



Folk Sources and New Narratives— Focus on Oklahoma

A Teaching with Primary Sources Curriculum Guide by Local Learning



"Survivors' Stories." Includes interviews of Tulsa Race Ma...

MORE VIDEOS

About the Cover Images (top) *Little Africa on fire*, Tulsa, Oklahoma. June 1, 1921. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017679764>. (bottom) *Survivors Stories*. The Eddie Faye Gates Tulsa Race Massacre Collection. Tulsa: Gilcrease Museum. Still from video. <https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/53271686>.



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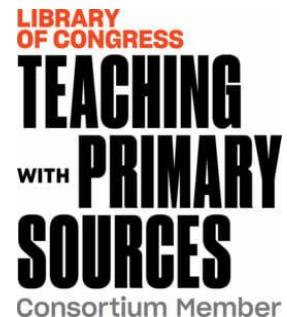
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This curriculum guide is supported in part by an award from the Teaching with Primary Sources program of the Library of Congress. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed by authors are their own. Content created and featured in partnership with the TPS program does not indicate an endorsement by the Library of Congress.



Local Learning Teaching with Primary Sources project team offers teaching tools and materials that engage the digitally available archival holdings of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress alongside local and regional collections, bringing them into conversation with each other to create a fuller, more complex narrative of American communities, history, and people.

2024 Project Team



Find additional resources and information generated by this Teaching with Primary Sources project at <https://locallearningnetwork.org/professional-development/tps>.

Folk Sources and New Narratives— Focus on Oklahoma

Challenging History: Teaching hard history and topics that may engage unjust content.

Challenging History: Analyzing oral histories and primary source collections gathered through ethnographic research to discover and learn from multiple perspectives and counternarratives about an historic event or topic.

From *Journal of Folklore and Education* (2023) Vol. 10.2

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Preface

This packet represents one part of a three-year study engaging the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre through primary sources. Included in these lesson plans and units of study are discoveries, tools for teaching, activity prompts, and deep pedagogical engagement from oral historians, cultural geographers, artists, historians, veteran teachers, and folklorists.

Serendipity cannot be ignored when undertaking this kind of project. Upon learning that Dr. Bettina L. Love was scheduled to speak with Oklahoma State University faculty, students, and Tulsa educators about educational reparations, the connection to our Teaching with Folk Sources project was immediately clear to our team. Oral histories from survivors of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre offer accounts closeted for decades. Through an analysis of audio primary sources to understand individual and community perspectives on memory, meaning, and identity come counternarratives. Likewise, critical analysis of primary source metadata housed in archives across the nation offers new pathways to literacy around the social and cultural narratives that are embedded within (and sometimes literally written upon) primary source images, periodicals, and other items. This Curriculum Guide offers activities to challenge dominant narratives and build culturally responsive understanding through ethnographic collections. All these activities are foundational in carrying out educational reparations by (re)centering diverse narratives and perspectives.

This Curriculum Guide offers the following primary learning objectives for our resources:

- 1) Scaffold foundational knowledge around ethnographic primary sources as key historical resources for learning,
- 2) Demonstrate how community narratives reframe notions of the “expert,” and
- 3) Encourage dialogue among diverse learners to facilitate deeper understanding of communities and their stories—a task that proves particularly significant in the current political environment.

Why focus on primary sources in the classroom? Over the past 150 years folklorists and other ethnographic researchers have created a unique, enormous corpus of ethnographic field collections: multi-formatted, unpublished groups of materials documenting human life and traditions, from historic photographs of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre to contemporary Civil Rights Movement recordings. Such researchers organize community-based field research, often in collaboration with members of the community whose life is the focus of study. The largest and most significant collection of these materials in the United States is the Archive of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Similar, smaller collections are held by individuals, organizations, and academic institutions across the country, including the Eddie Faye Gates Tulsa Race Massacre Collection, archived in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the Helmerich Center for American Research, which is featured prominently in the first Unit of Study by Dr. Autumn Brown. Within archives of folklife collections, linguistic and cultural knowledge that form counternarratives offer students new perspectives and address gaps allowed to form because of structural racism that informs what is included, or not, in classroom texts. In addition to often reflecting historical truth, primary sources are valued as powerful reference points for accessing diverse stories and local learning. Our curriculum engages visual, auditory, and textual inquiry to open these collections up for a better tomorrow through new understanding. Let us know how you use them to transform learning in your classroom!

Lisa Rathje, PhD, Executive Director of Local Learning

Dear Educators,

Renowned scholar Robin D.G. Kelley (2002) expresses that freedom dreaming is an “extremely difficult task, yet it is a matter of great urgency. Without new visions we don’t know what to build, only what to knock down. We not only end up confused, rudderless, and cynical, but we forget that making a revolution is not a series of clever maneuvers and tactics but a process that can and must transform us” (xii). What Dr. Kelley describes is the process of unfettered radical and speculative imagination grounded in relationships and collective intergenerational conjuring that fosters self-determination and full humanity. These dreams facilitate the building of transformative processes and structures toward actualizing freedom. As a DJ, producer, and educator from the South, I have cultivated a communal, yet sonic lens that affords me to see, hear, and feel both freedom dreams and the concept of educational reparations from a unique perspective.

I recently attended an educational reparation convening curated by Dr. Bettina Love (2023), scholar and best-selling author of the necessary text, *Punished For Dreaming: How School Reform Harms Black Children And How We Heal*. For two full days, I, alongside, other Black scholars, economists, and creatives, developed ideas on how to combat the educational debt that is owed to Black children and Black communities. We laughed, cried, and created an environment where a sacred, communal, and political act of trust was developed amongst the group. We knew that meaning would be made, regardless of what was discussed. Trust was easily established because we trusted our convening leader, Dr. Bettina Love. No one was worried about tenure, or if our freedom dreams were too big or too small. We just were able to be; to sit still and learn from each other’s brilliance. I left the convening with a new family; knowing that I am worthy of building a future that is filled with peace, joy, and economic stability for Black people. The convening was life changing because I was truly able to reflect on my unique educational journey. For example, we were able to connect virtually with the Oakland Education Association to discuss how they approached educational reparations for their Black students and parents. Through grassroots efforts, the association knocked from door to door to ask parents and students what they wanted outside of monetary compensation. Many parents and students expressed how that they wanted their children to receive visual and performing art opportunities. Although many of the Black educators of the reparation convening were shocked to hear this, I wasn’t surprised in the slightest. I would argue that I’ve been freedom dreaming for a long time, and that visual and performing arts opportunities are both catalyst and product of these dreams.

I only had one Black teacher during my K-12 educational journey and her name was Ms. Janice Ford. Ms. Ford was my first-grade teacher, and she would start class by singing to me and my classmates every morning, “If you want to be somebody, if you want to go somewhere, you better wake up and pay attention.” I remember everything about that class: The love, tenderness, and care was always present. My Blackness was affirmed every day. Looking back, I am inspired

that she brought her music sensibilities into our classroom because it was unknowingly the difference for me. Fast forwarding, I graduated from high school in 2007 and attended the University of Oklahoma. With over 35,000 students, a 6 percent Black student population and being roughly five hours away from home, I was filled with so much anxiety that I was ready to drop out of school, despite excelling academically. It wasn't until I picked up the craft of DJing that I found my identity, community, and passion for serving others. I recognized my responsibility to help community members (as well as myself) to release trauma and stress through sound and movement. The ability to serve and heal through music became not only my passion, but my purpose.

There is so much cultural wealth in Black communities—in our historians, griots, and elders, among others—that sits untouched because most individuals do not have the proper credentials to teach in traditional structures of schooling. Community and arts-engaged scholarship ... is something that most of our educational curriculums direly need.

From developing one of the first Hip Hop album dissertations that centers on the anti-Black experiences Black students encounter at historically white institutions, to creating *Fire in Little Africa* (Fire in Little Africa & Johnson, 2021)—a multi-modal and interdisciplinary [album](#), [live-version album](#) and [colloquium](#) recorded at Harvard University, [documentary](#), [curriculum](#) (with state and national standards), and [podcast](#) that commemorates the Black lives and businesses that were taken during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, I have been able to, in the words of poet Jayne Cortez (1996), envision a “*somewhere in advance of nowhere*.” I freedom dreamed my album dissertation. I freedom dreamed *Fire in Little Africa* because I made the process about the artists and not about me. I allowed them to shape how the work would look, sound and feel.

You may be asking the question: Why is all this important? What does it have to do with the *Fire in Little Africa* Curriculum? My short answer? EVERYTHING! Hip Hop continues to be viewed as a tool or culture that is inherently violent, hypermasculine, and derogatory to women. Although Hip Hop is not exempt from critique, I also recognize that Hip Hop culture was built because racial, economic, and political “accommodations” were not provided for Black and Brown people. If anything, those things were (and continue to be) stripped away. In the words of Dr. David Stovall (personal communication, May 2021), “the language of Hip Hop is unsettling, because the language has been unsettled.” If basic needs, acknowledgement of humanity, and reparations were given in an effort to rectify the economic empowerment that we know the Greenwood District¹ was 100 years ago, then maybe the world wouldn't have to hear songs like *Shining*, where Dialtone says, “300 deaths, I guess that's how the story go, I guess they didn't remember that Jane Doe, Jane Doe, Jane Doe,” or *Descendants* when Earl Hazard says “Underneath the full moon light, are you going to choose life? We're going to make sure that the history won't repeat twice” (Fire in Little Africa & Johnson, 2021). The language is unsettling because history has not been acknowledged and those who control history have not been held accountable. I'm reminded of the phrase that insanity is doing the same thing, yet expecting different results. This is case in point.

¹ The Greenwood District is the predominately African American neighborhood of Tulsa known as “Black Wall Street” that was bombed during the events of the Tulsa Race Massacre.

The dreamers on this album, however, are seeking new results. New accountabilities. New narratives for our educational spaces. Education sparked the fire that is burning live and well right now in Greenwood. Hip Hop is academic. Hip Hop is scholarly. Hip Hop is the arts. Hip Hop is love. Hip Hop is me. And if you choose not to recognize Hip Hop's liberating power as such, but love what it can do for you monetarily, then you don't love Hip Hop, and you don't love me. I stand on the backs of great scholars: Tupac, Biggie, Lauryn Hill, James Baldwin, Berry Gordy, Nipsey Hussle, Fannie Lou Hamer, Malcolm X, Audre Lorde, Toni Morrison, Harriet Tubman, Mary Johnson (my mother), and so many others. There is so much cultural wealth in Black communities—in our historians, griots, and elders, among others—that sits untouched because most individuals do not have the proper credentials to teach in traditional structures of schooling. Community and arts-engaged scholarship is at the core of my being and is something that most of our educational curriculums direly need. Our kids want it. Our parents want it. Our communities need it.

Education is evolving and goes beyond the structures of schools. As divisive bills, school closures and defunding of public education continues to take place in our country, educators must attempt to envision “somewhere in the advance of nowhere.” But you cannot attempt to freedom dream and develop counternarratives if you are not building trust with Black students and their communities. In the words of Ruha Benjamin, “growing the world we want is like the slow tending of a garden, transforming the plants by fostering relationships, trust, skills, community accountability, and healing. It requires cultivating new habits internally, seeding restorative ways of being together interpersonally, uprooting practices of inequality institutionally, and planting alternative possibilities structurally” (54). Educational reparations are about developing trust and structure to sustain the imagination so that when we work in community, everyone is aligned with the same values and goals, although our pathways make look different. I can continue freedom dreaming because I’ve always known the necessity of planting and truly cultivating alternative structures for living and learning. My mother and first grade teacher made it very clear to me that alternative structures were crucial for me to keep dreaming beyond my environment; to survive out the hood and thrive in an environment filled with joy and peace. My question to you, reader, is what does educational freedom dreaming look like outside of traditional schooling settings? What can we dream beyond our traditional methodological and theoretical frameworks? What fears are holding us back? Everything is Us,² but everything is on us to make our wildest dreams happen. Our livelihoods depend on it.

Stevie “Dr. View” Johnson, PhD

Assistant Professor, Creative Practice in Popular Music, The Ohio State University

Founder & Executive Producer, [Fire in Little Africa](#)

Nasir Jones Hip Hop Fellow, Harvard University

#EverythingIsUs

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Cortez, Jayne. 1996. *Somewhere in Advance of Nowhere*. Serpent's Tail.

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Kelley, Robin D. G. 2022. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Beacon Press.

Love, Bettina L. 2023. *Punished for Dreaming: How School Reform Harms Black Children and How We Heal*. St. Martin's Press.

² Everything is Us is a phrase or motto that was developed by Tulsa artists on the Fire in Little Africa album that reminds individuals that if we want to see freedom dreams actualized, then we must look inward because we have everything we need. Everything is Us, but it's on us to make it happen.

Oklahoma Territory and Tulsa

by Autumn Brown

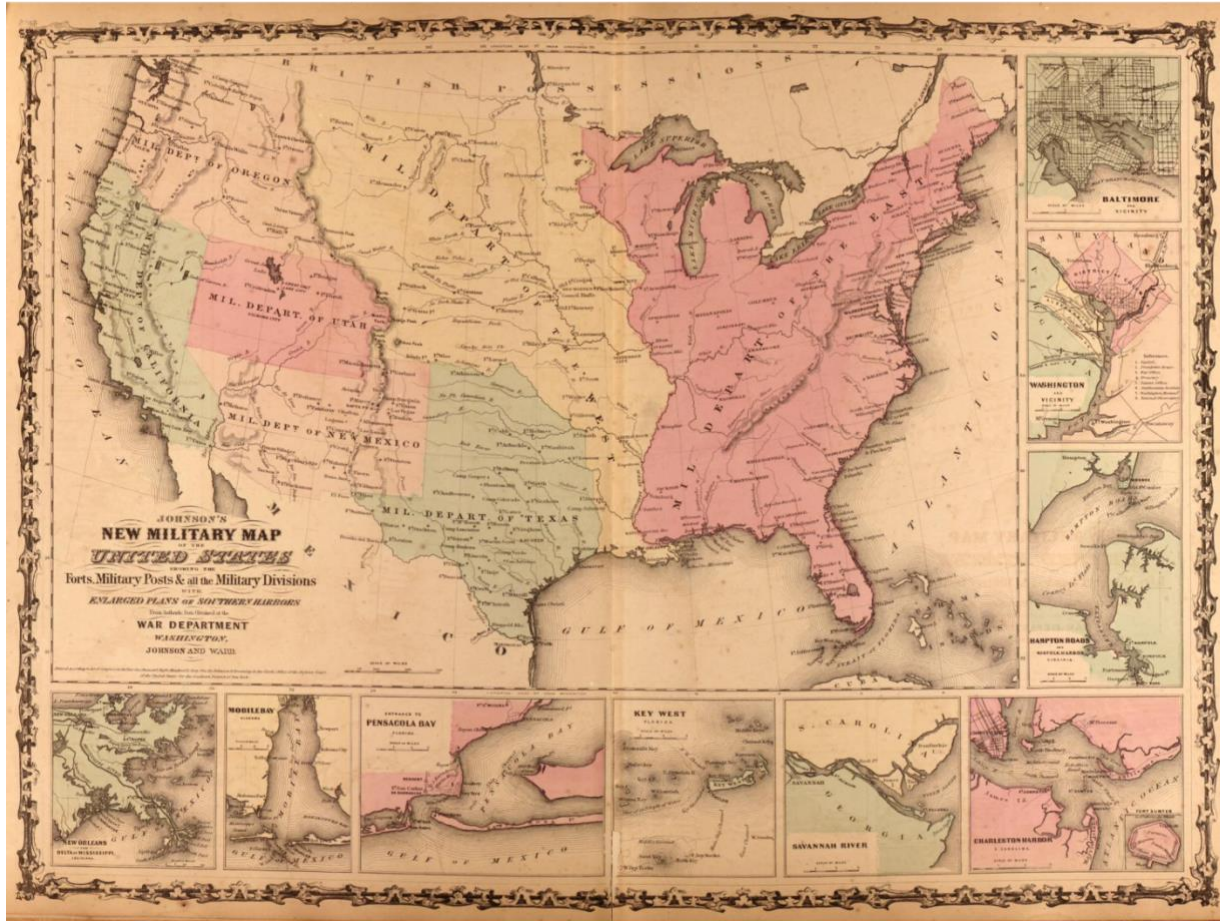
This lesson opens with an introduction on Oklahoma territory and its entry into statehood in 1907. Such an introduction is salient in the critical examination of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre through primary sourced materials. By examining the tensions that existed in the young state at the top of the 20th century, students will better understand the historical and cultural context of 1921 in Tulsa and thus, spark important student inquiry that meets state history standards while also supporting a fuller narrative of this event.

This lesson is important because it unpacks historical details through primary sources like oral histories and archival photographs from the Eddie Faye Gates Tulsa Race Massacre collection, housed at the Helmerich Center for American Research. These archival items are a crucial data source that preserve stories and remnants of not only the traumatic 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, but the beauty of the North Tulsa community. Students will discover through these texts how a thriving Greenwood community rebuilt bigger and better after the massacre. The collection highlights pain, destruction, resiliency, and hope, and will serve as one that will significantly add to knowledge surrounding both the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and the Greenwood community more broadly.

Below you will find an introduction to this lesson that will provide important background information for the teacher, but may also be adapted for student use. This is followed by a Unit of Study designed for 5 class periods that outlines the lessons.



Fowler, T. M., and James B Moyer. *Edmond, Oklahoma Territory*. Morrisville, Pa., T. M. Fowler & James B. Moyer, 1891. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/74693065>



Johnson, A. J., J. H. Colton, and Johnson and Browning. *Johnson's New Illustrated Steel Plate Family Atlas, With Descriptions, Geographical, Statistical, and Historical*. New York: Johnson & Browning, 1862. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006458039>

Grappling with Oklahoma's past is helped by engaging with primary sourced materials like archival images and oral histories. The Library of Congress cites primary sources as "the raw materials of history—original documents and objects which were created at the time under study*." With primary sources, our aim for this lesson with 7th and 8th grade students was to facilitate students' deeper understanding of early periods of Oklahoma territory into statehood and broader histories surrounding the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

To introduce the lesson, ask students to consider Johnson and Browning map above. Then, ask them to "agree or disagree" with the following statement and to include their rationale in the response:

Oklahoma, geographically, is situated in a sort of "no man's land" begging the question of whether the state is southern or midwestern.

Discussion prompt: What consequences might come from not feeling as if your region belongs to other cultural or geographical regions?

*<https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources>

Oklahoma remained a territory until 1907. This lesson begins Oklahoma's story pre-statehood when Native Americans were pushed further west and south after the Civil War. These Indigenous tribes settled on "Indian Territory," which is present Oklahoma, and with some these tribes came enslaved persons, giving rise to an Afro-Indigenous community that played an integral role on the creation of Tulsa, or "Tulasi" meaning "Old Town."

A common misconception is that oral histories, or primary sources of the like, are collected without a vision for how they will impact our understanding of history or historical events. Therefore, we ask the following essential questions:

1. How do primary sources challenge and extend our understanding of historical events?
2. How does early Oklahoma history (1890-1907) inform the events of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre?
3. How do Oral History interviews from 1999-2000 offer important perspectives on the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre?
4. What might a timeline that extends significantly before and after an event provide historians? Why does this matter?

Our objectives call for students to critically evaluate and analyze primary source materials and recognize historical realities that challenge common historical knowledge.

Instruction begins with a lesson on how to analyze primary sources including oral histories, photographs and prints. It was important for us to spend adequate time answering the questions, "what are primary sources," and "what can we learn from them." This lesson was extended to include a [multiple perspectives activity](#) for students to understand the complexities of oral histories and the multiple perspectives they contain when studying a singular historical event.

After students were versed in their understanding of primary sources and their uses, they were introduced to early Oklahoma territory, indigenous and afro-indigenous groups that settled here, and growing tensions that led to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

"Survivors' Stories." Includes eight interviews of Tulsa Race Massacre survivors and heirs conducted for the Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921. Interview one is by Eddie Faye Gates and unidentified interviewer with Phineas Bell. Int







Survivor Stories. Helmerich Center for American Research at Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma.
<https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/53271686>

Though some supplemental texts were used to contextualize this lesson, such as *The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: A Photographic History* and Eddie Faye Gates's chapter "Post-Reconstruction/ Freedman Era: Wanderings, Migrations, Settlements" in *They Came Searching: How Blacks Sought the Promised Land*, archival images from the Library of Congress and the Tulsa Historical Society as well as oral histories from the Eddie Faye Gates Tulsa Race Massacre Collection housed at the Helmerich Center for American Research were centered in this lesson.

Students practiced with digital images of early Oklahoma territory and the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. They *critically responded* to each photo by asking themselves questions about what they saw: was the photo black or white or color? Is there a caption? If so, what does it tell you*? Students then *observed* parts of the photo, tried to *make sense* of it, and then used it as *historical evidence* of early Oklahoma territory and events of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Finally, students listened and analyzed (using the Oral History Analysis graphic organizer below) multiple oral histories focused around the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre—both pre- and post-massacre.

After working with physical materials and oral histories students extended their learning by answering the question, “How might these two sources, created at different times, (almost 80 years apart) offer important insight into the Tulsa Race Massacre?” And their writing assessment consisted of the following prompts:

1. Write a summary of the Self-Evident module--*What happens to a dream destroyed?* (At least one paragraph)
2. Why is it important to learn about early Oklahoma history and the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre more than 100 years later?
3. How do you compare what happened in the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre with other atrocities experienced by Indigenous/Native Americans that we learned about in class?
4. In at least three sentences, describe how learning about the history of your city makes you feel.

Oral History Analysis Sheet		Name: _____
What type of recording is it? <input type="checkbox"/> Audio <input type="checkbox"/> Film or video <input type="checkbox"/> Written document <input type="checkbox"/> Other	What time period did this story take place? How do you know?	Who is telling the story? What is their point of view? 
Where was this recording made? STUDIO Home Other: _____	What do you notice about the person telling the story? <input type="checkbox"/> They have an accent <input type="checkbox"/> They are old <input type="checkbox"/> They are young <input type="checkbox"/> They use words I don't know	Why are they telling the story? What's the purpose? 
What did you learn from listening to this person's story? 		If you could ask this person a question what would it be? 


Note: Though developed for 7th and 8th grade students at Legacy Charter School, this lesson is adaptable to meet differentiated needs in a K-12 classroom.

*For critical caption activity, see “[Visualize This](#)” activity.

Unit of Study

Course: English Language Arts/Social Studies-Humanities	Lesson Title: Oklahoma Territory & Tulsa
Time Requirement: 5 days	Unit of Study: Tulsa Race Massacre
<p>Central Focus (Purpose): This lesson provides a general overview of how primary source materials are used to study and understand historical events. Students will use these materials to gain a deeper understanding of early periods of Oklahoma territory into statehood and broader histories surrounding the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.</p> <p>Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do primary sources challenge and extend our understanding of historical events? • How does early Oklahoma history (1890-1907) inform the events of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre? • How do Oral History interviews from 1999-2000 offer important perspectives on the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre? • What might a timeline that extends significantly before and after an event provide historians? Why does this matter? 	
<p>Academic Standards:</p> <p>8.3.R.1: ELA- Students will analyze works written on the same topic from a variety of historical, cultural, ethnic, and global perspectives and analyze the methods the authors use to achieve their purposes.</p> <p>8.3.R.2: ELA - Students will evaluate perspectives (e.g., historical, cultural, ethnic, and global) and describe how they affect various literary and informational texts.</p> <p>8.6.R.1: ELA - Students will find and comprehend information (e.g., claims, evidence) about a topic, using their own viable research questions.</p> <p>8.6.R.2: ELA - Students will find, record, and organize information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, following ethical and legal guidelines.</p> <p>8.1.S.3: ELA - Students will give formal and informal presentations in a group or individually, providing textual and visual evidence to support a main idea while determining the purpose, content, and form to suit the audience.</p> <p>8.12 The student will analyze the political, social, and economic transformations during the Reconstruction Era to 1877.</p> <p>8.12.2 SS Analyze the impact of state and federal legislation following the Civil War including A. 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments B. Black Codes and Jim Crow laws C. establishment of the Freedmen's Bureau</p> <p>8.12.3: SS Compare the emerging social structure of the South including the A. influx of carpetbaggers and scalawags B. rise of the Ku Klux Klan and its acts of intimidation and violence C. election of blacks to government positions D. expansion of the tenant and sharecropper systems E. migration of former slaves.</p>	
<p>Common Misconceptions and how you plan to address them: A common misconception is that oral histories and ethnographic primary sources are collected without a vision for how they will impact our understanding of history or historical events.</p> <p>Students will learn that history has often been created or preserved by the elite and/or ruling class and, therefore, reflect dominant narratives. Through an introduction of primary source</p>	

materials, including why they're created, collected, and presented to the public, students may begin to understand why primary sources are integral to our understanding of history through the lens of marginalized communities.	
Learning Objective(s) Associated with Above Standards: 1) Critically evaluate and analyze primary source materials 2) Recognize historical realities that challenge common historical knowledge	
Academic Language/terminology (Term and definition): Primary Source: original documents, narratives, and objects that were created at the time under study. Learn more at https://www.loc.gov/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/ Oral History: the collection and study of historical information using sound recordings of interviews with people having personal knowledge of past events Archive: a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people Marginalized: (of a person, group, or concept) treated as insignificant or peripheral Migration: Movement from one part of something to another Displacement: The moving of something from its place or position Transformation: A thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance Legislation: Laws, considered collectively Social Systems: the patterned network of relationships constituting a coherent whole that exists between individuals, groups, and institutions White Supremacy: The belief that white people constitute a superior race and should therefore dominate society, typically to the exclusion or detriment of other racial and ethnic groups	
Differentiation and Other Modifications: Both audio and transcripts are available for student use.	
Teacher Materials & Preparation: Familiarize yourself with the suggested primary sources and make sure all links work for students. Download worksheets and share copies with students. Introduce how to analyze primary sources: Analyzing primary sources Analyzing oral histories Analyzing photographs and prints Multiple Perspectives Worksheet: Explicitly Teaching Perspective Taking	
5E Instructional Model	Teaching Tips
Engagement: 1) K-W-L (What do you know about early Oklahoma territory and/or tensions leading up to the	Utilize graphics, like age-appropriate graphic novels, to create buy-in and engagement among students.

<p>1921 Tulsa Race Massacre? What do you want to know? What did you learn?)</p> <p>Students read Eddie Faye Gates's chapter Post-Reconstruction/Freedman Era: Wanderings, Migrations, Settlements in <i>They Came Searching: How Blacks Sought the Promised Land</i>.</p> <p>2) Discussion questions: Why did indigenous citizens settle in Oklahoma territory? What broader tensions existed prior to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre? How did these tensions impact Black communities? What occurred during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre? What impact did the massacre have on survivors?</p>	<p>Establish the same standard as OKH.5.2 (high school), which mandates the teaching of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, throughout middle school aged curriculum. Connecting this lesson to a broader overall unit like migration would help with context.</p> <p>Encourage group discussion (socratic seminar).</p> <p>Encourage children to talk to families to discuss connection with Greenwood and the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.</p> <hr/> <p>The primary sources and prompts found here complement this section: https://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2021/05/tulasas-greenwood-district-exploring-the-impact-of-the-tulsa-race-massacre/</p> <p>The fire map, along with photos and survivor stories contributes to an opportunity for students to craft a timeline of this neighborhood and the people of this place.</p>
<p>Explore & Explain:</p> <p>1) Students will read Karlos Hill's section on photographing a massacre (pg. 7-12) in <i>The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: A Photographic History</i>.</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Students practice with digital images of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and maps from the Oklahoma Territory. Find the classroom primary source set here.</p> <p>2) Introduce how to work with oral histories and multiple perspectives activity (worksheets)</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Separate students into groups to listen and analyze different perspectives recalled during oral history interviews from The Eddie Faye Gates Tulsa Race Massacre Collection:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>George Monroe Iola Streeter Jackson Veneice Dunn Sims Kinney Booker Elwood Lett Theodore Porterfield Ernestine Gibbs Ruby McCormick Wes Young Otis G. Clark</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;"> <p>You may also access the videos through this QR code →</p>  </div> </div>	
<p>Extension/Elaboration:</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> How might these two media, archival photos and oral histories, created at different times, (almost 80 years apart) offer important insight on the Tulsa Race Massacre?</p>	

Evaluate:**Formative Assessment(s):** Writing Assignment**Summative Assessment(s):** Writing Assignment**Lesson Closure:**

Students present their writing assignments in front of the class.

Recommended Resources

Karlos Hill's *The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: A Photographic History*. University of Oklahoma Press.

Eddie Faye Gates's chapter, Post-Reconstruction/Freedman Era: Wanderings, Migrations, Settlements in *They Came Searching: How Blacks Sought the Promised Land*. Eakin Press.

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<https://www.theatlantic.com/sponsored/hbo-2019/the-massacre-of-black-wall-street/3217/>

1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Photos from Tulsa Historical Society Digital Collection.

<https://www.tulsa-history.org/exhibit/1921-tulsa-race-massacre/photos/nggallery/page/1>

"What Happens to a Dream Destroyed" Curriculum Module from Self-Evident Education, <https://selfevidenteducation.com/modules>.

Challenging History: Focus on Oklahoma

Challenging History: Teaching hard history and topics that may engage unjust content.

Challenging History: Analyzing oral histories and primary source collections gathered through ethnographic research to discover and learn from multiple perspectives and counternarratives about an historic event or topic.

Note for Teachers

Folklife Education methodology, including ethnography and oral history, provides access to sources that offer multiple perspectives. This use of inquiry and documentation disrupts systems of education that center expertise in texts and curricula removed from local knowledge and cultural expertise. Within the archives of the American Folklife Center (AFC) at the Library of Congress and in other folklife collections around the nation, linguistic and cultural knowledge that is not found in other texts can offer students new perspectives, and potentially help them see themselves in history in new ways, particularly when intentionally brought into conversation with regional and local collections through our learning materials.

Through the lens "Challenging History" we engage history that may be hard to teach because of racist and unjust content, as well as "challenge" standard narratives about history to expand, through oral histories and primary sources, the multiple stories and perspectives that can be brought to the teaching and learning.



Challenging History Unit Introduction, article, and lessons reprinted and updated with permission from the *Journal of Folklore and Education* (2023: Vol. 10, Issue 2).

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Using Primary Sources to Foster Difficult Dialogues

by Shanedra D. Nowell and Robin R. Fisher, Oklahoma State University, School of Teaching, Learning, and Educational Sciences



With candidates screaming at political opponents on the television and state legislatures across the country introducing or passing laws on how teachers speak about race and racism (Schwartz 2021), students in K–12 Social Studies classrooms need effective models of civic discourse and tough conversations even more than before. As Social Studies teachers with decades of combined experience and as teacher educators at a predominantly white midwestern university, we center our curriculum around teaching challenging and whole histories, analyzing primary sources, and creating classroom community spaces where difficult dialogues can safely happen.

In our current political and cultural climate, this approach may seem like a pie in the sky ideal, but in our Social Studies education methods courses, we use folk sources, such as oral histories from survivors, primary source photographs and news clippings of historic events, and current young adult literature, including *Dreamland Burning* (Latham 2017) and *Black Birds in the Sky* (Colbert 2021). Leveraging these resources related to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, we model how to facilitate difficult dialogues or tough conversations around history, race, class, and culture in the classroom. While we primarily work with preservice and early career teachers in our 16-week Social Studies in the Elementary Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Social Studies in the Secondary School Methods courses, we feel all Social Studies educators should use strategies that get students to think deeply about historical events and their effect on our present-day social issues. Teaching with primary sources allows students to explore multiple perspectives or points of view to “relate in a personal way to events of the past,” and develop “a deeper understanding of history” (Library of Congress n.d.). With growing political polarization and partisanship, we see people struggle to see each other’s point of view and often lack a willingness to engage in difficult conversation in a professional manner. Primary sources “serve as points of entry into challenging subjects,” as Potter shares (2011, 284). They can “get a conversation started” (2011, 284) and help students discover “little known facts and different perspectives” (2011, 285) along the way. In this article, we hope to offer educators specific teaching strategies and learning activities aimed at fostering difficult dialogues around primary sources.

About the image: Alvin C. Krupnick Co, photographer. *Smoldering ruins of African American’s homes following race massacre in Tulsa, Okla.*, In Oklahoma Tulsa, 1921. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/95517072>.

Teaching the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

Most of the preservice teachers we train never learned about the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and similar events connected to the Red Summer of 1919 before entering college. Even students growing up in and around Tulsa share this knowledge gap. Most of our students identify as white and come from urban, upper-middle-class upbringings or grew up in lower- and middle-class rural communities—both often racially homogenous communities where they have faced very little discrimination or adversity in their lives based on race or culture. It is difficult for our college-age preservice teachers to understand the struggles that the residents of Greenwood (a neighborhood of Tulsa) faced or the severity of racism before, during, and after the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

When teaching the history related to the Tulsa Race Massacre, we encourage students to start with Greenwood's prosperity and its nickname "Black Wall Street," a nickname purportedly assigned by Booker T. Washington (Crowe and Lewis 2021). Ottawa "O.W." Gurley and his wife Emma purchased the land that established the Greenwood District in 1906, a year before Oklahoma gained statehood (Gara 2020, Thomas 2021). They dedicated the land to be sold in parcels to African Americans only, laying the groundwork for what would become the most prosperous Black community in the United States. Before the destruction caused by the Tulsa Race Massacre, Greenwood boasted 10,000 residents and 35 square blocks of homes, businesses, churches, hospitals, libraries, and so much more (Johnson n.d.). This thriving, vibrant Black community was targeted by white Tulsans in what historians call "the single worst incident of racial violence in American history" (Ellsworth n.d.).

The Tulsa Race Massacre took place May 31 to June 1, 1921. Many pinpoint the *elevator incident* as the catalyst for the Tulsa Race Massacre, when Dick Rowland, a young Black man, was accused of assaulting a young white woman, Sarah Page. But through the *Learning Through Listening: Rumor Conspiracy Studying the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre* lesson, local folklore presents multiple stories as possible motives for the violence. In our methods courses, students investigate the experiences of Greenwood residents during and after the Tulsa Race Massacre through primary sources, including the hundreds of photographs taken during the event. Through the work of oral history researchers to capture the memories of survivors decades after the event, we also have access to [video](#) and [audio](#) testimony of what happened in 1921. As Social Studies teacher educators, we let the primary sources do much of the teaching and allow our preservice teachers' questions to drive the learning and set the stage for difficult dialogues around this challenging history.

Starting the Conversation

Just as literacy instructors use touchstone texts, or revisit books repeatedly to model effective literacy techniques, we use the Tulsa Race Massacre as a *touchstone event* in the methods course, revisiting the topic throughout the semester (Johnson 2009). For example, Robin Fisher's former fourth-grade students loved the book *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad*, and immediately became attached to Henry, his suffering, and his will to survive as an enslaved person (Levine and Nelson 2007). Using this as a touchstone text meant referring to this book throughout the school year and connecting back to Henry as we covered other topics, such as discussing creative introductions and the way the authors intentionally used their words to elicit emotion and hook the reader into the story. As a touchstone event, teaching about the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and preparing our preservice teacher candidates to handle difficult dialogues around racially charged historical events in their future classrooms are pillars of our Social Studies methods courses. When we poll students at the beginning of the semester, uncomfortable

conversations are something students are most concerned about. Many do not know how to approach teaching the Tulsa Race Massacre, while others are terrified of backlash from parents. The introduction of anti-Critical Race Theory (CRT) legislation across the country includes Oklahoma House Bill 1775 (OK HB1775) that bans “teaching about white supremacy, patriarchy, implicit bias, unconscious bias, structural racism, and even empathy towards oppressed groups” (Bronstein et al. 2023, 34). Since the passage of this law in 2021, many educators question if it is even appropriate to teach the complex and racially charged history surrounding the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Those willing to do so struggle to select instructional strategies that “embrace multiple perspectives, narratives, and interpretations of a shared U.S. history” that align with Social Studies education demands (Bronstein et al. 2023, 33). Preparing future educators to teach in this hostile climate endows us with an even stronger responsibility to help our teacher candidates navigate difficult dialogues and challenging topics.

Before digging into history of the Tulsa Race Massacre we begin with two short writing prompts in which we ask students to check for their blind spots by evaluating their inner circle to understand where their personal beliefs come from and by identifying other perspectives around a challenging topic. We discovered that many of our college-aged teacher candidates had really never thought about how their opinions and views were influenced by those close to them. We want students to look at their own inner circles to see how their thoughts, impressions, and beliefs are influenced by those they value most. This activity, loosely based on an [Inclusion Works](#) protocol, asks students to do three things:

1. List the five people closest to them. These are the people they turn to when things go wrong or they need to make a decision.
2. Next students are instructed to place a checkmark next to the person’s name when they have something in common with them. We ask such things as age, gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and religion.
3. Students are then given time to reflect privately and ask themselves a series of questions:
 - a. Did you realize your close circle was so like or different than you?
 - b. How does this knowledge influence your thinking?
 - c. Why do you think it is important to recognize this as a teacher?
 - d. How might someone with a very different circle of people see things from a completely different perspective?
 - e. How does perspective influence relationships and dialogues among people?

(Hive Learning n.d.)

Through our experiences with preservice teachers, we found that allowing students to be introspective before tackling such a racially charged historical event led them to be more open-minded and to interrogate their personal biases. By gently exposing these introspections at the start of the conversation, we are able to move forward and navigate the hard history.

While the inner circle activity is great to expose possible biases, it could make people self-conscious. In the second short writing activity, taken from a Facing History lesson titled [Preparing Students for Difficult Conversations](#), our future teachers first write a private journal entry about what feelings they think people in the room might be having. Next they respond to a very short writing prompt: “I *mostly* feel _____ when discussing [the Tulsa Race Massacre], because _____” (Facing History 2016). None of the students’ “I feel” statements are shared publicly. Next, students are asked to brainstorm what feelings they think *others* might be feeling

in the room. Typically, students share common words or feelings in response to the Tulsa Massacre such as sad, confused, angry, horrified, nervous, and uncomfortable. To wrap up the activity, we open up the classroom to a short discussion about what the words shared have in common, where these feelings might have come from, and which words or opinions might be the most valid. Guess what? *All feelings* are valid. This strategy has been powerful for students in our Social Studies teaching methods courses to see that others feel the same way about this topic.

As we complete the post-writing reflection discussion, our teacher candidates comment that they appreciate the pressure being taken off them by asking what others might be feeling. There is a general consensus that they might not participate in the difficult dialogue had they been put on the spot with their own feelings. In many instances, this activity exposes feelings of white guilt with our preservice teachers expressing anger and shame over the events of the past, remorse over the lives lost, curiosity if their families were involved in the atrocities, and fear of repercussions even 100 years later. We reiterate that all these feelings are valid and lead to fruitful conversations about the influence of race, racism, socioeconomics, and history on our lives today. As with most activities in a teaching methods course, we discuss how this strategy might be helpful in their PK–12 classrooms. With the restrictions surrounding OK HB1775 and similar anti-CRT laws, we do caution teacher candidates about using these activities in the classroom. Despite the heightened political climate, each school culture is different, and this material has proven to be effective and appropriate for curricular standards. Our preservice teachers agree this would be a gentle way to lead into difficult content and conversations.

Centering Primary Sources

As we dive into the history surrounding the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre throughout the semester, we use several activities that interact, analyze, and respond to primary sources. Often at the beginning of our study, we use a “[Connect, Correct, Collect](#)” graphic organizer to activate students’ prior knowledge about the Tulsa Massacre (Neuhaus Education Center 2023). This chart is a variation of a KWL, which asks students what they already Know, Want to Know, and, after the lesson, what they Learned. Through “Connect, Correct, Collect” students connect their prior knowledge about the Tulsa Race Massacre to their knowledge of history past and present (Figure 1). While students learn new information in their daily lessons or throughout the semester, they add information to the Collect category. If students find information that contradicts what they thought they knew (or misconceptions), they cross out the misinformation from the Connect or Collect columns and place accurate information in the Correct column. The strength of this graphic organizer lies in the Correct column as it asks students to physically cross out misinformation or misconceptions and helps to solidify the correct information in their minds. Often this leads to great conversations about the importance of reliable sources, and preservice teachers quickly realize the most accurate information comes from primary source documents because corrections often need to be made when relying too much on secondary sources. After completing this activity, we ask students to reflect on their PK–12 Social Studies education, the teaching strategies and activities used, and if they were taught whole histories through this kind of inquiry and primary source analysis. Many come to realize how little they know about U.S. or World History and begin to research historical events independently to see if they truly know what happened in Tulsa in 1921 and beyond. These future teachers translate the principles of this learning activity as they design lessons of their own, often replacing textbooks with oral histories, newspaper articles, and primary source photographs accessed through cultural or historical societies, museums, and archives.

Connect: 	Correct: 	Collect:
Write down 3-5 things you know about the Tulsa Race Riot/Massacre.	Correct any misconceptions you had. Cross out erroneous information from side columns.	As we go through the lesson, add information here you learn along the way.

Figure 1. Connect, Collect, Correct graphic organizer activity allows students to list what they already know about the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, add additional information as they continue to learn more throughout the lesson, and correct any misconceptions they may have about the event. Adapted from Neuhaus Education Center 2023.

We also center primary sources by exploring the experiences of the victims of the Tulsa Massacre. Oral histories recorded decades after the event give teachers and students a glimpse into what happened over 100 years ago. These oral histories are available through [Voices of Oklahoma](#), the [John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation](#), and the [Tulsa Historical Society](#), as well as our [folksources.org](#) website and connected lesson plans. Another learning activity we frequently use with preservice teacher candidates, adapted from [Rethinking Schools](#) (Christensen 2012), asks participants to put themselves into the role of a Tulsa Race Massacre survivor and share what they saw or experienced in a Dinner Party or Mixer role-play activity. The curated roles contain first-person narratives from real people who witnessed the event. The narratives are based on primary sources and secondary sources taken from books by Tulsa Race Massacre historians. In small groups, teacher candidates mingle and share the stories and perspectives of Greenwood residents and what happened during the Tulsa Race Massacre. The conversations fostered when debriefing the role-play activity reveal lesser-known stories of the Massacre and help students understand the motivations, conflicts, and consequences of this event on the community. Most importantly, students ask hard questions, such as “Who bears the blame for the destruction of Greenwood?” and “Why did law enforcement deputize a mob?” We often pair the debrief activity with primary source photographs and maps to give students a more complete understanding of what happened in 1921. The [Library of Congress](#) analysis tools that ask students to observe, reflect, and question work well with the primary source photographs of the Tulsa Race Massacre available from [folksources.org](#), the [Oklahoma Historical Society](#), and [Oklahoma State University](#).

Challenging Questions Lead to Difficult Dialogues

Throughout the Social Studies methods courses, our preservice and early career teachers learn hard history and how to teach it through these strategies, but the most important teaching strategy we model is inquiry—to let questions drive Social Studies learning. Often students will come up with their own questions, but it is also important that the instructor be prepared with questions to jumpstart meaningful conversations. As students gain more knowledge about the 1921 Race

Massacre, the history of Greenwood, and the effects of this historical event on the community, city, state, and nation, we use discussion prompts, such as the questions listed below, to delve deeper and push their understanding beyond the simple questions of who, what, where, and when and toward the more complex questions of why and how. We have used these questions in our Social Studies methods courses to foster deeper understanding and difficult dialogues about the Tulsa Race Massacre:

- Should we call this event a riot or massacre?
- What motivated the perpetrators to attack the thriving Greenwood district?
- What role did the press play in the events of the Tulsa Race Massacre? Does the press bear any responsibility?
- What responsibility does the city/state have to revitalize Greenwood and North Tulsa?
- What are the lasting effects (economic, political, social) of this event on Tulsa? Oklahoma? The United States?
- What is the difference between “not racist” and “anti-racist”?
- How is being a “colorblind” teacher hurtful to students of color?
- What recent events in Oklahoma and the nation can we teach in connection with the 1921 Race Massacre? How are these connections relevant to students’ lives?

As students learn more about Greenwood and the Tulsa Race Massacre, the more questions they ask about why this history continues to be hidden. When PK–12 students and university teacher candidates start to ask challenging questions and seek out historical connections between people, places, and events across time periods, we believe this shift demonstrates their readiness for difficult dialogues about hard history. These same questions may come up in the upper elementary, middle school, and high school classrooms we are preparing teacher candidates to step into one day, and they need to be prepared to handle challenging questions and the conversations that follow.

We model difficult dialogues in our Social Studies methods courses to equip preservice teachers to have hard conversations about history with their future students. As we shared in this article, educators should prepare their students to engage in difficult dialogues by creating a safe classroom community, teaching students to activate listening and critical-thinking skills, and leading students to evaluate their own thinking and biases before entering challenging conversations. Teaching through inquiry, modeling primary source analysis, and encouraging students to use texts, oral histories, photographs, and visual sources as evidence when responding to challenging questions allows students to participate in difficult dialogues in the classroom without it devolving into a shouting match (Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning n.d.). While we do our best to prepare effective Social Studies teachers and fully acknowledge the challenges educators face today, we hope the strategies presented here will encourage them not to back down from teaching challenging topics out of fear or lack of knowledge.

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Lesson 1: Evaluating Primary Sources: A Lesson on Critical Language Use

by Sarah Milligan with Teaching Tips from Brandy Perceful and Shanedra Nowell

How can teachers use archival documents in the classroom not only to teach about a historical event, but also to strengthen students' critical inquiry skills? This lesson aims to help students develop critical inquiry skills by examining how historic images and objects are framed in institutional contexts. Students will examine historic "captions" of postcards created of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and how personal perspective shapes the way we view historic objects. At the end of the lesson, students will gain a deeper understanding of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre by interrogating the documentation of this event and reinforce the need to think critically about how information is generated and shared.

Lesson Title: Evaluating Primary Sources: A Lesson on Critical Language Use	
Time Requirement: 50-60 min.	Suggested Courses: U.S. History (1878–Present), AP U.S. History, Oklahoma History, African American History
Central Focus: This lesson offers a general overview of primary source context. It includes a discussion of the positionality of people who have institutionalized the care and access of primary source material over time and explores how language matters. Explore the slide deck created by our classroom teacher: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1CPBhyr8iqvJ12hiL7Ru1_t3tiuZzy0UUEeklbb32G8/edit?usp=share_link	
Essential Questions: What are primary sources and how are they created and “institutionalized?” What could be missing? How does language describing this material accurately represent the cultural context of the object?	
For the Teacher: For an overview of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, see the digital exhibition from the Tulsa City-County Library: https://www.tulsalibrary.org/1921-tulsa-race-massacre . For an overview of understanding and talking about bias, see this resource from the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History: https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/bias . For more on the history of sharing images taken during and in the wake of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, see: <i>World Literature Today</i> . 2021. Volume 95(2, Spring). Photographing the Tulsa Massacre: A Conversation with Karlos K. Hill by <u>Daniel Simon</u> : https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2021/spring/photographing-tulsa-massacre-conversation-karlos-k-hill-daniel-simon . For more depth: <i>The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: A Photographic History</i> by Karlos K. Hill: https://www.oupress.com/9780806168562/the-1921-tulsa-race-massacre .	

See this article detailing the 2021 petition by University of Oklahoma librarians to update the terminology for the Tulsa Race Massacre within the Library of Congress subject headings https://www.ou.edu/web/news_events/articles/news_2021/library-of-congress-accepts-ou-libraries-proposal-to-change-subject-heading-to-tulsa-race-massacre.

Tips for checking bias in archival descriptions:

Use these examples from the *Anti-Racist Description Resources* describing how to be more accurately descriptive of context in framing archival or primary source records. For example, when it is clearly demonstrated or understood that there is action happening, do not try to make it a passive description. Looking at the example from the first exercise under “Engage,” assigning the term rioters to people in the car is accurate to the historic understanding of what happened and demonstrates relevance to the event it represents rather than describing people as passively “riding in a car.”

From the *Anti-Racist Description Resources* Created by Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group:

https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf.

Suggestions for evaluating and thinking critically about how primary source descriptions can impact our understanding or assumptions about a source:

- Unlearn the “neutral” voice of traditional archival description.
- “Is the descriptive language I am using respectful to the larger communities of people invested in this record?”
- Decenter “neutrality” and “objectivity” in favor of “respect” and “care.”
- Avoid passive voice when describing oppressive relationships, for example, identifying a “slave” vs. “enslaved person.”
- Use active voice to embed responsibility within description.

For example, consider the difference between these two sentences:

1) “Four Kent State University students were killed on May 4, 1970, during a clash between the Ohio National Guard and a crowd gathered to protest the Vietnam War.”

2) “Members of the Ohio National Guard killed four Kent State University students during a mass protest against the Vietnam War.”

Oklahoma Academic Standards:

Social Studies Practices

- 2.A.6-8.2 Compare points of agreement from reliable information and interpretations associated with discipline-based compelling and supporting questions.
- 2.A.9-12.2 Compare points of agreement and disagreement from reliable information and expert interpretations associated with discipline-based compelling and supporting questions.
- 2.A.6-8.3 Develop deeper levels of understanding by questioning ideas and assumptions and identifying inconsistencies or errors in reasoning.
- 2.A.9-12.3 Reinforce critical thinking by evaluating and challenging ideas and assumptions; analyze and explain inconsistencies in reasoning.
- 3.A.6-8.1 Gather, compare, and analyze evidence from primary and secondary sources on the same topic, identifying possible bias and evaluating credibility.

- 3.A.9-12.1 Gather, organize, and analyze various kinds of primary and secondary source evidence on related topics, evaluating the credibility of sources.
- 3.A.6-8.3 Use multiple historical or contemporary primary sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional relevant sources.
- 3.A.9-12.3 Develop questions about multiple historical and/or contemporary sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
- 3.A.6-8.7 Describe multiple factors that influence the perspectives of individuals and groups during historical eras or toward contemporary situations.
- 3.A.9-12.7 Analyze complex and interacting factors that influence multiple perspectives during different historical eras or contemporary events.
- 4.A.6-8.3 Acquire, determine the meaning, and appropriately use academic vocabulary and phrases used in social studies contexts.

Oklahoma History

- OKH.5.2. Examine multiple points of view regarding the evolution of race relations in Oklahoma, including:
 - A. growth of all-black towns (1865–1920)
 - B. passage of Senate Bill 1 establishing Jim Crow Laws
 - C. rise of the Ku Klux Klan
 - D. emergence of “Black Wall Street” in the Greenwood District
 - E. causes of the Tulsa Race Riot and its continued social and economic impact.
 - F. the role labels play in understanding historic events, for example “riot” versus “massacre”.

United States History (1878–Present)

- USH.4.1 Examine the economic, political, and social transformations between the World Wars.
 - B. Describe the rising racial tensions in American society including the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, increased lynchings, race riots as typified by the Tulsa Race Riot, the rise of Marcus Garvey and black nationalism, and the use of poll taxes and literacy tests to disenfranchise blacks.

Primary Sources in this Lesson:

Historic Postcard with the caption, "Captured Negroes on Way to Convention Hall - During Tulsa Race Riot, June 1, 1921." Courtesy of Tulsa Historical Society and Museum

<https://tulsahistory.pastperfectonline.com/photo/CD1D200D-B47C-48AF-A96D-223155630968>.

Historic Postcard with the caption, "Tulsa Negro Uprising. West Side of Greenwood, at Archer." Courtesy of Tulsa Historical Society and Museum

<https://tulsahistory.pastperfectonline.com/Photo/4A7C3B36-A640-41C3-A526-061926545403>.

Historic Postcard with the caption, “Scene from Tulsa Race Riot June 1st 1921.” Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

<http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/fd53fef46c1-75d7-4379-9f5b-ebb257182653>.

“Burning of church where amunition [sic] was stored - during Tulsa Race Riot.” American National Red Cross photograph collection, Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2017679767>.

Common Misconceptions and How You Plan to Address Them:

Objects and artifacts in museums, historical societies, libraries, and archives are presented as neutral pieces of representative evidence of our cultural past, but in reality they are collected or framed by individuals with often limited ties or understanding to the community or culture the sources represent. One way to more accurately engage with primary source materials is to understand the processes in which they are created, collected, and presented to the public.

Lesson Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary sources.
- Identify aspects of a text (audio or written) that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion, or avoidance of particular facts).

Academic Language/Terminology:

- Implicit bias: a bias or prejudice that is present but not consciously held or recognized ([Merriam Webster dictionary](#))
- Primary source: raw materials of history—original documents and objects that were created at the time under study ([Library of Congress](#))

Differentiation and Other Modifications:

This lesson uses visual materials that may be a challenge for visually impaired students. Aid these students with thick description of the photographs that engages other senses. Teachers may remove timed elements for students with time accommodations on tests or assignments.

Teacher Materials and Preparation:

Test all links connected to classroom activities. Review and print needed worksheets.

Context:

For more information on how language creation happens related to primary source material, see the Digital Public Library of America's "Statement on Potentially Harmful Content" <https://dp.la/about/harmful-language-statement>.

5E Instructional Model**Engage: Visualize This** (2-5 min.)

Objective: Reflect on subjectivity in archival metadata and how subjectivity can influence a researcher's framing of an archival object.

Action:

[Visualize This](#) exercise.

Teaching Tips:

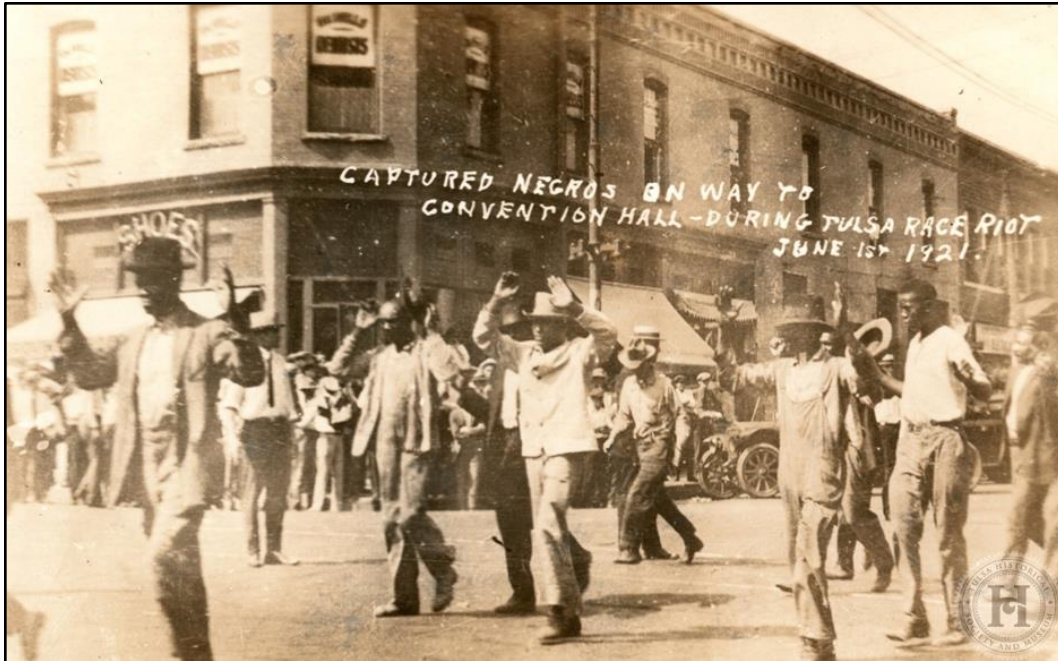
Spend time defining the word bias for students. Lead a discussion with students focusing on how narratives around important historical events are formed. Encourage them to think about power differentials in this process of shaping the narrative that is presented to the general public. This could also continue into an engagement in a brief discussion about immigration and the various

Ask to write about or discuss the difference in the three descriptions. Discuss how an image or artifact is described in collections and how the language of that description can also affect an individual's assumptions and experience when interacting with it in an archive or museum.	ways different politicians and news organizations discuss the topic. At the conclusion of this discussion, ask students to stop and think about the social and political landscape of Oklahoma and the United States as a whole in 1921 and discuss it with a partner for a few minutes and then share what they discussed with the class. This served as my lead-in to the lesson's activity.
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<p>Explore and Explain: Description Activity (5 min. per image, 5-10 min. for reporting)</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> Think critically about how the framing of a primary source object can change over time and be intentionally or unintentionally biased based on the author's subjectivity. Think critically how to be more transparent in accurate descriptions for researchers.</p> <p><u>Review:</u> Context statement from the Smithsonian Museum of African American History on historic postcards depicting scene from the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre http://n2t.net/ark:/65665/fd53d6610f6-6326-4f08-8be6-0b6fde8f5111</p> <p>On May 31 and June 1, 1921, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, mobs of white residents brutally attacked the African American community of Greenwood, colloquially known as "Black Wall Street," in the deadliest racial massacre in U.S. history. Amidst the violence, both white rioters and the Oklahoma National Guard rounded up black residents of Greenwood and forced them to detention centers. More than 6,000 African Americans were interned at the Convention Hall, the Tulsa County Fairgrounds, and the baseball stadium McNulty Park. Some were held for as long as eight days.</p> <p>Photo postcards of the Tulsa Race Massacre were widely distributed following the massacre in 1921. Like postcards depicting lynchings, these souvenir cards were powerful declarations of white racial power and control. Decades later, the cards served as evidence for community members working to recover the forgotten history of the riot and secure justice for its victims and their descendants.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Break into small groups. Have each group look at one of the 1920s handwritten captions on the image turned postcard and as a group create new descriptions. Think about</p>	<p>Teaching Tips: Students may struggle with the racial terms used on the images and in texts that describe the incident. Explain to students that some terms are outdated (such as Negro), but not necessarily offensive for the time period.</p> <p>Have students consider the connection between bias and point of view. Use contemporary examples to help students understand that their bias toward their favorite brands or foods influences their point of view or perspective on topics.</p> <p>Consider having students analyze and evaluate the reasons these photographs were taken. Discussion questions could include: "Was the photographer concerned with capturing and cataloging a historic event?" and "Who do you think wrote the captions on the photographs? The photographer? The postcard salesman? Someone else?"</p> <p>The See, Think, Wonder visual thinking strategy would work well with this activity. These photos are included in the lesson for reference. You may want to have larger copies available digitally or printed prior</p>
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how language affects the audience's perception of what is happening and focus specifically on how bias might come into play. What do you see? What do you know? What questions do you still have?

to using this activity in your course.



“Captured Negroes on Way to Convention Hall - During Tulsa Race Riot, June 1, 1921.”

[1984.002.071 - American Red Cross | Tulsa Historical Society](#)



“Tulsa Negro Uprising. West Side of Greenwood, at Archer.”

[1984.002.071 - American Red Cross, Tulsa Historical Society](#)



"Scene from Tulsa Race Riot June 1st 1921"

2011.175.10 - [Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture](#)



"Burning of church where amunition [sic] was stored during Tulsa Race Riot"

2017679767 - [American National Red Cross photograph collection \(Library of Congress\)](#)

<p>Extension: Continuation of Description Activity: (5 min. per image, 5-10 min. for reporting) <u>Objective:</u> Think critically about how the framing of a primary source object can change over time and be intentionally or unintentionally biased based on the author’s subjectivity. Think critically how to be more transparent in accurate descriptions for researchers.</p> <p>Create captions for the provided unidentified images. Ask “What do you see? What do you know? What questions do you still have?”</p>	<p>Teaching Tips: As an extension to this lesson, students in a high school classroom also discussed the 2020 Ahmaud Arbery murder.</p>
<p>Evaluate: Students will complete a Reflection Exit Ticket. Ask students to write three things they learned about evaluating primary source information and identifying bias in primary source materials.</p>	
<p>Sources: Digital exhibition from the Tulsa City-County Library https://www.tulsalibrary.org/1921-tulsa-race-massacre</p> <p>Smithsonian National Museum of African American History, Talking About Race: Bias https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/bias</p> <p><i>World Literature Today</i>. 2021. Volume 95 (2, Spring). Photographing the Tulsa Massacre: A Conversation with Karlos K. Hill by Daniel Simon https://www.worldliteraturetoday.org/2021/spring/photographing-tulsa-massacre-conversation-karlos-k-hill-daniel-simon</p> <p><i>The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: A Photographic History</i> by Karlos K. Hill https://www.oupres.com/9780806168562/the-1921-tulsa-race-massacre</p> <p>March 22, 2021 press release: <i>Library of Congress Accepts OU Libraries’ Proposal to Change Subject Heading to “Tulsa Race Massacre”</i> https://www.ou.edu/web/news_events/articles/news_2021/library-of-congress-accepts-ou-libraries-proposal-to-change-subject-heading-to-tulsa-race-massacre</p> <p><i>Anti-Racist Description Resources</i> Created by Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf</p> <p>Digital Public Library of America’s “Statement on Potentially Harmful Content” https://dp.la/about/harmful-language-statement</p>	

Visualize This... Image and Captions for Classroom Use

Read the first archival description of an image and ask the group to visualize this image. Then read the second and third description and ask to visualize the image. Then reveal that both descriptions are descriptions of the same image. Open a discussion on whether they had a different or similar image visualized for both descriptions. Does it matter?



- 1) “A group of Caucasian men in a car during the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. One man stands on the car’s running board. One man at the rear carries a rifle or shotgun.” (see object in this [digital exhibition](#)).
- 2) “A photographic reproduction of a photo taken of a ‘skirmish car’ with ten white men with firearms driving through a neighborhood” (see object in this [digital collection](#)).
- 3) “A group of armed white rioters in a car with one occupant holding a gun and another man standing on the running board from the Tulsa Race Massacre, 1921” (see object in this [digital collection](#)).

Lesson 2: Learning Through Listening: Rumor, Legend, and Conspiracy in Studying the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

by Sarah Milligan, with Teaching Tips by
Angela DeLong, Piedmont Intermediate
School; and Shanedra Nowell, Oklahoma
State University

After spending years of struggling and sacrifice, the people had begun to look upon Tulsa as the Negro Metropolis of the Southwest. Then the devastating Tulsa Disaster burst upon us, blowing to atoms ideas and ideals no less than mere material evidence of our civilization.

A Colored boy accidentally stepped on a white elevator girl's foot. An evening paper hurled the news broadcast, with the usual "Lynching is feared if the victim is caught." Then the flames of hatred which had been brewing for years broke loose.

Since the lynching of a White boy in Tulsa, the confidence in the ability of the city official to protect its

prisoner had decreased; therefore, some of our group banded together to add to the protection of the life that was threatened to be taken without a chance to prove his innocence. I say innocence because he was brought to trial and given his liberty; the girl over whom the trouble was caused failed to appear against him.

Excerpt from *Events of the Tulsa Disaster* by Mrs. Mary E. Jones Parish, 1922, pp. 7-8.

How can teachers use oral histories and written testimonies in the classroom to teach not only about historical events but also strengthen students' critical analysis skills? This lesson aims to help students develop close reading and listening skills and provide connections between historical narratives interrogating the concepts of rumor and conspiracy related to shaping the memory of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Students will hear survivors of the Race Massacre share accounts, juxtaposed with written reported accounts from journalists and residents of Greenwood, the African American neighborhood of Tulsa, writing down quotes and phrases that make an impression on them, then evaluating the function and role of rumor and conspiracy in public shaping of an event. By the end of the lesson, students will gain a deeper understanding of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre by listening to those who were there and practicing critical information evaluation skills, which are needed both inside and outside the classroom.

Teaching statement: This lesson is an excellent way to explore the initiating event of the Race Massacre and to discuss how historians and students of history analyze conflicting primary sources. Students are given multiple firsthand accounts of the "riot" and how it began, and discuss similarities, differences, and how rumor affected both the events then and how we see them now.

Lesson Title: Rumor and Conspiracy Studying the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre	
Time Requirement: 50-60 min.	Courses: U.S. History (1878-Present), AP U.S. History, Oklahoma History, African American History
<p>Central Focus: This lesson introduces rumor, legend, and conspiracy as ways folklorists study the past and seek to understand the present. Students will use oral history testimony and primary sources to investigate rumor, legend, or conspiracy related to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and evaluate them as a source of information and for media literacy.</p> <p>Essential Questions:</p> <p>What functions do rumor or conspiracy play as a source of information outside the realm of truth or fiction?</p> <p>How are rumor, legend, or conspiracy recognized in everyday life?</p>	

For the Teacher:

Folklorists study rumor, legend, and conspiracy, any of which according to the folklorists Gary Alan Fine and Patricia A. Turner (2004) is “a claim about the world not supported by ‘authenticated information.’ It involves ‘unsecured,’ ‘unverified’ information.” When mainstream media, established political authorities, and dominant culture gatekeepers ignore, tolerate, and/or dismiss rumors and conspiracy theories as unimportant, a false narrative such as the “[Lost Cause of the Confederacy](#)” or that events of 1921 were instigated by the segregated Black neighborhood residents of Greenwood in a “riot” can become entrenched and embedded. This narrative lives not only in the dominant culture psyche, but also in civic life, institutions, and media.

Even if the audience does not believe that the rumor is factually correct, it is presented as something that could be believed; it is a truth claim. Rumor is deliberate communication—often spread in face-to-face conversation, sometimes spread through written material, and now frequently spread through the mass media and other modern information technology... some rumors may be factually incorrect in the specifics of their claims (their superficial truth) yet reveal fundamental truths about the nature of the cultural order.

Rumor is, from this perspective, a form of problem solving, permitting people to cope with life's uncertainties, surely a more hopeful image than that of immoral mischief....What happens when historic events and community narratives live only in community space not championed by the dominant culture gatekeepers.

(*Whispers on the Color Line: Rumor and Race in America*, Gary Alan Fine and Patricia A. Turner. 2004. Oakland: University of California Press.)

For a more concise breakdown of the difference and function between rumor, legend, conspiracy, see the folklorist Andrea Kitta’s (2020) video, “COVID-19 Gossip, Rumor, Legend, and Conspiracy Theories,” <https://youtu.be/-x6gKUG6DTE?t=99>.

Academic Standards:**Social Studies Practices**

- 2.A.6-8.2 Compare points of agreement from reliable information and interpretations associated with discipline-based compelling and supporting questions.
- 2.A.9-12.2 Compare points of agreement and disagreement from reliable information and expert interpretations associated with discipline-based compelling and supporting questions.
- 2.A.6-8.3 Develop deeper levels of understanding by questioning ideas and assumptions and identifying inconsistencies or errors in reasoning.
- 2.A.9-12.3 Reinforce critical thinking by evaluating and challenging ideas and assumptions; analyze and explain inconsistencies in reasoning.
- 3.A.6-8.1 Gather, compare, and analyze evidence from primary and secondary sources on the same topic, identifying possible bias and evaluating credibility.
- 3.A.9-12.1 Gather, organize, and analyze various kinds of primary and secondary source evidence on related topics, evaluating the credibility of sources.
- 3.A.6-8.3 Use multiple historical or contemporary primary sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional relevant sources.

- 3.A.9-12.3 Develop questions about multiple historical and/or contemporary sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
- 3.A.6-8.7 Describe multiple factors that influence the perspectives of individuals and groups during historical eras or toward contemporary situations.
- 3.A.9-12.7 Analyze complex and interacting factors that influence multiple perspectives during different historical eras or contemporary events.
- 4.A.6-8.3 Acquire, determine the meaning, and appropriately use academic vocabulary and phrases used in social studies contexts.

Oklahoma History

- OKH.5.2. Examine multiple points of view regarding the evolution of race relations in Oklahoma, including:
 - A. growth of all-black towns (1865-1920)
 - B. passage of Senate Bill 1 establishing Jim Crow Laws
 - C. rise of the Ku Klux Klan
 - D. emergence of “Black Wall Street” in the Greenwood District
 - E. causes of the Tulsa Race Riot and its continued social and economic impact.
 - F. the role labels play in understanding historic events, for example “riot” versus “massacre”.

United States History (1878 - Present)

- USH.4.1 Examine the economic, political, and social transformations between the World Wars.
 - B. Describe the rising racial tensions in American society including the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, increased lynchings, race riots as typified by the Tulsa Race Riot, the rise of Marcus Garvey and black nationalism, and the use of poll taxes and literacy tests to disenfranchise blacks.

Primary Sources in This Lesson:

The Broad Ax. Salt Lake City, Utah, 11 June 1921. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. “Charles E. Stump, Traveling correspondent for the *Broad Ax*, Visits Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Secures a Vivid Account of the Race Riots in Tulsa,” <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1921-06-11/ed-1/seq-3>.

Kenny Booker and John Alexander interview for the National Visionary Leadership Project at the American Folklife Center, <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/59>.

Joe Burns, O.G. Clark, Mrs. G.E. Jackson for the National Visionary Leadership Project at the American Folklife Center, <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/60>.

Events of the Tulsa Disaster by Mrs. Mary E. Jones Parish, 1922, http://129.244.102.213/speccoll/collections/F704T92P37%201922_Events/Events1.pdf.

Manuscript by B.C. Franklin “The Tulsa Race Riot and Three of Its Victims.” August 22, 1931. From the Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift from Tulsa Friends and John W. and Karen R. Franklin,

https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2015.176.1#:~:text=The%20unpublished%20manuscript%20consists%20of,being%20killed%20by%20the%20mob.

Common Misconceptions and How You Plan to Address Them:

One common misconception is that all rumors, legends, and conspiracies are “untrue” and therefore not narratives that need to be addressed in the classroom. This lesson addresses the function of rumor and conspiracy and how students can recognize these types of narrative when thinking critically about information they encounter.

NOTE: For students and teachers unfamiliar with the Tulsa Race Massacre, the story of Dick Rowland functions as an example of how rumor spread and then was published as fact in area newspapers, then widely credited as the impetus or spark that led to the Tulsa Race Massacre. This lesson asks students, regardless of what we understand as the truth today, what does the rumor tell us?

Learning Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary sources and secondary sources.
- Identify aspects of a text (audio or written) that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Academic Language/Terminology:

Rumor: Information or a story that is passed from person to person but has not been proven to be true ([Britannica Dictionary](#)).

Conspiracy (Theory): An attempt to explain harmful or tragic events as the result of the actions of a small powerful group. Such explanations reject the accepted narrative surrounding those events ([Britannica Dictionary](#)).

Contemporary Legend: Contemporary legends (sometimes called urban legends or simply legends) are stories that spread primarily through informal channels. Legends differ from rumors; rumors are brief speculative statements usually confined to a specific location, whereas legends tend to be longer narratives and may be localized or spread more widely ([Oxford Bibliographies](#)).

Differentiation and Other Modifications:

This lesson uses recorded materials that include transcripts, so students with hearing impairments may read along as they review the primary source materials. Students with reading difficulties can listen to the recordings or use the transcripts to support their reading skills.

Teachers may remove timed elements for students with time accommodations on tests or assignments.

Teacher Materials and Preparation:

Test all links connected to classroom activities. Review and print needed worksheets.

Context: If a brief summary of the event and impact of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre is needed, see the Library of Congress “On this Day” summary for May 31, 2021, <https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/may-31>.

You could also play for students the PBS series *BOSS: The Black Experience in Business* episode “Greenwood and the Tulsa Race Riots,” <https://youtu.be/-yceK9LHFSA>.

For more on the difference between intentional misinformation, rumor, legend, and conspiracy, watch the folklorist Andrea Kitta’s video, “COVID-19 Gossip, Rumor, Legend, and Conspiracy Theories,” <https://youtu.be/-x6gKUG6DTE?t=99>.

For more on the function and identification of rumor and conspiracy, see Patricia Turner’s “The Obamas’ Lonely Walk on the High Road” on the podcast *Notes from America with Kai Wright*, October 3, 2022, <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/anxiety/episodes/obamas-high-road>.

5E Instructional Model

Engage: Ask students if rumor and conspiracy are new phenomena. Where and how do they see them play out today?

Teaching Tips:
Provide examples from current events or social media trends that students at their specific age/grade level would understand and connect with.

Explore:

Have students read the May 27, 2021, Library of Congress Blog entry “[Tulsa Race Massacre: Newspaper Complicity and Coverage](#)” discussing the role of news providers in spreading, or working to counter, rumor and conspiracy in the events leading up to and following the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

Ask students to compare the historical accounts referenced in the blog post by analyzing written accounts or oral history interviews for similarities and differences in the accounts.

Students should take notes on what they notice that might indicate points of rumor or conspiracy, either clearly stated or through unclear information sourcing. Ask students:

- What would be possible motives for any rumors or conspiracies being spread?
- How did individuals represented here talk about these instances in the context of shaping public memory around the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre?

Teaching Tips:
Follow the reading with a discussion or writing response. Have students consider and compare ways Americans received news in 1921 versus today, or past and present [ethical responsibilities](#) in journalism. Incorporate some basic writing tasks to engage all learners and enhance conversation (tasks can be accessed [here](#)). Consider printing the written testimonies for students to annotate. The exercise helps students see the difficulties of searching for “what

<p>Sources (full citations at top of lesson):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Charles E. Stump, Traveling correspondent for the Broad Ax, Visits Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Secures a Vivid Account of the Race Riots in Tulsa.” • Excerpt from an interview with Kenny Booker and John Alexander. • Excerpt from an interview with Joe Burns, O.G. Clark, Mrs. G.E. Jackson • Excerpt from Events of the Tulsa Disaster by Mrs. Mary E. Jones Parish, 1922 (excerpt also below) • An unpublished manuscript by B.C. Franklin “The Tulsa Race Riot and Three of Its Victims.” (excerpt also below) 	<p>happened” in history and understand how rumor can both conceal truth and reveal it.</p> <p>Students may struggle with the racial terms used by the speakers. Explain to students that some terms are outdated (such as Negro), but not necessarily offensive for the time period.</p>
<p>Explain: Have students write independently or create discussion groups and respond to the following prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think rumor and conspiracy contributed to the Tulsa Race Massacre, or the legacy of the event over the last 100 years? Why do you think they were effective as a catalyst? • Regardless of truth, why do you think this rumor about Dick Rowland exists? • What function does rumor play? What makes it believable? Who might want to believe a rumor and why? 	<p>Teaching Tips: Consider having students ponder the overall legacy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre on U.S. history. Also have students make connections to other race riots related to Red Summer 1919 and consider how rumor served as a catalyst within these events.</p>
<p>Extend: In small groups have students brainstorm and identify another historical event affected by rumor or conspiracy. Have groups consider ways they can use primary sources to investigate these rumors and/or conspiracies and seek different perspectives around the events.</p>	<p>Teaching Tips: An example may be the rumors surrounding the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, such as what the American military knew before the bombing (and when) and how rumors about Japanese American spies caused paranoia and led to mass incarceration during WWII.</p>
<p>Evaluate: Students will complete a Reflection Exit Ticket. Ask students to write three things they learned about the Tulsa Race Massacre or about identifying rumors in historical and current informational sources.</p>	
<p>Sources:</p>	

Some lesson language is adapted from “Respecting the Smears: Anti-Obama Folklore Anticipates Fake News,” by Patricia A. Turner, *Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 131, no. 522, Fall 2018, pp. 421-25, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/707447>.

Andrea Kitta’s video, “COVID-19 Gossip, Rumor, Legend, and Conspiracy Theories,” <https://youtu.be/-x6gKUG6DTE?t=99>.

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PBS series *BOSS: The Black Experience in Business*. Greenwood and the Tulsa Race Riots, <https://youtu.be/-yceK9LHFSA>.

Library of Congress “On this Day” summary for May 31, 1921, <https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/may-31>.

For fully forty eight hours, the fires raged and burned everything in its path and it left nothing but ashes and burned safes and trunks and the like where once stood beautiful homes and business houses. And so proud, rich, black Tulsa was destroyed by fire--that is its buildings and property; but its spirit was neither killed nor daunted. It is however not purpose to discuss here the cause or causes of this great shame, except to say that the chief cause was economic. The Negroes were wealthy and there were too many poor whites who envied them. Within two hours after the alleged assault had been reported, there were not a dozen white men here who did not know that this alleged assault consisted of a poor laboring, Negro boy accidentally stepping on the foot of a very poor but worthy white girl while the two were on a very crowded elevator in one of the down town business buildings; nor yet is it our purpose here to discuss the wonderful, almost miraculous come-back of the Race here in the accumulation of property and in the acquiring of a larger, richer and fuller spiritual life.

An unpublished manuscript by B.C. Franklin, “The Tulsa Race Riot and Three of Its Victims.” August 22, 1931, pp. 9-10.

Primary Source Set Texts

Student Observations

After spending years of struggling and sacrifice, the people had begun to look upon Tulsa as the Negro Metropolis of the Southwest. Then the devastating Tulsa Disaster burst upon us, blowing to atoms ideas and ideals no less than mere material evidence of our civilization.

A Colored boy accidentally stepped on a white elevator girl's foot. An evening paper hurled the news broadcast, with the usual "Lynching is feared if the victim is caught." Then the flames of hatred which had been brewing for years broke loose.

Since the lynching of a White boy in Tulsa, the confidence in the ability of the city official to protect its

prisoner had decreased; therefore, some of our group banded together to add to the protection of the life that was threatened to be taken without a chance to prove his innocence. I say innocence because he was brought to trial and given his liberty; the girl over whom the trouble was caused failed to appear against him.

Excerpt from *Events of the Tulsa Disaster* by Mrs. Mary E. Jones Parish, 1922, pp. 7-8.

This sad occurrence committed by more than 5,000 Whites has blackened the city of Tulsa's character and placed a black stain upon this great Oil City that can never be erased, I happened to note, being a resident of Tulsa.

The Daily Tribune, a White newspaper that tries to gain its popularity by referring to the Negro settlement as "Little Africa," came out on the evening of Tuesday, May 31, with an article claiming that a Negro had had some trouble with a White elevator girl at the Drexel Bldg. It also said that the Negro had been arrested and placed in jail and that a mob of Whites were forming in order to lynch the Negro.

Some time during the night about 50 Negroes arrived; then scores with rifles, etc., went up to the district where the accused Negro was in prison, and upon their arrival, found a host of Whites who were making an effort to lynch the Negro.

The Negroes were given the assurance by officials in charge that no lynching would take place, and as they were about to return to the Negro section, some one fired a shot and the battle began. All night long they could be heard firing from both sides, while the Whites were marshalling more than 5,000 men who had surrounded the Negro section to make an early attack in the morning on more than 8,000 innocent Negroes.

As daylight approached, they (the Whites), were given a signal by a whistle, and the dirty, cowardly outrage took place. All of this happened while innocent Negroes were slumbering, and did not have the least idea that they would fall victims of such brutality.

At the signal of the whistle, more than a dozen aeroplanes went up and began to drop turpentine balls upon the Negro residences, while the 5,000 Whites, with machine guns and other deadly weapons, began firing in all directions. Negro men, women and children began making haste to flee to safety, but to no avail, as they were met on all sides with volleys of shot. Negro men, women and children were killed in great numbers as they ran, trying to flee to safety.

Excerpt from *Events of the Tulsa Disaster* by Mrs. Mary E. Jones Parish, 1922, pp. 47-48.

Lesson 3: Learning Through Listening and Observation: Point of View in Reconstructing Events of the Tulsa Race Massacre

by Sarah Milligan, with Teaching Tips by Dee Maxey, Riverfield Country Day School; Brandy Perceful, Santa Fe South High School; and Shanedra Nowell

How can teachers use oral histories in the classroom to teach not only about historical events, but also strengthen students' listening skills? This lesson aims to help students develop close listening skills and seek connections between historical narratives using clips from five different oral histories related to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Students will hear survivors of the Race Massacre tell their stories, writing down quotes and phrases that make an impression on them, then make connections between the oral histories to better understand the concepts of point of view and differing perspectives. By the end of the lesson, students will gain a deeper understanding of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre by listening to those who were there and practicing close listening, a skill needed both inside and outside the classroom.

Teacher Statement: This lesson pushes students to look at situations from more than just one perspective. Relying on one point of view handicaps people's ability to see the complete picture. It is important to consider each available perspective and compare those with the available provable data and evidence. By digging through multiple perspectives of the same event, a kaleidoscope of facts will come together to create a cohesive picture of what happened. With the rise of social media escalating the dissemination of misinformation at an alarming rate, it is more important now than ever to do due diligence to investigate the details of a story to ensure a more accurate understanding of what is happening in our world.

Lesson Title: Point of View in Reconstructing Events of the Tulsa Race Massacre	
Time Requirement: 50-60 min.	Courses: U.S. History (1878-Present), AP U.S. History, Oklahoma History. African American History
Central Focus (Purpose): This lesson explores primary sources related to the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, specifically oral history interviews. By listening to multiple points of view of the same day and time, students will engage in critical thinking, close listening, and media literacy skills.	
Essential Questions: How does engaging the same event from multiple perspectives help us develop a complex understanding of history? What do counternarratives tell us about these events?	
For the Teacher: For deeper thinking about how “hidden history” lives inside communities, listen to Episode 7, Season 4 of Teaching Hard History to think through how the community reshaping of the Tulsa Race Massacre was reframed through the lens of the victims instead of perpetrators. “The survivors and their descendants keep that history alive. They kept artifacts, they kept documents proving what had happened. They shared the stories with one another. They understood that there was some risk in doing so because Tulsa as a whole didn't want to acknowledge this, just wanted to move on, forget it had happened.”	

Oklahoma Academic Standards:

Social Studies Practices

- 2.A.6-8.2 Compare points of agreement from reliable information and interpretations associated with discipline-based compelling and supporting questions.
- 2.A.9-12.2 Compare points of agreement and disagreement from reliable information and expert interpretations associated with discipline-based compelling and supporting questions.
- 2.A.6-8.3 Develop deeper levels of understanding by questioning ideas and assumptions and identifying inconsistencies or errors in reasoning.
- 2.A.9-12.3 Reinforce critical thinking by evaluating and challenging ideas and assumptions; analyze and explain inconsistencies in reasoning.
- 3.A.6-8.1 Gather, compare, and analyze evidence from primary and secondary sources on the same topic, identifying possible bias and evaluating credibility.
- 3.A.9-12.1 Gather, organize, and analyze various kinds of primary and secondary source evidence on related topics, evaluating the credibility of sources.
- 3.A.6-8.3 Use multiple historical or contemporary primary sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional relevant sources.
- 3.A.9-12.3 Develop questions about multiple historical and/or contemporary sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
- 3.A.6-8.7 Describe multiple factors that influence the perspectives of individuals and groups during historical eras or toward contemporary situations.
- 3.A.9-12.7 Analyze complex and interacting factors that influence multiple perspectives during different historical eras or contemporary events.
- 4.A.6-8.3 Acquire, determine the meaning, and appropriately use academic vocabulary and phrases used in social studies contexts.

Oklahoma History

- OKH.5.2. Examine multiple points of view regarding the evolution of race relations in Oklahoma, including:
 - A. growth of all-black towns (1865-1920)
 - B. passage of Senate Bill 1 establishing Jim Crow Laws
 - C. rise of the Ku Klux Klan
 - D. emergence of “Black Wall Street” in the Greenwood District
 - E. causes of the Tulsa Race Riot and its continued social and economic impact.
 - F. the role labels play in understanding historic events, for example “riot” versus “massacre”.

United States History (1878 - Present)

- USH.4.1 Examine the economic, political, and social transformations between the World Wars.
 - B. Describe the rising racial tensions in American society including the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, increased lynchings, race riots as typified by the Tulsa Race Riot, the rise of Marcus Garvey and black nationalism, and the use of poll taxes and literacy tests to disenfranchise blacks.

Primary Sources in This Lesson:

- Excerpt from interview with Fanny Misch from the Tulsa Historical Society collection, <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/61>.
- Excerpt from recorded 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Commission depositions (1999) - Interview with Joe Burns (Tape 2; 46:30 - 53:28), <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/62>.
- Excerpt from recorded 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Commission depositions (1999) - Interview with Eunice Jackson (Tape 4; 22:18 - 26:35), <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/63>.
- Excerpt from interview with Lessie Randle, Oklahoma State University Library, <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/65>.
- Excerpt from interview with Chloe Tidwell by Ruth Avery from the Tulsa Historical Society collection, <https://folksources.org/resources/items/show/64>.

Other Resources:

Teaching Hard History <https://www.learningforjustice.org/podcasts/teaching-hard-history/jim-crow-era/premeditation-and-resilience-tulsa-red-summer-and-the-great-migration>

Common Misconceptions and How You Plan to Address Them:

Understanding historical events does not come from one single truth or perspective. This lesson addresses the importance of investigating historical events from multiple perspectives to better understand a larger whole of a complicated event like the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. By investigating primary source accounts, such as oral history interviews, students exercise skills in critical thinking around media and information literacy.

NOTE: For students and teachers not familiar with the Tulsa Race Massacre, the events of the Tulsa Race Massacre on May 31 and June 1, 1921, were largely silenced or shaped in public opinion by the instigators of the violence, labeling the event a “riot” to shift blame to those inside the Greenwood neighborhood community, rather than an attack from outside the community. It was not until decades after the event, primarily with the appointment of a “Tulsa Race Riot Commission,” that the truth of the events was publicly exposed through narrative accounts of Greenwood neighborhood residents who lived through the events.

Lesson Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary sources.
- Identify aspects of a text (audio or written) that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Academic Language/Terminology:

Descriptive language: Use of adjectives and adverbs to give a reader/listener a more detailed feeling or understanding of a subject. Descriptive language often focuses on the five senses.

Differentiation and Other Modifications:

This lesson uses recorded materials that include transcripts so students with hearing impairments may read along as they review the primary source materials. Students with

reading difficulties can listen to the recordings or use the transcripts to support their reading skills.	
<p>Teacher Materials and Preparation:</p> <p>Test all links connected to classroom activities. Review and print needed worksheets.</p> <p>Context: If a brief summary of the event and impact of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre is needed, see the Library of Congress “On this Day” summary https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/may-31</p> <p>Teaching Tip: Introduce or frame the idea of perspective by reading through <i>The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs</i> (Scieszka and Smith, 1989), https://youtu.be/dIfBpZOQwls.</p>	
5E Instructional Model	
<p>Engage: Ask students for examples of an event they hold in common, like a community or school gathering. Ask for volunteers to share their personal experience or a secondary experience from someone they know about the event. Have a discussion to compare what stories or experiences overlap and what areas diverge from how the event is described.</p>	<p>Teaching Tips:</p> <p>Consider using school events, such as homecoming, school dances, or ball games as examples.</p> <p>Discussion questions could include “What were some of the experiences you had in common while attending this event?” or “Why would people have different perspectives on the event?”</p>
<p>Explore:</p> <p>Define descriptive language and give students examples. Students will listen for descriptive vocabulary in oral history excerpts about the night of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.</p> <p>Active Listening Activity: Students should take notes on details that help identify overlapping experiences, like physical reference points (street names, businesses, intersections), names, and time (of day, o’clock, related to an event). Students will listen for common and diverging experiences or memories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpt from interview with Fanny Misch from the Tulsa Historical Society collection. • Excerpt from recorded 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Commission depositions (1999) - Interview with Joe Burns (Tape 2; 46:30 - 53:28). 	<p>Teaching Tips:</p> <p>You may need to play each clip twice for students to listen closely and hear the descriptive language the speakers use.</p> <p>Students may struggle with the racial terms used by the speakers. Explain to students that some terms are outdated (such as Negro) but not necessarily offensive for the time period.</p> <p>Have students use this Note Catcher to organize their thoughts as they listen to the oral history clips.</p> <p>Consider splitting the class into smaller groups to do this portion of the activity. A jigsaw strategy may work as well, where students listen to clips in expert groups, then share their notes and compare/contrast oral histories in teaching groups.</p> <p>Consider using maps from the Tulsa World or Tulsa Community College to help students</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Excerpt from recorded 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Commission depositions (1999) - Interview with Eunice Jackson (Tape 4; 22:18 - 26:35). ● Excerpt from interview with Lessie Randle, Oklahoma State University Library. ● Excerpt from interview with Chloe Tidwell by Ruth Avery from the Tulsa Historical Society collection. 	<p>visualize the locations speakers mention in the oral history clips.</p> <p>After listening to the oral history excerpt from Lessie Randle, they may be interested in the interactive StoryFile where they can talk to her about her experiences.</p>
<p>Explain: Create student discussion groups based on the notes students took during active listening. After students share their ideas in a whole class or small group discussion, ask students, “How do oral history interviews help us listen for counter points related to our own history?”</p>	<p>Teaching Tips: Have students return to their Note Catcher find and compare connecting and diverging stories from the oral history clips.</p> <p>If using the jigsaw strategy, this is where students would move from their expert groups into the teaching groups to compare/contrast oral histories.</p>
<p>Extend: Hang a large piece of butcher paper, poster-size sticky note, or a classroom whiteboard on the wall.</p> <p>Using individual words, quotations, questions, drawings, or symbols, have students share their feelings, responses, and questions related to the perspectives shared in the oral history interviews. Facilitate a class discussion based on the points shared on the wall.</p>	<p>Teaching Tips: Discussion questions could include How does descriptive language add credibility to the speaker? How does proximity to the event affect the speaker’s point of view? Are there other characters or speakers who may alter their point of view?</p> <p>Include a writing activity in this lesson. Ask students to write a short reflection paper using the notes they took during each interview they listened to. Ask students to compare and contrast the details of events from the Tulsa Race Massacre as told by both sides of the racial divide as they were described during the interviews students listened to earlier in the lesson. How did the perspectives differ and how were they the same?</p>
<p>Evaluate: Students will complete a Reflection Exit Ticket. Ask students to write three things they learned about the Tulsa Race Massacre or about listening for different points of view.</p>	
<p>Sources: Library of Congress “On this Day” summary for May 31, 1921, https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/may-31. Episode 7, Season 4 of <i>Teaching Hard History</i> podcast, Premeditation and Resilience: Tulsa, Red Summer and the Great Migration.</p>	