



TOPIC: [Social Studies](#)

Classroom Ideas

## Here Are 21 Free Resources for Teaching Social Justice in the Classroom

Resources for teaching about inclusion, diversity, and equity.

 [Megan DeMatteo](#) on March 20, 2019



With no federal standards for the topic in place, teachers are left to their own devices for creating or finding social justice lesson plans. Our country's history is rich with resistance, organizing, and civil rights campaigning—but for many teachers, these movements seem new.

If you want to guide your students through conversations about inclusion, diversity, and equity, it's important to both teach the history and build upon the work of the countless people who contributed to social justice movements throughout the years.

From [habeus corpus for Native Americans](#), to women's suffrage, to civil rights, none of these freedoms were

Make 2019 the year you stretch yourself. Here are 21 free resources for social justice lesson plans.

## Take a deep dive with these curriculum planning resources:

### 1. [Teaching Tolerance](#)



We love this website from the Southern Poverty Law Center. It provides free lesson-building materials for teachers of kindergarten through high school. These award-winning resources include everything from a simple weekly newsletter, to magazine articles, to an in-depth lesson-plan builder. With the tool, you can share your learning plan with colleagues for collaborative projects and units. And it doesn't stop there. Teaching Tolerance also offers both self-guided and facilitated professional developments, in person and via webinars.

Okay, we'll stop gushing now and share [how this teacher helped destigmatize menstruation at her school](#)—just in time for Women's History Month! Consider building a lesson from staff writer Coshandra Dillard's amazing article.

### 2. [Poets.org](#)



You might not think about poetry when you think of social justice. But Poets.org has been assisting teachers in teaching historical & contemporary issues through poetry since 1960. Enjoy [a monthly curriculum calendar](#), plus a database of poems filtered by issue and era, and [lesson plans](#) designed to teach students about social issues through poetry. [RONIJS](#): Sign up for the convenient [poem-a-day newsletter](#) for poems and commentary.


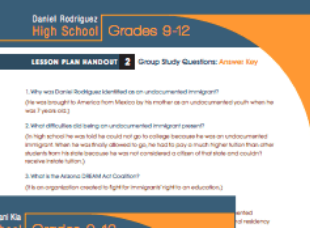
### 3. [The National Education Association's Social Justice Lesson Plans](#)

Daniel Rodriguez  
High School

Grades 9-12

*Leading the Lesson continued*

13. **After** five minutes, have each group leader read the questions, writing them on the board. Tell students not to read a question if it has already been written on the board.
14. **After** all groups have responded, prompt students to include any key questions not listed. (Refer to Key Questions on Handout 1).
15. **Assign** each group to research one of the key questions using the computer. Add in related questions for that group to provide answers to that information, if possible.
16. **Provide** students with websites to answer the Group Study Questions. Have each student work individually to locate related information for their group's questions and jot down notes from the site information. (Allow 10 minutes of work time).
17. **Direct** groups to meet again to write an answer to their group's question, combining the important pieces of information from group members. Assign a writer and group leader (the two students in each group who were not yet assigned either role).
18. **Direct** each group leader to read their question and the group's answer to it. Use the answer key (Handout 2) to provide clarification as needed.
19. **Ask** if events in your life and the world around

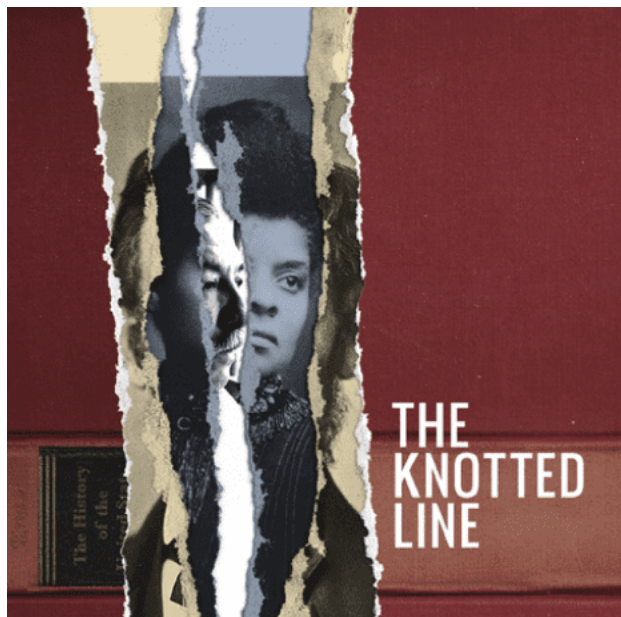
**Websites  
for Group Study  
Research**

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/tempe/2014/07/01/undocumented-arizona-youth-receives-human-rights-advocate-award/11796337/>  
<http://theadac.org>

These lesson plans are so good they won the 2018 Human and Civil Rights Award (sponsored by the National Education Association).

Created by various groups and individuals—including the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of present-day Idaho, DREAMer Daniel Rodriguez, and Writers in the Schools collaborator Susan Bartley—these K–12 lessons cover subjects related to English, art, and humanities. Links include handouts as well as Common Core equivalencies.

### 4. [The Knotted Line](#)





Hey all you data nerds! This three-part project plots open-source historical information into a timeline that looks at both freedom and confinement in the United States.

Use the online interactive experience, [a free curriculum guide](#), and the website's media collection to help your students think critically about who has access to freedom and under which circumstances.

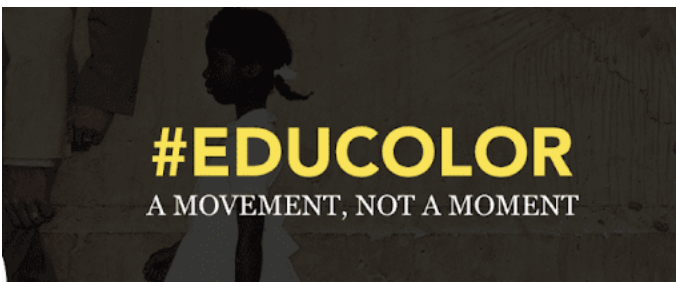
**Stay current on evolving social justice issues and happenings. Add these social media influencers and hashtags to your feed:**

5. [@RethinkSchools](#)



Rethinking Schools is a nonprofit magazine and book publisher dedicated to strengthening public education through social justice teaching and education activism. While their books are fab, follow them and the hashtag [#SoJustEdu](#) to stay in the loop when you don't have time for extra reading. Their feed helps teachers remember significant but underpublicized historical events and stay current on current events like the [#Unite4OaklandKids](#) teachers' strike.

6. [#EduColor](#)



If you are looking for monthly chats on language, culture, self-care, and equity, then be sure to follow this hashtag. Organized by a collective of activists of color, EduColor is here to promote intersectional diversity and provide expert resources that help teachers do their part in deconstructing the oppression that lives within the school system.

7. [DisruptTexts](#)



[#DisruptTexts](#) is a Twitter chat founded by [Tricia Ebarvia](#), [Lorena German](#), [Dr. Kim Parker](#), and [Julia Torres](#). The goal is to challenge the traditional language arts canon and create a more inclusive curriculum. [Here's how to participate in #DisruptTexts](#).

8. [@theconsciouskid](#)



This Instagram account discusses parenting and educating through a race-critical lens. You'll love this account for the book recommendations, social commentaries, and critical articles it shares. Click follow and prepare for an elevated consciousness! Be prepared to think twice when selecting books for your class library, but fear not because this influencer provides a variety of equitable alternatives.

9. [@teachandtransform](#)



Liz Kleinrock is a 2018 Teaching Tolerance Award Winner and TED Talk presenter. @teachandtransform is her anti-bias education platform, where she offers simple and practical shifts for teachers to make their classrooms more inclusive and equitable. Enjoy real-life snapshots of Liz's whiteboard and learn as she learns along the way!

**Listen up! Stream these helpful podcasts on your morning commute:**

10. [Educators for Social Justice Podcast](#)

**Educators for Social Justice**



You can find this St. Louis-based, grassroots, teacher-led podcast on iTunes, and it covers issues on race, gender, sexuality, language, and more. Its presence was short but sweet. Listen to [the final episode about how to unconditionally support LGBTQ+ youth](#).

11. [Cult of Pedagogy](#)





We'll be honest: We love all of the resources from Cult of Pedagogy! But the podcast is extra helpful for the self-proclaimed teacher nerds (like us) who want to hear about teaching strategies, classroom management, education reform, and educational technology—many with a social justice lens. Listen to [this recent episode with Pedro Noguera about 10 ways educators can take action in pursuit of equity](#).

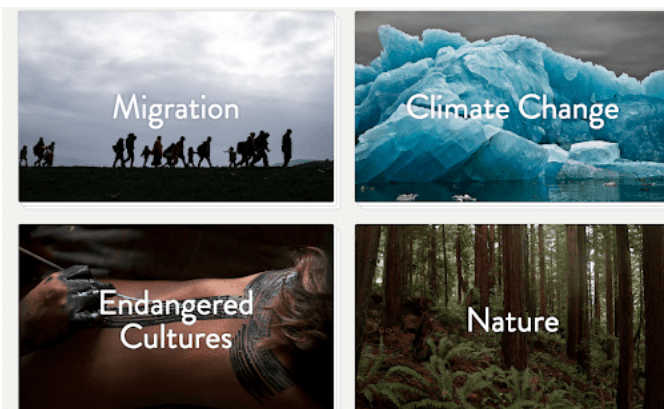
### 12. [The Truth for Teachers Podcast](#)



Another resource for more than social justice, the Truth for Teachers podcast is a top-ten podcast for K-12 educators. In [this episode](#), Angela Watson speaks with [Dr. Travis Bristol](#), a former teacher now researching at UC Berkeley. Travis is also the principal investigator for the NYC Young Men's Initiative, which focuses on recruiting and supporting 1,000 male teachers of color. Listen to this episode about [why most teachers are white women and how schools can support more diverse faculties](#). What do you think?

**You can rely on these done-for-you activities to promote critical discussion:**

### 13. [The Global Oneness Project](#)



This beautiful collection of multimedia includes films, essays, and photography highlighting the universal themes of humanity. Special collections include hot topics like climate change, migration, and endangered cultures. The

#### 14. [The Critical Media Project](#)



The Critical Media Project (CMP) is a free media-literacy web resource for educators and students ages 8–21.

CMP provides relevant media clips and follow-up discussion questions based on Common Core Standards that engage with students' capacity to think critically about identity politics and advocate for social change. CMP is founded on the notion that media literacy and analysis are fundamental to all education, and in today's complex political landscape, we agree!

#### 15. [iCivics](#)



Use the power of gaming to teach your students about civics! This fun and interactive site provides full lesson plans and online games that put your students in the roles of lawmakers and civic servants.

BONUS: Follow [@iCivics on Twitter](#) to stay up to date on policy and legislation news, plus see how other teachers are using iCivics in their classrooms!

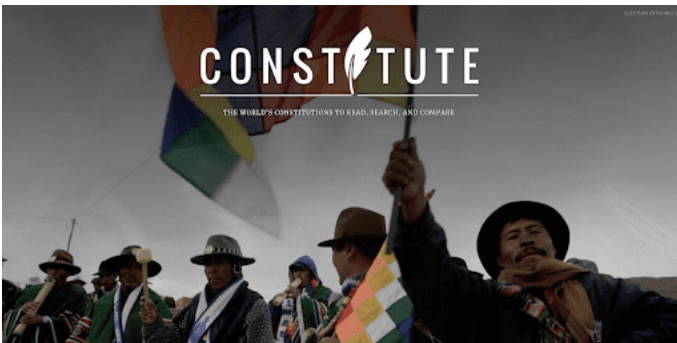
#### 16. [iWitness](#)





Explore survivor testimonies with this well-organized [activity library](#) for educators. Select your language preferences and choose from a database of powerful videos and Common Core lessons that help your students unpack hatred. BONUS: Check out their [completely free professional development webinars](#).

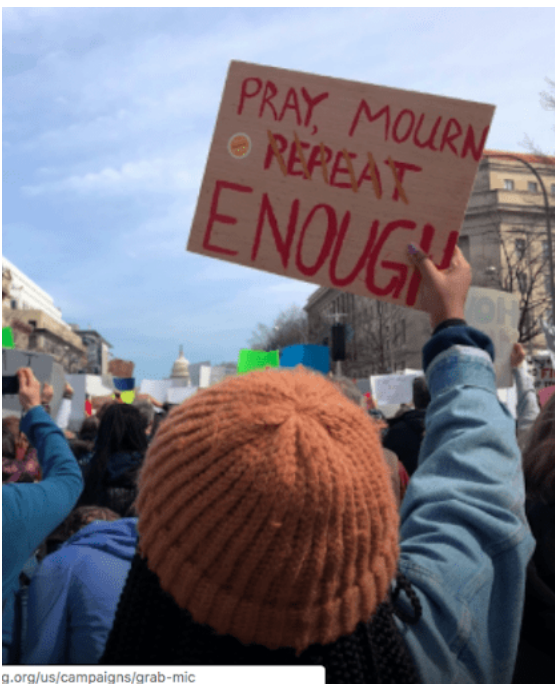
### 17. [Constitute](#)



This extensive searchable database is your one stop shop for accessing constitutions from governments all over the world. Have your students search, read, and compare the laws of cultures around the globe. Filter by country, topic, date adopted, and status. Though there are no lesson plans here, this site is sure to catalyze high-level classroom discussion for high school students.

**Mobilize your students to bring about change that they believe in by using these programs as your guide:**

### 18. [DoSomething.org](#)





Awesome BTS giveaways just for teachers! [Enter now >>](#)

×

community. The class can then submit a photo or video of their completed campaign and enter to win prizes, including scholarships.

### 19. [YR Media](#)



This Oakland-based organization amplifies the voices of young journalists and artists. Empower your high school students to become reporters, too! Watch videos by YR Media journalists and set your young broadcasters out to find the stories in their communities.

**Transform your school culture with these administrative-level resources and professional development trainings:**

### 20. [Facing History and Ourselves](#)



This organization offers school-wide trainings, a partner school network, and professional development for teachers and administrators. From pedagogical theory to subject-specific content, Facing History tailors their programs to the needs of your school community. [Here's how to bring them to your school.](#)

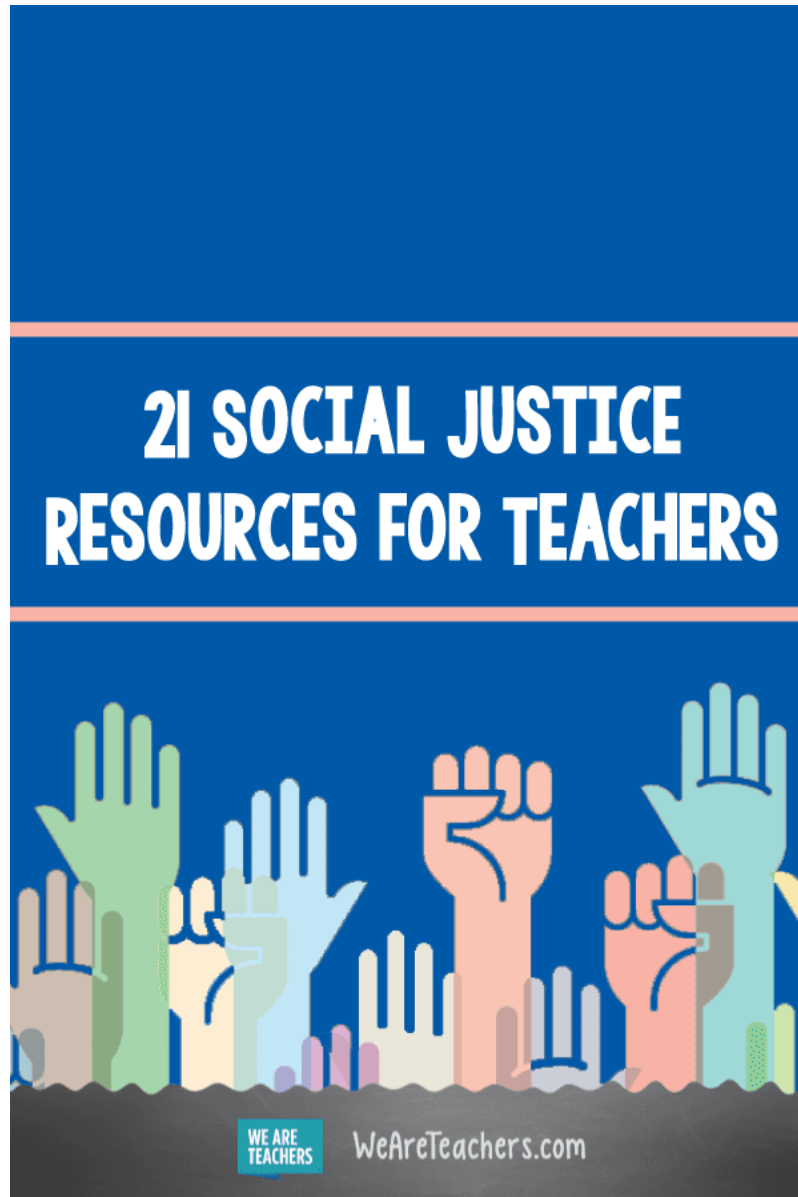
### 21. The Zinn Education Project



This social justice resource list would not be complete without the Zinn Education Project. This group offers [workshops for teachers and administrators](#) on how to teach people's history. By last year, a total of [87,000 teachers had enrolled in Zinn Education trainings](#) and learned about topics like climate change, Islamophobia, the labor movement, the New Deal, antiwar movements, and how to write curriculum and articles for publication.

Whew! What a list—and it barely scratches the surface. We'd love to hear from you—what have been your challenges and successes when planning social justice lessons? Come and share your experiences in our [WeAreTeachers HELPLINE group](#) on Facebook.

Plus, [Own Voices books](#) to add to your classroom library.



Posted by Megan DeMatteo

ALL POSTS

### Related Content



20 #OwnVoices Books To Share With Middle and High School Kids



Best Social Studies Websites for Teachers



31 Amazing Sources for Free Teacher Resources



Charlottesville Curriculum Resources for Teachers

### Explore WeAreTeachers



Why Teachers Need to Put on Their Own Oxygen Masks First



23 Close Reading Anchor Charts That Will Help Your Students Dig Deep



Once You're My Student, You're Always My Student



Why Some Teachers Are Trading in Their Desks for Classroom Aprons

## Leave a reply

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.

GET OUR NEWSLETTER

Be the first to know about new giveaways, teacher tips, and laugh-out-loud posts. Sign-up to receive our newsletter.

Email

Submit

### Recent Articles

[A Teacher's Guide to Digital Stress and Social Media Addiction](#)

Awesome BTS giveaways just for teachers! [Enter now >>](#)

×

[The Big BTS Giveaway Contest](#)



[Previous](#)

## 7 Surprising Classroom Triggers for Kids Who Experienced Trauma (and How to Av...

March 19, 2019

[Next](#)

## 50 Legit Ways Teachers Can Make Extra Money

March 20, 2019

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[About WeAreTeachers](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Write for WeAreTeachers](#)

[Join the WeAreTeachers Influencer Network](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms Of Use](#)