

SOME GIRLS

A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY RAQUEL CEPEDA AND HENRY CHALFANT



6-8TH
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

6TH - 8TH CURRICULUM



MODULE ONE

IDENTITY

MODULE 1 | ACTIVITY SET
BUILDING COMMUNITY AND SAFETY IN THE CLASSROOM
AND EXPLORING IDENTITY, PEER PRESSURE AND
STEREOTYPES

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) WHO AM I? (DISTINCTION BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT VS. WHAT OTHERS SEE)
- 2) WHO DO OTHERS THINK I AM?
- 3) WHAT EXPERIENCES CREATE MY IDENTITY?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL ARTICULATE WHAT INFORMS THEIR IDENTITY
- 2) STUDENTS WILL CONCEPTUALIZE KEY VOCABULARY WORDS

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

I. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

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.

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.

Code switching

When a speaker changes their language, dialect, or registers based on the environment and people around them. Switching between languages to express one's self.

Cultural identity

A sense of belonging to a group; can be based on nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, geography or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. This is defined by the individual, and how they relate to their culture.

Identity

Who or what a person is. Identity is made up of a person's beliefs, values, and personality. It is influenced by culture, family, and, peers.

Mental health

A way to describe social and emotional well-being. Being mentally healthy means feeling positive, being a part of one's community, and taking care of your body.

Peer pressure

Direct influence from members of one's peers on a person's behaviors, attitudes, and values.

Stereotypes

A fixed, offensive generalization used to describe a person or group of people.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Consider consulting with the school counselor before introducing this module to your students. Have they discussed the topics of identity, peer pressure, and stereotypes before? Are there students who have been bullied in your classroom? Think about how you will respond to students who may need support when talking about these themes, and find out if your school counselor is available to debrief with students who may need more time to process with an adult.

Because this module focuses on bias and self identity, it is essential to the success of the program that you take time to reflect and think about what biases and stereotypes you carry and hold. All people have biases as part of our tools for survival. Some of these biases are not accurate and we must do the work for ourselves to bring truth to light in ourselves before we can ask this of students. Write a short essay or list of stereotypes you believe and work to combat. Write a paragraph about your personal identity, what people, places, and experiences have formed your identity? Write a short paragraph about your racial identity development. When were you first made aware of your race? What is your relationship with talking about race now? These are important questions to answer for yourself before engaging in conversation with youth, as it is likely to come up in their explorations and conversations about identity.

To prepare for the dialogue, revisit your class' community rules or agreements. Are there classroom agreements that you need to go over with students beforehand? If you find you need additional guidance, we suggest you consult with the resources below.

RESOURCES ABOUT CLASSROOM AGREEMENTS

- 1) <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/groundrules.html>
- 2) <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/education-outreach/ground-rules-for-discussion.pdf>

EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM AGREEMENTS

- 1) Move up, move back. People who do not talk as much are encouraged to share their thoughts; people who talk often are asked to be mindful and make space for others.
- 2) What is said in this room stays in this room, what is learned in this room, leaves the room (Confidentiality rule).
- 3) Use “I” statements or speak from your own experience.
- 4) One Diva, One Mic (One person speaks at a time).

TIME

2 or 3 class periods

PREP

- Paper for each student
- Writing utensils
- Collage materials: paper, magazines, scissors, glue or tape, markers or paint or colored pencils (Activity 4)

ACTIVITY 1: WHO AM I - IDENTITY QUADRANTS

The purpose of this activity is for students to explore how pieces of their identity are informed and shaped by themselves and the people around them. How students see themselves is the most important. This activity can be done before or after the film.

STEP 1

Students fold a piece of paper in half, then fold it again to get four boxes or quadrants.

STEP 2

Students label each quadrant: Society, Peers, Family, and, Self. In each quadrant, students create a list about what people in each group perceive them to be. This can be timed per box, or as a free write.

STEP 3

Once students have written in each box, divide students into subgroups to have small group discussions. How you divide the groups is up to you, but we recommend breaking into four groups: Society Group, Peer Group, Family Group, and Self Group. If you have strong classroom management and capability to facilitate deeper discussion, you can consider asking students to divide themselves into groups with peers who share similar identity markers. You can facilitate this process by asking students to go around the room to talk with peers about what they wrote. This could be in affinity groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, birth order, etc.

STEP 4

Each group will respond to the following questions to guide their discussion.

- a. Each person share 1 think that they wrote in multiple quadrant, and one thing that they wrote in only 1 quadrant.
- b. Do you share similarities with other members of your group?
- c. What differences do you notice?

STEP 5

Organize students into groups based not based on affinity, so they are randomly grouped. Students discuss the same questions in the new groups.

STEP 6

As a larger group, discuss how each experience was the same or different. Did students notice any difference in the quality of their discussions? Did students notice their behavior change? Introduce the term code switching: Define, and ask students if they noticed themselves code switching between groups.

STEP 7

Have students share out their key learnings to the whole class or reflect in a journal or on a piece of paper.

ACTIVITY 2: FILM DEBRIEF - PEER PRESSURE AND STEREOTYPES

In *SOME GIRLS*, the teens struggle through feelings of peer pressure and the damaging nature of stereotypes people say about them. In this activity students will articulate where they saw these themes in the film.

After watching the first portion of the film, as a class discuss moments where the girls shared aspects of who they are. Ask students:

- a. What words did the girls use to describe themselves? (I am _____, etc.)
- b. How did the girls learn these things about themselves?
- c. What were words that the girls used to describe who other people thought they were? Was it true or not? (Ex. The discussion around beauty standards, “good” hair vs. “bad” hair, etc.) Use the second part of the question of true or not true to push the discussion.
- d. Who assigns labels and who does not? Why?
- e. How did these true and false statements and stereotypes influence the girl’s mental health?

ACTIVITY 3: GROUP DIALOGUE - PEER PRESSURE AND STEREOTYPES

In the film the girls struggle through feelings of peer pressure and the damaging nature of stereotypes people say about them. In this activity students will articulate how these themes show up in their lives and communities. The purpose of this activity is to introduce and define terms as a group using examples from students' lives as well as from the film. This is best carried out in a space where all students can see each other, perhaps in a circle. Before having a dialogue all participants must commit to follow a set of rules for dialogue. For example: one person, one mic (one person talks at a time). Please refer to the links at the beginning of this module for more additional guidance on setting classroom agreements.

QUESTIONS TO INITIATE DIALOGUE

As a class discuss the following:

a) Peer Pressure

- i) What is peer pressure? Ask for examples.
- ii) Do you think any of the girls in the film were affected by peer pressure?
- iii) What do you do when your friends ask or tell you to do something you do not want to do? What could you do when you feel peer pressure?

b) Stereotypes

- i) What is a stereotype? Ask for many examples. Allow students to discuss what stereotypes are, as there may be disagreements about the definition.
- ii) What stereotypes did the girls face (and is there evidence of this in the movie?)
- iii) Where do stereotypes come from? (media, government, etc.)
- iv) Thinking back to what you wrote about in regards to how other people see you, are any of these things stereotypes?

Note: If there is a high level of trust in the group, you may be able to deepen the conversation:

1. Do you see stereotypes of people like you in the media? (based on gender, race, ethnicity, ability, class, sexuality, hair color, etc.)
2. Have you been stereotyped before?
3. What do you do and how do you feel when people stereotype you to be something you are not?
4. Are there any stereotypes you feel or think about the girls in the film? Why do you think this is the case? Where do you think these thoughts come from? (Ex. I thought Maria Celeste didn't have any good ideas because she was so quiet)
5. How can we broaden our view to challenge these stereotypes? (Ex. Maybe Maria Celeste was quiet because she felt nervous about speaking in a large group, or in front of a camera.)

ACTIVITY 4: IDENTITY MAP OR COLLAGE

In the film the girls unearthed pieces of their identity that they were disconnected from. The purpose of this activity is to provide students with an opportunity to think about their identity by creating a map or collage displaying key pieces or points in life they believe are a part of their identity.

STEP 1

Introduce the lesson and activity by sharing with students that they will have an opportunity to explore their identity throughout the film and track down their understandings of themselves through an identity map. Although they will begin the map today, they may discover moments throughout this unit where they will want to add more information.

STEP 2

Share various examples of what identity maps can look like, allow the students to gain insight and inspiration from examples. Identity maps often include:

- a. Major life moments, such as a graduation or other milestone.
- b. Information about your community, where you live, where you spend time, and what these spaces mean to you.
- c. Times when you learned something powerful about yourself.
- d. Places and people that influence you (Ex. what school you go to, what neighborhood you live in, people who inspire you).
- e. Parts of your cultural identity that you hold close.
- f. Hobbies, goals, curiosities and interests.

This can be a digital or analog collage, a drawing, a poem or other art form.

STEP 3

If possible, teachers share an example of what their own identity map may look like. (Example below)

STEP 4

Allow the students to take artistic liberties when creating the map. The map itself should be unique to them and their experience.

EXAMPLE OF IDENTITY MAP:

I make pottery!

I am playful!

Here is a picture a student drew of me. I enjoy teaching and dancing!

I like to grow food and flowers in my garden.

Esperanza Spalding inspires me to keep playing music.

I like to listen to music and sing. I LOVE Solange's album, A Seat At The Table because it reminds me to be true to myself.

MODULE TWO

**HERSTORY
+ HISTORY**

MODULE 2 | ACTIVITY SET

THE EFFECTS OF HISTORY ON IDENTITY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) HOW DOES THE HISTORY WE KNOW AFFECT OUR IDENTITY?
- 2) ARE THERE BENEFITS OF ANALYZING THE HISTORY WE ARE TAUGHT?
- 3) WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN AMERICAN?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HISTORY AND IDENTITY
- 2) STUDENTS WILL ANALYZE HOW AND WHY HISTORY IS TAUGHT
- 3) STUDENTS WILL UTILIZE DISCUSSION SKILLS TO EXAMINE AND DISCUSS HISTORY AND ITS CONNECTION TO IDENTITY

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

I. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

II. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

III. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

VOCABULARY

American

To be from the Americas. This region includes all countries in North and South America, as well as Central America and the Caribbean.

Analyze

To examine something in detail in order to explain or interpret its meaning.

Counter-story

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

Herstory

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

History

The study of events from the past, based exclusively on written documents.

Identity

Who or what a person is. Identity is made up of a person's beliefs, values, and personality; can be influenced by culture, family, and, peers.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

As students watch the film and learn about the impact of identity on their lives, they will also begin to discover the ways in which history and knowledge of history can affect their self perception and identity. This module allows students to explore the ways in which history can affect their identity and identity formation through critical thinking, analysis and discussion of important concepts related to history and knowledge of history. As teacher and facilitator, your role is to allow students to discuss guiding questions such as, “How does the history we know affect our identity?”; “Are there benefits of analyzing the history that we are taught?”; and, “What does it mean to be an American?” Know that there are no right answers to these questions. Rather, invite your students to explore concepts of the film in relation to their own worldview as it relates to history and allow them to grapple with the tough subjects. In this way, you will facilitate and guide students to explore their own identity and history. As facilitator, it is helpful for you to consider these essential questions in terms of your own identity and positionality. Prior to engaging students in the activity, consider your own understandings of your history as it relates to your identity. This will better prepare you for understanding the emotions your students may feel when discussing these concepts.

TIME

2 class periods

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITIES

The following activities will allow students to explore concepts of history in relation to identity. Much of the focus of the activities ask students to reflect and reframe their thinking in regard to history and identity. Allow students time to grapple with these concepts using think time, individual reflection and class discussion.

ACTIVITY 1: KWL ABOUT COLUMBUS (SEE APPENDIX A)

STEP 1

Prior to watching the animated scene where depicting what history may sound like from the perspective of Anacaona, have the students reflect on what they know about Columbus utilizing the KWL (Know, Want to know, and Learn) chart attached. As a homework piece, ask students to take the chart home and ask their family members what they know about Columbus. Upon returning to the classroom, ask the students to share what they learned from family members. Discuss similarities and differences to what it shared.

STEP 2

Next, have students reflect on their knowledge and what was shared. Have students write down three things they hope to learn about Columbus while watching the film. Place this in the “W: Want to Learn” column. Have students turn and talk to a partner and share the three things they want to learn.

STEP 3

Watch the scene once through. Ask the students to listen and watch without writing. Afterwards, allow students to write down at least 3 things they learned while watching the film.

STEP 4

Turn and talk with a partner: Have the students turn to their partner and share the three things they learned. Afterwards, have the students reflect on these questions.

- a. Did I learn the information I wanted to learn?
- b. What would I still like to know?
- c. Was there any information that was different from what I thought I knew or family members shared with me? Why could this be the case?

STEP 5

Final discussion: Once turn and talks have been completed, complete the activity with a short discussion. Have students share what they have learned and any discrepancies they have discovered in their learning. Guide the discussion with the following questions:

- a. Why are there differences in the stories I thought I knew and in the story shared in the film?
- b. Why is it important to know these counter stories?
- c. How does knowing or not knowing these stories affect our identity?

ACTIVITY 2: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN AMERICAN?

INTRO

Write or post the word “American” on the board or in a central space. Explain to the students that you will be discussing the question, “what does it mean to be an American?” Give the students a few minutes to write their answers down on a post-it notes without writing their name. Afterwards, collect the post it notes.

DISCUSS

Explain to the students that you will be passing out different Post-its to each student. In small groups of 4, allow the students to discuss what it on the Post-it note by using “I agree with...” or “I disagree with...” what is written on the note and add their reasoning why. Allow the students 10-15 minutes to discuss and share their reasoning.

WRITE

Ask the students to reflect on their conversation and what they originally wrote. Using a different color post it note, have the students write down what it means to be an American.

DISCUSS

Have students switch to a new group of four and discuss what they wrote. Now, students will use “I agree....” or “I disagree..” statements to communicate with each other their ideas of what it means to be an American.

SHARE

Come together as a class and have students share the discussions that occurred in their groups. Ask them to reflect on things they agreed or disagreed with. You can use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- a. What were concepts you heard repeated?
- b. Was there something you heard that you did not agree with at all?
- c. Did you notice anything interesting regarding people’s ideas of what it means to be an American?
- d. Do you think any of these ideas challenge or align with what we know from media about “what it means to be an American?”
- e. What are ways that being an American is discussed in the film?
- f. Did those points align to points you shared or heard others share?
- g. How do you think history affects our perceptions of what it means to be an American?

ACTIVITY 3: IDENTITY MAP - HOW DOES THE HISTORY WE KNOW AFFECT OUR IDENTITY?

STEP 1

Now that students have learned more about the importance of history, they are prepared to add more to their identity map. Begin by initiating a reflection and discussion. Select from these questions to guide the reflection.

- a. What do I know about my own history thus far?
- b. Who shared this history with me and how did they share it? (i.e. grandmother through stories, father through music, etc.)
- c. How does my family's history shape my identity?
- d. How does what I learned about my family at home differ from what I learn in school?
- e. How does the history we know affect our identity?
- f. Are there benefits of analyzing the history that we are taught?
- g. What does it mean to be an American?

STEP 2

As a culminating activity, have students go back to their identity map from Module 1. Have the students reflect and see if there are any more pieces they would like to add to the map.

STEP 3

Reflection – Have students select one or two points on their map that relate to history and answer the following prompt:

What pieces of your identity map did you select? Explain how history affects these pieces of your identity and how knowing your history affects your identity as a whole?

MODULE THREE

HEALING

MODULE 3 | ACTIVITY SET

HEALING THROUGH REFLECTION

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1) HOW DID LEARNING ABOUT THEIR IDENTITY AND HERSTORY HELP IN THE GIRLS' HEALING PROCESS?
- 2) WHO DID YOU IDENTIFY WITH THE MOST IN THE FILM?
- 3) HOW DID THE GIRLS IN THE FILM COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES IN THEIR LIVES?
- 4) IF YOU KNEW ONE OF THE GIRLS IN THE FILM, WHAT COULD YOU DO TO SUPPORT THEM?
- 5) WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HEALTHY?

OBJECTIVES

- 1) STUDENTS WILL EXAMINE HOW THE GIRLS IN THE VIDEO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES IN THEIR LIVES
- 2) STUDENTS WILL IDENTIFY WHICH ARE HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY COPING STRATEGIES
- 3) STUDENTS WILL REFLECT ON THEIR OWN WAYS OF COPING
- 4) STUDENTS WILL IDENTIFY FEELINGS, THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS THEY ASSOCIATE WITH THEIR OWN PERSONAL HEALTH
- 5) STUDENTS WILL IDENTIFY SOURCES OF SUPPORT IN THEIR LIVES
- 6) STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP THEIR CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH DISCUSSION AND ANALYZING HER/HISTORY, THEIR IDENTITIES AND FORMS OF COPING

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

I. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

II. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

III. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

VOCABULARY

Mental wellness/Mental fitness

A way to describe social and emotional well-being. Being mentally healthy means feeling positive (mejorar), being a part of one's community, and taking care of your body.

Coping

The way in which people deal with a significant moment in their lives that can either be healthy or unhealthy

Cutting

The unhealthy act of deliberately harming the surface of one's body by cutting the skin, can be caused by emotional pain or depression.

Herstory

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

History

The study of events from the past, based exclusively on written documents.

Self-harm

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

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Healing looks different for each person given that we come into the journey of healing with varied experiences and backgrounds. For some, healing might be writing in a journal or drawing; for others, it might be taking a walk. Whichever way students choose to heal, it is important that they know there is no "one size fits all" approach when it comes to this personal work. The process of healing can be especially challenging for students who have experienced traumas in their lives. In this module it is important to work in collaboration with a school counselor or school social worker in case a student is triggered by the discussion. This module could also be adapted for school counselors and school social workers in group setting.

TIME

2 class periods with home assignment

PREP

- Poster or a large board to write on
- Printed copies of Circle of Influence Sheet (See Appendix B)

INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITIES

- 1) The following activity will be a discussion where students reflect on the healing process of the girls in the film, followed by an activity that has students identify the support systems and resources in their life.
- 2) The culminating assignment allows students to select from a menu of options to share with the director what the film meant to them.

ACTIVITY 1: KWL ABOUT COLUMBUS (SEE APPENDIX A)

STEP 1

Begin the discussion by asking the students to think back to the film.

STEP 2

Using a large Post-it or board, write down students' responses to the following two questions in separate columns:

- a. What emotional and mental health challenges did the girls face?
- b. How did they cope with those challenges?

STEP 3

Ask the students to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy coping strategies by asking:

- a. What coping strategies were healthy or unhealthy? You can use +/- symbols to differentiate between responses, or use another helpful symbol.

STEP 4

Extend the discussion by having students fill out the Circle of Influence Sheet so they can begin to contextualize the way in which the girls in the film began the process of healing in comparison with the support systems students have in their own context.

STEP 5

Circle of Influence Sheet: Students will write their name in the middle and then write the names of people that they consider family as someone they can reach out to. In the second concentric circle students will write down resources or people that they can reach out to. (Note: This could be used as an entry point for the school mental health resources). In the third concentric circle, students will write in names and resources in their community/neighborhood (this could include, but is not limited to church, youth program or sports teams.)

CLOSING

Close out by saying there is no one way of coping with challenges. For some it might be writing in a journal and for others it might be taking a walk. Whichever way students choose to heal just know that there is no “one size fits all” approach when it comes to this work and that it is a journey.

HOME ASSIGNMENT: YOUR REFLECTION ON HEALING

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

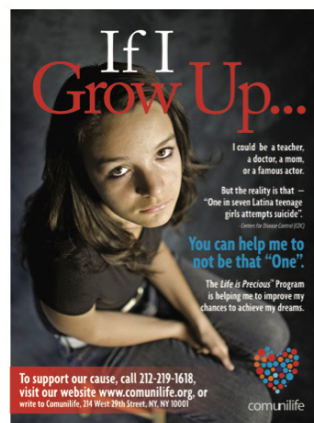
- How do you cope with challenges and/or strong emotions in your life?
- If you knew one of the girls in the film, what could you do to support them? Which resources could help?
- What else could the school do to meet your needs?

Teacher Tip:

The student’s responses to the prompts could give insight to student’s needs. This information could be useful to you as a teacher, school counselor/social worker and/or school administrator. 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.

RESOURCE FOR BROCHURE

<http://comunilife.org/life-is-precious/>



ACTIVITY 2: SHARE YOUR LEARNING

STEP 1

Films can impact our lives in more ways than we can imagine. Have the students reflect on what they learned from the film and how has it impacted their lives and share it with the director, Raquel Cepeda by visiting her website at www.djalirancher.com.

STEP 2

Students can select from the following options listed below. The objective is to answer the questions:

- a) What did you learn from the film?
- b) How has it impacted your life?

Poem

Films can provide us with insights to ourselves that otherwise we might not have considered. In the first two stanzas of your poem, talk about what you learned from the film. In the last two stanzas of your poem, talk about the impact it had on you.

Song

Compose a song or perform a song that answers the questions: What did you learn from the film? How has it impacted you?

Draw

Draw, create a cartoon or paint a piece addressing the questions of what did you learn from the film and how has it impacted you?

Collage

Create a collage consisting of drawings, quotes, images and anything related to what did you learn from the film and how has it impacted you?

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.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: KWL CHART

MODULE 2: HERSTORY/HISTORY | ACTIVITY: KWL ABOUT COLUMBUS

KWL		
Know	Want to Know	Learn
What do I <i>already know</i> about Columbus?	After reflecting on what I know and what others know, what do I <i>want to know</i> about Columbus?	What new information did I <i>learn</i> about Columbus?
What I know:		
What others know:		

APPENDIX B: CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE SHEET
MODULE 3: HEALING | ACTIVITY: HOW DO WE COPE

Write the name of people/resources at school

Write the name of family members

Name