

1 in 3

Grade Level 11th

Subject Area - US History

Duration (15 minutes for prep) + (4-5 hours class time)

Key Words: mass incarceration, school to prison pipeline, racial disparities, plea bargaining, bail, convicted felon

SUMMARY: Teacher leads the students through a warm up activity based on having the students group up based on statistics representative of the racial disparities within mass incarceration. This leads the students into the main activity of reflecting and responding to poignant questions to provide three points of view about their personal reactions to mass incarceration by producing a video blog. To wrap up the students partner together to view their video blogs and propose a specific solution or component of mass incarceration that must be addressed given the way it compromises the experience of equality in the United States.

Measurable Objective: Students **provide three points of view** about their personal reaction to mass incarceration BY recording and producing a video blog.

Facet: GAIN SELF-KNOWLEDGE and OVERCOMING THE NAIVE VIEW

Materials list:

- Devices with access to recording video and sound (smartphones, tablets, computers, camcorder)
- Vlog Guide
- Rubric
- *optional:* Netflix documentary, 13th

Making connections: The relevance of this activity for students is to break down the misconception that everyone has equal access to a fair trial and opportunity in the criminal justice system. It is vital for students to understand the potential of these factors affecting their lives as the United States has the highest prison population rate in the world. With this information, students can understand not only the effects mass incarceration has on their own lives, but the effects on those in their communities and across the country. Prison reform and policies are consistently being debated and handled differently, which is another component that affects people being treated equally before the law.

Background information: Mass incarceration discusses not only the fact that the U.S. has the highest number of incarcerated individuals in the world, but is also points out the overall system and approach the country takes to upholding laws, order, and ultimately control of the population. Statistics about the criminal justice system, such as number of trials, for what offenses, the range of bail, the types of and details within convictions, reveal that there are a racial and socioeconomic disparities within the prison population. For example, given the fact that black men only make up about 12% of the US population, they represent 33% of the prison population, as opposed to white men who make up 64% of the US population, but only 30% of the prison population. Additionally, there are issues in regards to plea bargaining or individuals not able to afford to post bail, or not even having enough time to give everyone a trial, and thus influencing people to accept convictions and prison sentences without even seeing a courtroom. Although the foundational principles of the United States are based on liberty and equality, the multitude of issues within mass incarceration display a clear compromise to those foundations. **Misconception Alert:** This topic may be very difficult for students to understand in the beginning. This topic might also be difficult for some students to discuss because mass incarceration has directly affected their lives already. It is important to know about your students home lives before jumping into mass incarceration, specifically if working with black and latino students as the data

shows this has the highest potential to affect their lives. Reminder that the point of this activity is to break down the misconception that although there are laws meant to protect and ensure our equality, other factors affect and push us to experience varying degrees of equality.

Teacher: Print article and *Vlog Guide*. Read over procedure instructions. Lead students through the warm up activity. After warm up, pass out *Pre-Pop Tool Sheet*.

Procedure

Warm up

- **Teacher:** To begin, ask the students: *for 5 minutes, write down your initial reaction to “mass incarceration”. When I say, “mass incarceration”, what comes to mind? What do you already know? What questions do you still have?*
 - Then, tell students to get up, and form groups based on the number you give them. First, tell them to make a group of 18. Then, ask them for one volunteer in that group to “go to jail”. Once they have picked, ask them if those odds seemed fair? 1 in every 18 black women (born in 2001) will go to jail/prison in their lifetime. The odds presented in this warm up represent the likelihood of someone born in 2001 going to prison during their lifetime.
 - The rest of the ratios (Ask students, make a group of...and then pick one person/volunteer for jail):
 - 1 in 17 - White Men
 - 1 in 9 - All Men
 - 1 in 6 - Latino Men
 - 1 in 3 - Black Men
 - Ask the students back to their chairs, and respond to *What are your reactions to these statistics? What causes such a wide range of odds?*
- Then, move into the activity. Pass out the vlog guide and provide access to the online articles/resources.

Activity

- Go to Students read and research about mass incarceration and how it has affected different communities. Questions are listed throughout the *vlog guide*. Students provide 3 points of view about their personal reactions to mass incarceration by recording and producing a five minute video blog.

Wrap up:

- To wrap up the students partner together to view their video blogs and propose a specific solution or component of mass incarceration that must be addressed given the way it compromises the experience of equality in the United States.

Formative Assessment: Linked and embedded within “Rubric” under Materials list of Activity 3 on the Module 2 webpage.

Extensions / Differentiation

- Ask students to
 - Identify two court cases within the last five years that have been used to garner concern and attention to the issue of mass incarceration
 - for example: Kalief Browder, who was imprisoned at Rikers Island for 3 years without a conviction. It is important to know that his story ends with him taking his own life, which reveals the mental abuse suffered within prison (especially when being held there for years awaiting trial)
 - Extend the solution proposal for what needs to be addressed with mass incarceration

- Interview loved ones and collect testimonials from folks affected by mass incarceration
- Allow students to pick their different point of views instead of the ones listed
- Additional instructional options:
 - Model navigating the online resources
 - Model working with video production media (for example iMovie)
 - Provide sentence frames and starters
 - Perform in native tongue, and offer a translation
 - Allow students to pick their different point of views instead of the ones listed
 - Watch documentary, *13th* - *Netflix*

Blackline masters: PDF copies of blackline masters and materials are embedded and linked within the “Materials list” of Activity 3 on the Module 2 webpage.

Part 2: Vlog Response - Using all of the information you have gathered, **provide 3 new points of view about your personal reactions to mass incarceration by recording and producing a 5 minute vlog.** Begin by sharing your initial reaction to mass incarceration, and then move into the 3 new points of view. Be specific, thorough, and expand on your responses. Your points of view can be similar, but it should be clear which point of view you are explaining. Provide evidence from the resources to support your point of view. **Use the guide below to draft your responses. Once you are ready, begin recording and editing your video to create your 5 minute video blog.**

<p>Initial Reaction:</p>	<p>At the beginning of this activity, what were your initial thoughts and reactions to mass incarceration?</p>
<p>Point of View</p>	<p>From this point of view, what are your thoughts and reactions to mass incarceration? What should be done?</p>
<p>As a Student (thinking about the school to prison pipeline)</p>	
<p>As a Family Member or Friend (of someone affected by mass incarceration)</p>	
<p>As a Worker (Pick a future profession/job. What would your POV be from that position? Examples: Lawyer, Teacher, Politician, Business Owner, etc. you pick!)</p>	

References

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- Criminal Justice Facts. (n.d.). Retrieved April 29, 2018, from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/criminal-justice-facts/>
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