

A powerful form of storytelling on one's own experiences. The story of self is multidimensional and relates to all facets of a person's identity.

PhD

Abbreviation for Doctor of Philosophy; It is the highest academic degree awarded by universities in most countries; PhDs are awarded for programs across numerous academic fields

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The lesson begins with students realizing the importance of their research given educational pipeline statistics. Conversation related to the educational pipeline can be taken in several directions. For the purpose of this activity, the pipeline helps students see the lack of students of color in the research field. These students' narratives are critical and their voices are just as valid as researchers at a university campus. This discussion will give students a rationale for their research. For students who do not feel comfortable with the family tree activity, there is a separate option that asks students to reflect on one piece of their identity and conduct research of the her/history behind it.

TIME

1 class period

PREP

- Projector or large image of educational pipeline
- White board or chart paper
- Image of Educational Pipeline (Appendix B)
- Printed family tree handouts (Appendix C)
- Interview questions for family members (Appendix D)
- Sources page (Appendix E)

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY

- Educational pipeline (Appendix B)
- Show students the image of the the educational pipeline by racial groups. Explain that the image starts with 100 kindergartners from each racial group and how they progress through the educational system.
- Ask: “What do you notice?” “Which group has the most high school graduates? Least graduates?” “How many students of color are at the PhD level?”
- Takeaway: There are not many doctoral students of color. As youth, you all can tell your own stories and conduct your own research, which is what you will do today.

ACTIVITY: (Students choose Option 1 OR Option 2)

OPTION 1

STEP ONE

Write the quote: “No history, no self. Know history, know self.”

STEP TWO

Ask: “What does this mean?” If we know where we come from, then we can begin to understand who we are and our purpose.

STEP THREE

Students will conduct research on their own family his/herstory (family tree) or an aspect of their identity. Students are the researchers and their findings are truth and just as valid as a person with a Ph.D. Explain the definition of a Ph.D.

STEP FOUR

Students fill out the family tree and their family’s country of origin (if they know it) (see Appendix C).

HOMEWORK

The research may require students to interview people in their family. A printable list of interview questions is provided in the Appendix (see Appendix D). The information from family will help students complete the handout. Students can include the names of biological and non-biological family members. They should not feel pressured to include one name in each box in the family tree.

ADDITIONAL

In addition to the interview, students will use several sources (see Source list in Appendix E) to contextualize the the family tree. For instance, if a grandparent immigrated from another country, it is important know what historical event or circumstance led to their migration. What was occurring in the world during the time of the student’s birth?

Students will write a one-page summary explaining their family her/history. origin (if they know it) (see Appendix C).

OPTION 2

STEP ONE

Students will identify one aspect of their identity and fill out a timeline describing the her/history behind it. For instance, a student may choose their queer identity and research the gay rights movement in the United States. Alternatively, students can choose education as a part of their identity and complete a timeline on the his/herstory of education in the United States. Students may or may not choose from the following identities:

- Immigration
- Education
- Race/Ethnicity
- Religion
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual (LGBTQIA)
- Music
- Athlete
- Artist

STEP TWO

Students will write a one-page summary explaining their identity her/history.

CLOSING

Ask students: What is the value behind learning about our own his/herstory? How is this related to the master and counter-narratives? If we don't know where we come from, then we don't know where we are going. Let's continue to ask our family members questions and thinking about our own his/herstory.

MODULE 2 | ACTIVITY SET

THE EFFECTS OF HISTORY ON IDENTITY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) HOW HAVE I BEEN TRADITIONALLY REPRESENTED IN MY EDUCATION?
- 2) HOW AM I REPRESENTED (OR MISREPRESENTED) IN SOCIETY AND/OR THE MEDIA?
- 3) WHAT IS A TRADITIONAL NARRATIVE? WHAT IS A COUNTER-NARRATIVE? A SILENT NARRATIVE?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL ANALYZE QUOTES FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS AND APPLY THEM TO THEIR OWN LIVES AND EXPERIENCES
- 2) STUDENTS WILL DEFINE NARRATIVE, COUNTER-NARRATIVE, SILENT NARRATIVE, AND ETHNIC STUDIES AND PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF EACH
- 3) STUDENTS WILL PRESENT ANALYSIS OF QUOTES IN A MINI PRESENTATION TO CLASSMATES
- 4) STUDENTS WILL INDIVIDUALLY EXPLORE THE NARRATIVES SURROUNDING THEIR IDENTITIES AND WRITE A RESPONSE PAPER SYNTHESIZING KEY TAKEAWAYS

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- I. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3**
Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
- II. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4**
Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- III. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.5**
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- IV. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4**
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

VOCABULARY

Counter-narrative

The telling of history from the perspective of marginalized groups, or those who have been excluded from history-making

Dominant narrative

The telling of history from the perspective of the dominant culture.

Example: White, Eurocentric culture in the United States

Ethnic studies

An interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity through a lens of marginalized peoples that helps one analyze the history and future of power, struggle, and progress in the United States.

Marginalize

To treat a person or group as insignificant.

Personal narrative

A powerful form of storytelling on one's own experiences. The story of self is multidimensional and relates to all facets of a person's identity.

Silent narrative

A history that has yet to be uncovered due to the exclusion of a marginalized group, or a history that has been hidden.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

In the film, the girls grapple with how they have learned history and what has been left out of their learning. Prior to this module, you should consult with the history teacher(s) on your grade level. You can ask: What are students currently learning about and reading? Who are the authors? Which perspectives are represented in students' current history education? This will allow you to engage more deeply in a discussion with students about their learning and gaps in both content and perspectives. Students will recognize in the film that the girls engage with the same questions around history and who is responsible for writing it. These activities are intended to position students in front of their own narratives and show them the power they have in sharing their voices and their stories. You can introduce students to this activity by inviting them to think about what history means to them and whether they feel included in it. This activity allows students explore the ways in which others think about history, and have students apply that thinking to their own lives.

TIME

1 class period
with homework

PREP

- Board or chart paper to go over definitions prior to beginning activity
- Print selected quotes (see quotes below) on slips of paper and fold in half. Put them in a jar for students to choose at random.
- One piece of chart paper for each group positioned in different parts of the room to capture their analyses of the quotes and present to the class
- Markers
- Notebooks or paper for students to write

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY

This jigsaw activity is a chance for students to work in groups and analyze rigorous quotes about narratives from historians, writers, and activists. Through the quotes students will begin to question who the writers of history are and why that is the case. This activity is meant to mirror the realizations that the girls experience in the film when they visit the Dominican Republic and grapple with their learned history of Christopher Columbus. See Appendix F for a printable classroom monitoring key.

ACTIVITY 1 | JIGSAW NARRATIVE

STEP ONE

Divide students into five groups, or a number of groups that works for your classroom. Have each group select a quote from the bag at random (see quotes below).

STEP TWO

Have each group interpret and analyze the quote. Guiding questions can include:

- a. What is the author saying? How does it apply to us and the world in which we live?
- b. How does this quote connect to one of the definitions discussed at the beginning of class?
- c. Students should capture their group discussion on a piece of chart paper. Once complete, go around the classroom and have each group present their findings.

STEP THREE

Have students return to their seats to debrief the activity before students watch the film. Ask the following:

- a. What are some takeaways we have about the quotes you interpreted or learned about from your classmates?
- b. Is it important to have different voices represented in our histories? Which voices should be represented?
- c. If your history is missing from the textbooks and discussions, what can you do to change that? What can others do?

QUOTES

"The tension between people is palpable, and the ideal of what it means to be and look American becomes a preoccupation to folks around the country, including me."

- Raquel Cepeda

Note: This quote relates to marginalization

"Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

- Chinua Achebe

Note: This quote relates to dominant narratives vs. counter-narratives

"History is a story about power, a story about those who won."

- Michel Trouillot

Note: This quote relates to dominant narratives vs. silent narratives

"[A] single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Note: This quote relates to dominant narratives vs. counter-narratives

"I believe our education system as a whole has not integrated the histories of all people into our education system, just the Eurocentric view of itself, and the White-centered view of African Americans, and even this is slim to nonexistent. What I find is that most people don't know the fact they don't know, because of the complete lack of information."

- Ronald Takaki

Note: This quote relates to the need for ethnic studies

"When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing."

- Adrienne Rich

Note: This quote relates to the need for ethnic studies

Note: There are a number of quotes and authors that will work for this activity. Based on your class makeup and size, you can use all of these or some of these. For some of these quotes, students may require additional prompting or scaffolding. Make sure to monitor the groups as they are working and push their thinking as they grapple with the analyses.

See Appendix G for a printable of these quotes.

ASSIGNMENT: WHAT IS YOUR SILENT NARRATIVE?

- 1) In *SOME GIRLS*, the girls discuss what they have learned about Christopher Columbus and the finding of the Americas as they journey to the Dominican Republic. Many people are often surprised that what they learn in school is different from what actually happened, or that there are conflicting accounts of what happened. The same is true of all histories.
- 2) Write a 1-2 page response answering the following question:
 - a. Do you have a silent narrative to tell? Why or why not?
 - b. If you do, is there a current narrative that exists that is untrue? If you do not, investigate the reasons why.
 - c. In your response you can reference the quotes you discussed in class, scenes from the film, and new vocabulary words. Be sure to incorporate your own experiences as evidence.

MODULE THREE

HEALING

MODULE 3 | ACTIVITY SET
WHO ARE YOU? WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE? WHO DO YOU PRETEND TO BE?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) WHO ARE YOU?
- 2) WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE?
- 3) WHO DO YOU PRETEND TO BE? WHY DO YOU PRETEND?
- 4) WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE? WHY DO YOU GET UP EVERY MORNING?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL DEFINE THE PHRASE “PUT UP A FRONT” AND “PUBLIC MASK”
- 2) STUDENTS WILL REFLECT ON HOW WE ALL WEAR MASKS TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD
- 3) STUDENTS WILL REFLECT HOW OUR ACTIONS/CHOICES ALIGN TO OUR TRUE SELVES

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

- I. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1 AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1**
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.
- II. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.5 AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5**
Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- III. **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D AND CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D**
Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

VOCABULARY

Connected vs. Disconnected

Feeling connected and/or disconnected can shape the identity of youth. Feeling disconnected from themselves and their communities can result from not having an outlet for expression versus another students with resources at their disposal.

Depression

A common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act; Causes feelings of intense sadness and/or a loss of interest in activities; Is treatable

“Descend from lions”

The director, Raquel Cepeda, uses this phrase to describe the strength of one’s ancestors and their critical role in the formation of the Americas.

Empowering

Encouraging someone to be strong and confident, especially in controlling their life and claiming their rights.

Healing

The process of making or becoming sound or healthy again

Purpose

The reason for which someone exists. Usually motivated by personal passions, goals and interests.

Self-care

Any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, or physical health

Self-harm

An unhealthy way to cope with emotional pain or frustration by inflicting psychological or physical injury upon oneself

NOTE TO TEACHERS

This activity requires the teacher to act as a facilitator. A facilitator’s role is to guide the conversation using discussion questions. Prior to the activity it is important to remind students of the classroom agreements. The facilitator may have to revisit one or more agreements during or after the activity to ensure everyone abides by them. Additionally, students will engage deeply with the activity if they see the buy-in from the facilitator and other adults in the room. Furthermore, it is powerful if the facilitator shares their own answers to the questions during the group discussion. It is important for youth to see an adult practicing self-reflection and vulnerability.

TIME

One class period

PREP

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Projector
- Write three questions “Who are you? Who do you want to be? Who do you pretend to be? Why do you pretend?” on the board and cover the questions (they will be revealed later)

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY

1. Facilitator will ask: “Who knows what it means to “put up a front or a wall?” or a “public mask?”
2. Choose a student to define it. The phrase can mean pretending to be someone you are not in front of different people.
3. Follow-up the question with: “With a show of hands/thumbs, who here has put up a front at one point in their life?”
4. Facilitator can transition to the activity by saying: “When we are trying to figure out who we are and where we come from, it can be easy or even a survival tool to put up a front. Today’s activity is meant for us to reflect on all that we’ve learned through this documentary and how we see ourselves.”

ACTIVITY

STEP ONE

Students will work in partners for the entirety of the activity. Assign or have students choose a partner.

Note: Given your classroom culture, assigning partners may be helpful. Think strategically about how you can pair students and set them up for successful conversations.

STEP TWO

Have students stand up and join their partners. Explain that you will pose 3 questions, one at a time, and they will answer them. Each student will have a minute to talk while the partner listens. The activity is only effective if students are willing to reflect and trust their partner with their truth. It is also okay if there is silence or emotions that come up. Reassure students to notice the silence and the feelings.

STEP THREE

Reveal the first question “Who are you?” on the board. Remind students that they each have one minute to share and that you will tell them when to switch.

STEP FOUR

Reveal the second question “Who do you want to be?” on the board. Remind students that they each have one minute to share, then they will switch.

STEP FIVE

Reveal the third and last question “Who do you pretend to be? Why do you pretend?” on the board. Remind students that they each have one minute to share, then they will switch.

STEP SIX

Students will return to their seats and teacher will conduct a large group discussion. Begin by asking what students shared for the first, second, and third question. This is a great opportunity for the teacher to share their answers.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Do your actions right now align with who you want to be? Why or why not?
2. Which questions did you struggle with the most?
3. How did it feel to share your answers with your partner?

CLOSING

You will find that we will ask these same questions throughout our lives. We will not have clear answers all the time, and our answers may change, but know that we are all a work in progress, growing to become a better version of ourselves. Put in the work to take care of yourself and explore what gives your purpose, consider what wakes you up each morning.

1. Write or project the poem by nayyirah waheed (below) on the board.
2. Conclude by saying that we are coming home to ourselves and finding who we are in this life journey. This process heals us.

"Be easy.
take your time.
you are coming
home.
to yourself.
-the becoming | wing"

nayyirah waheed

Activity adapted from **Flourish Agenda**
Shawn and Nedra Ginwright
Oakland, CA

ASSIGNMENT: WHAT IS YOUR SILENT NARRATIVE?

Students can choose a project from the menu below. The objective is to answer the three questions we visit in class: Who are you? Who do you want to be? Who do you pretend to be? Why do you pretend?

Hidden Self Poem

We all project certain identities to the world but only you know who you truly are. In the first two stanzas of your poem, talk about the you others see. In the last two stanzas of your poem, talk about the parts that you keep hidden behind your public mask.

Song

Compose a song or perform a song that answers the 3 questions: Who are you? Who do you want to be? Who do you pretend to be?

Draw

Draw, create a cartoon or paint a piece addressing the questions of your true self, your projected self, and who you aspire to be.

Collage

Create a collage consisting of drawings, quotes, images and anything related to the questions.

Record

Record a podcast style episode discussing the questions with your audience and/or with a co-host.

Free Style

You have the choice to create your project. Ensure that your idea for a project answers what did you learn from the film and how has it impacted you? Make sure it is able to be presented in class.

MODULE 3 | ACTIVITY SET PERCEPTION AND REFLECTION

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) HOW IS MEANING ASSIGNED TO A WORD? HOW DOES THAT FACTOR INTO MY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING?
- 2) IN WHAT WAYS HAVE MY IDENTITIES BEEN AFFIRMED IN SCHOOL, THE MEDIA, AND IN SOCIETY? IN WHAT WAYS HAVE MY IDENTITIES BEEN IGNORED OR MISREPRESENTED?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL RECALL CONNOTATIONS OF SPECIFIC WORDS AND DISCUSS THE EFFECT THEY HAVE ON PEOPLE
- 2) STUDENTS WILL DESCRIBE WHAT MENTAL HEALTH MEANS AND WHY IT MATTERS
- 3) STUDENTS WILL DETERMINE WHAT SELF CARE MEANS TO THEM

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

I. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.5

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

II. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.6

Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

VOCABULARY

Binary

Something made of two things or parts; In the context of identity, binary is a term used to inappropriately categorize people. For example the gender binary assumes people are either men or women. A racial binary in the U.S. assumes people are either Black or White.

Mental health

Refers to one's psychological and emotional well-being.

Microaggression

Verbal or nonverbal insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate negative messages to marginalized people; Usually has to do with offensive stereotypes targeted to a person's racial, ethnic, or other group belonging.

PTSD

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; A mental health disorder that one develops after experiencing a scary, shocking, or life-threatening event. People with PTSD often have recurring flashbacks to the event, are triggered by reminders of it, feel numb and/or angry, and have trouble sleeping and concentrating.

Self care

Any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health.

Trauma

An emotional response to a severe episode such as an accident or natural disaster. Emotional and physical symptoms may present themselves after the event. Longer term responses include irregular emotions, flashbacks, headaches and/or nausea. Trauma can also be inherited and passed down from parents and ancestors.²

² DeGruy, J. (2005). *Post traumatic slave syndrome: America's legacy of enduring injury and healing*. Milwaukie, Oregon: Uptone Press.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

The themes explored in the film, such as suicide, body image, and sexual abuse, can be triggering for students. Before showing the film, think about how your school equips its staff to make sure kids' social and emotional needs are being met. Talk with your school counselor and discuss the resources available to you and your students. Perhaps let your school counselor know that you will be showing this film in case students need to debrief their feelings during or after watching. Going over general vocabulary with students prior to watching is useful as well. What do your students already know? Are there gaps you could help fill? Make sure you are establishing a safe space in which students feel open to discussing difficult topics, and be prepared to sit in discomfort with them, dissect the feelings in the room, and push forward.

TIME

One class period
with homework

PREP

- Board or chart paper to go over definitions prior to beginning activity
- 7 pieces of chart paper and markers placed at different points in the room for students to capture their reactions.
- Label each piece of chart paper with the following words: Light, Dark, Good Hair, Bad Hair; Illegal; Legal; Immigrant leave last sheet blank.
- Printable Monitoring Key (Appendix F)
- Printable Quotations (Appendix G)

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY

The purpose of this activity is to investigate the meaning assigned to words and how that meaning comes to be. Equally important is how we ourselves choose to use and receive language. In this activity, students will have the opportunity to respond to opposing words placed at different points around the room. The opposing words mirror the microaggressions that the girls experience in the film (i.e. good hair vs. bad hair). If students are not familiar with the term microaggression, you can start class with a discussion about the word and give examples showing how language connects to identity and, ultimately, impacts one's emotional well-being.

ACTIVITY: OPPOSING WORDS GALLERY WALK

STEP ONE

Tell students that as a class you will be investigating the meaning, characteristics, and nature of certain words. You will write one word at the top of each piece of chart paper, leaving one blank.

STEP TWO

Students will have two minutes to reflect on their own before moving around the room silently and writing the words and images that come to mind when they hear a given word. Students can also pose questions under the words, and underline or put a checkmark next to something a classmate has written. You can determine if there are additional symbols that would be useful here. Students will have seven-ten minutes to complete this activity. You can call students back to their seats once you see they are done, or you can have them stand next to whichever word they are closest to.

STEP THREE

Have students debrief the process. Ask students:

- a. How did you feel as you saw these words? What about seeing what others wrote?
- b. Why do certain labels or words come to mind as we see words like these? How do words get their meaning?
- c. Use the trends you see in student responses to push the discussion. Also ask students if they noticed trends. Did you/they notice certain responses under the words good hair vs. bad hair? Name that to the class and have them challenge or affirm each other with their reasoning.
- d. We have reserved one last sheet of paper for our key takeaways. Take one minute to reflect on the following question: ***How can we live outside of these boxes and encourage others to do the same?*** Call on individual students to share out responses, and capture them on paper or the board.

Note: See Appendix F for a printable monitoring key

ASSIGNMENT: YOUR REFLECTIONS ON SAFETY

In the film, the girls explore different ways to heal from their wounds. It is important to stay safe physically and mentally, and a big piece of that safety is caring for yourself. People do this in a variety of ways, some of which include meeting with a counselor, doing physical activity, or connecting with their spirituality. Write a one-two page response to the following questions:

1. How do you take care of yourself and stay connected to your body and mind?
2. What is one thing that makes you feel cared for at school? What is one thing that makes you feel less cared for? Are your needs being met at school and do you know what resources are available to you?

Teacher Tip:

Collect student responses and identify trends. Use them to gauge how student needs are being met at school. Can you share them with the school counselor or principal? Do students know what resources are available to them? If not, collaborate with your school counselor on creating a brochure for student mental health. Ask your students if any of them would be interested in penning a letter to the school administration based on their key takeaways and providing recommendations on how the school can best serve them. Let students know their voice matters.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PRINTABLE TREE OF LIFE ACTIVITY GUIDE

MODULE 1: IDENTITY | ACTIVITY: ROOTS OF IDENTITY

ROOTS OF IDENTITY – ACTIVITY GUIDE

THE ROOTS

Ask students to draw roots and write down where they “come from.” This can include (but is not limited to) culture, hometown, country, parents/guardians, or a club/organization that has shaped their identity.

THE GROUND

Ask students to write down things they choose to do on a weekly basis. These should be activities that are of pleasure and not forced.

THE TRUNK

Ask students to draw and write down their values and skills. You may ask the students to begin at the base of the trunk with their values and transition into skills towards the top.

THE BRANCHES

Ask students to draw and write down their hopes, dreams, and wishes for themselves. Members can also write “change:...” on things they’d like to see change. This can be long or short term. These can be personal, communal, or general for all of society. These should be spread throughout various branches.

THE LEAVES

Ask students to write down the names of significant individuals who have affected them in a positive way. This can include, but is not limited to, extended family, friends, pets, celebrities, heroes, authors, or characters, among others.

GALLERY WALK

Ask students to gather post-its and do a gallery walk for about 7 minutes and place “validation” or “curiosity” comments on others’ trees. Members may leave their name on the post it or remain anonymous.

REFLECTION

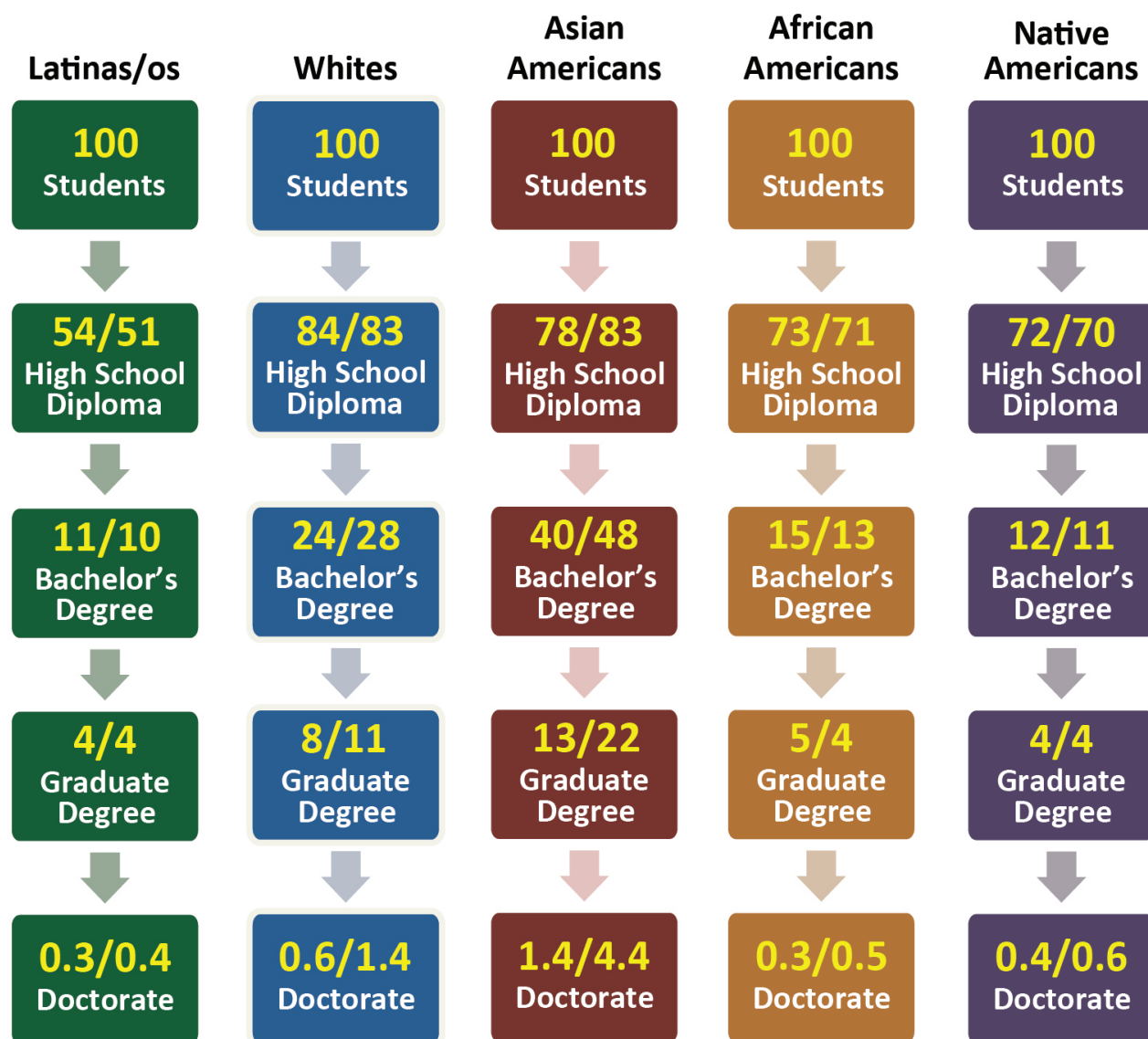
Ask members to return to their tree and process what they see for 3 minutes.

Adapted from Nathan B. Weller: *The Tree of Life: A Simple Exercise for Reclaiming Your Identity and Direction in Life Through Story*

<http://nathanbweller.com/tree-life-simple-exercise-reclaiming-identity-direction-life-story/>

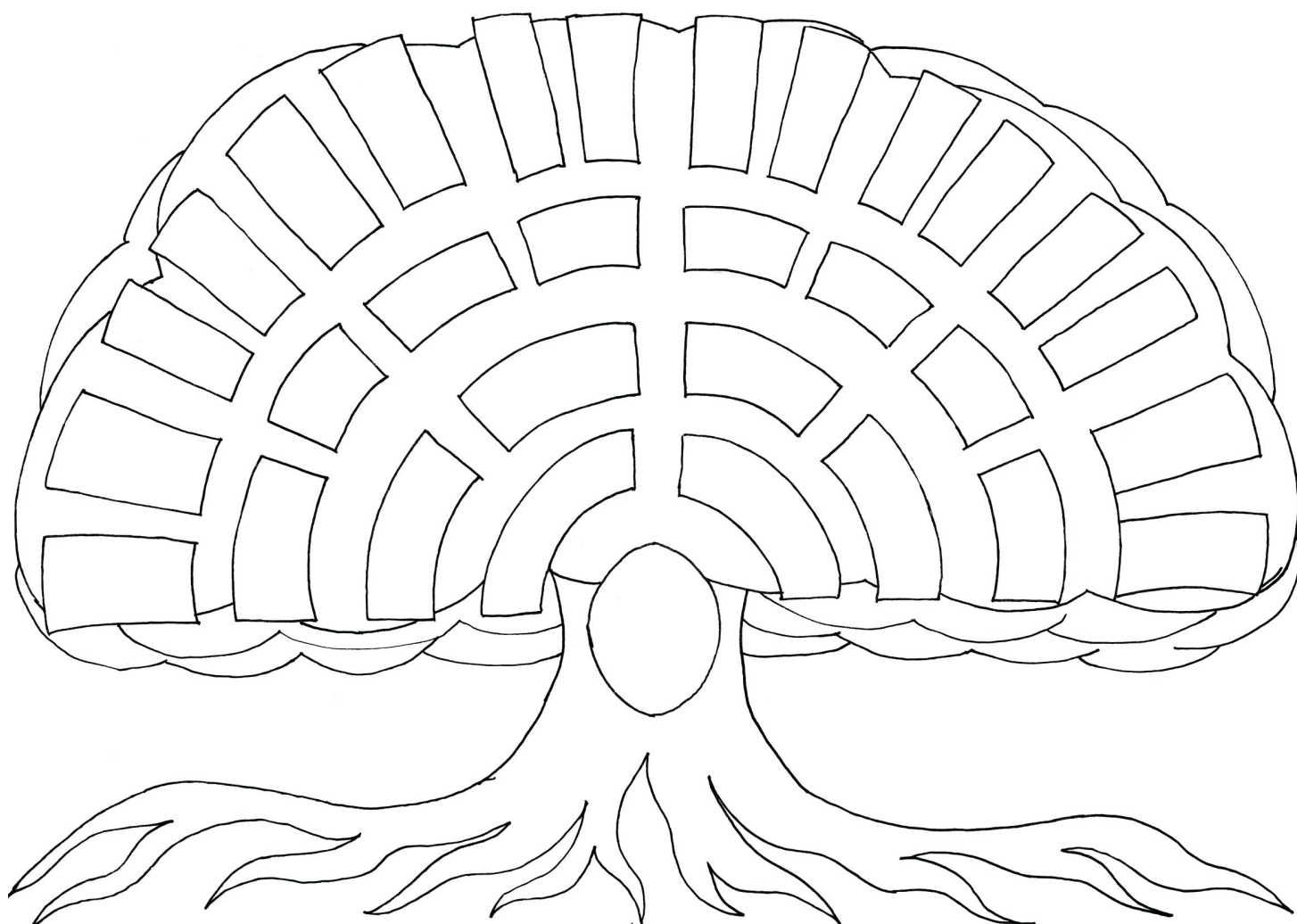
APPENDIX B: PRINTABLE EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE

MODULE 2: HER/HISTORY | ACTIVITY: EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE



Source: Huber, L., Huidor, O., Malagón, M.C., Sánchez, G., Solórzano, D.G. (2006), Falling through the Cracks: Critical Transitions in the Latina/o Educational Pipeline (Report No. 7). Retrieved from <http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/files/RR19.pdf>

My Family Tree



© www.family-tree-template.org

APPENDIX D: PRINTABLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

MODULE 2: HER/HISTORY | ACTIVITY: EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE

1. What is your full name? Why did your parents select this name for you? Did you have a nickname?
2. When and where were you born?
3. How did your family come to live there?
4. Were there other family members in the area? Who?
5. What was the house (apartment, farm, etc.) like? How many rooms? Bathrooms? Did it have electricity? Indoor plumbing? Telephones?
6. What is your earliest childhood memory?
7. Describe the personalities of your family members.
8. What kind of games did you play growing up?
9. What was your favorite thing to do for fun (movies, beach, etc.)?
10. Did you have family chores? What were they? Which was your least favorite?
11. Did you receive an allowance? How much? Did you save your money or spend it?
12. What was school like for you as a child? What were your best and worst subjects?
13. Where did you attend grade school? High school? College?
14. What school activities and sports did you participate in?
15. Do you remember any fads from your youth? Popular hairstyles? Clothes?
16. What were your favorite songs and music?
17. Did you have any pets? If so, what kind and what were their names?
18. What was your religion growing up? What church, if any, did you attend?
19. Who were your friends when you were growing up?
20. What world events had the most impact on you while you were growing up? Did any of them personally affect your family?
21. How were holidays (birthdays, Christmas, etc.) celebrated in your family? Did your family have special traditions?
22. How is the world today different from what it was like when you were a child?
23. Who was the oldest relative you remember as a child? What do you remember about them?
24. What do you know about your family surname?
25. Is there a naming tradition in your family, such as always giving the firstborn son the name of his paternal grandfather?

26. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors?
27. Have any recipes been passed down to you from family members?
28. Are there any physical characteristics that run in your family?
29. Are there any special heirlooms, photos, bibles or other memorabilia that have been passed down in your family?
30. What was the full name of your spouse? Siblings? Parents?
31. When and how did you meet your spouse?
32. Where and when did you get married?
33. What memory stands out the most from your wedding day?
34. How would you describe your spouse? What do (did) you admire most about them?
35. What do you believe is the key to a successful marriage?
36. How did you find out you were going to be a parent for the first time?
37. Why did you choose your children's names?
38. What was your proudest moment as a parent?
39. What did your family enjoy doing together?
40. What was your profession and how did you choose it?
41. If you could have had any other profession what would it have been? Why wasn't it your first choice?
42. Of all the things you learned from your parents, which do you feel was the most valuable?
43. What accomplishments were you the most proud of?
44. What is the one thing you most want people to remember about you?

While these questions make great conversation starters, the best way to uncover the good stuff is through more of a storytelling session than a Q&A. Retrieved from:
<https://www.thoughtco.com/fifty-questions-for-family-history-interviews-1420705>

APPENDIX E: PRINTABLE LIST OF SOURCES

MODULE 2: HER/HISTORY | ACTIVITY: EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE

United States Census Data: <https://www.census.gov/>

Library of Congress: <https://loc.gov/>

CNN: <http://www.cnn.com/>

National Public Radio: <https://www.npr.org/>

Sources to retrace your his/herstory: <https://www.findmypast.com/content/20-family-history-resources>

Dominican-born people residing in the U.S. can find population estimates on the chart “Population Change in the Dominican Republic” page 249, in *A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York* (Princeton, 2008) by Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof

Arab and Persian-descended Americans

“Not Quite White: Race Classification and the Arab-American Experience” chapter in *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*

“Arab- and Persian-American Campaign: ‘Check It Right’ on Census” (2010) by John Blake. Interview found online at: <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125317502>

**APPENDIX F: PRINTABLE MONITORING DOCUMENT
FOR GROUP ANALYSIS OF QUOTES**
MODULE 2: HER/HISTORY | ACTIVITY: NARRATIVE JIGSAW

GROUP RESPONSES TO PROMPTING

1. What is the author saying?

Group 1	
Group 2	
Group 3	
Group 4	
Group 5	

2. How does this quote apply to us and the world in which we live?

Group 1	
Group 2	
Group 3	
Group 4	
Group 5	

3. How does this quote connect to one of the definitions discussed at the beginning of class?

Group 1	
Group 2	
Group 3	
Group 4	
Group 5	

Debrief Questions

1. What are some takeaways we have about the quotes you interpreted or learned about from your classmates?
2. Is it important to have different voices represented in our histories? Which voices should be represented?
3. If your history is missing from the textbooks and discussions, what can you do to change that? What can others do?

APPENDIX G: PRINTABLE QUOTES

MODULE 2: HER/HISTORY | ACTIVITY: NARRATIVE JIGSAW

"The tension between people is palpable, and the ideal of what it means to be and look American becomes a preoccupation to folks around the country, including me."

- Raquel Cepeda

"Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

- Chinua Achebe

"History is a story about power, a story about those who won."

- Michel Trouillot

"[A] single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."

- Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

"I believe our education system as a whole has not integrated the histories of all people into our education system, just the Eurocentric view of itself, and the White-centered view of African Americans, and even this is slim to nonexistent. What I find is that most people don't know the fact they don't know, because of the complete lack of information."

- Ronald Takaki

"When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing."

- Adrienne Rich