**Adapt a Module: Allison Pyo**

**Unit question:** What were the origins of race, what does that mean for us today, and in what ways is race portrayed today that are inaccurate and fallacious? (11th grade)

**Text Set:**

1. The Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson and the Committee of Five historical document

One the most famous documents of U.S. history, the Declaration of Independence begins by outlining the foundational values of the U.S. - notably including “self-evident truths” that “all men are created equal” as well as “unalienable Rights” that include “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” It then describes how the colonies came to decide to separate from its parent country, followed by a list of grievances which includes the famous taxation without representation among many others. It claims the colonists have petitioned against these oppressions and went unheard, and ends with their final declaration of independence.

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>

1. “Slave Labor” by Digital History - web article

This article gives an explanation of the type of labor slaves did on plantations in the U.S. It describes the many different roles slaves played on plantations, but emphasizes the work they did “planting, cultivating, and harvesting” cash crops. It also importantly debunks myths of slave labor being inefficient - in reality, it was very structured and innovative, resulting in massive profits for plantation owners. It finally explains the incentives and punishments used to elicit work from the slaves, which included the well-known physical punishments as well as gifts and holidays.

<https://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtid=2&psid=3041>

1. “The myth of race, debunked in 3 minutes” by Vox - video

This video starts with the first person who tried to categorize people in categories of “race” - Johann Friedrich Blumenbach. It describes how Americans quickly adopted this, possibly due to the fact that it helped them justify slave labor. It then explains how definitions of race have shifted over time, giving examples such as the shift of racial categorization of those of Mexican ancestry from white to Black to white again and the shift to the one-drop rule for categorization as “Black.” It also discusses Census categorization and the addition of mixed race as well as confusion for people about their own racial identity and how the concept of race is used incorrectly throughout society. It ends by acknowledging that there are absolutely real-life effects of racial categories through racism, and states that understanding that races are social constructs can hopefully offer us a valuable perspective on racism.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnfKgffCZ7U>

1. “Red Cross has urgent need for more black blood donors to help sickle cell patients” by American Red Cross - press release

This press release, in light of both Sickle Cell Awareness Month and the decrease of

African American blood donors during the coronavirus pandemic, hopes to encourage Black people to donate blood. It explains sickle cell anemia, describing how blood transfusions help treat the disease and that donors of a similar “race or ethnicity” are more likely to be compatible. It then describes safety precautions being taken at blood donation centers as well as donor information which are mostly requirements to be able to donate.

[https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/press-release/2020/red-cross-hasurgent-need-for-more-black-blood-donors-to-help-sickle-cell-patients.html](https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/press-release/2020/red-cross-has-urgent-need-for-more-black-blood-donors-to-help-sickle-cell-patients.html)

1. “5-Year-Old’s Haircut to Look Like Friend Goes Viral” by CBS Miami - video

This short news clip introduces Reddy and Jaxon, two “colorblind” best friends who are waiting for Jackson to get a haircut. When Jackson sits down to get his hair cut and is asked what kind of cut he’s looking for, he points to Reddy and exclaims “like Reddy’s!” The video reveals that the boys are trying to trick their teacher by looking the same, which is funny because they are “ignoring the obvious: their race.” Jaxon’s mother shares her initial reaction to their plan as well as her Facebook post about the situation (which hopes to prove that hate and prejudice is something taught not inborn), and Reddy’s father describes his gratitude that his son has learned well, expressing that their innocence is maybe something missing from society.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQrRm0CoQ1A>

1. Science Says Babies as Young as 6 Months Can Be Biased Against Different Races by

Libby Ryan (Parents) - article

This article introduces and explains a new study that attempted to measure the point at which humans begin to have racial bias. It begins by explaining why this study is important - mostly due to the impact racism has on society today - and then goes into describing how the study was conducted. The study results showed that the 6- to

8-month-olds reacted more positively to those of their own “race.” The article explains what the study concluded as the reason for racism: lack of exposure. Therefore, it ends by encouraging parents to expose their children to people of other races either in person or through media. [https://www.parents.com/baby/all-about-babies/science-says-everyones-a-little-bit-racist -even-babies/](https://www.parents.com/baby/all-about-babies/science-says-everyones-a-little-bit-racist-even-babies/)