

Michigan Celebrates

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

with Teaching Black History: Lessons from Educators

WEEK 4

February 2024

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

The Michigan Department of Education is excited to showcase lessons from educators to support instruction focused on Black history with a calendar during each week in February in celebration of Black History Month. Teaching diverse perspectives aligned to the work of [Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop](#) to provide students with mirrors and windows to increase engagement in learning throughout the year is a student right and an educator responsibility. Additionally, instruction to honor specific groups of people during recognized heritage months brings emphasis to instructional areas that have not traditionally received adequate time nor attention.

This week's calendar includes four lessons suggested by Michigan educators for Michigan educators. Each educator or group of educators also shares a personal why for teaching Black history.

February
26

Katie Tasch Bielecki, Leah Porter (2021-2022 Michigan Teacher of the Year), Khad Crabbe, Danielle Howell, Jason Copp, Jamie Fulk
Wilcox Elem, Holt Public Schools

Grade Band:
3-6

Content Area(s):
English
Language
Arts, Social
Studies

Standard(s):
ELA: RL.3-6.10, RI.3-6.10, W.3-6.1 & 7; SS: 3-5-P3.1 & 2, P4.2.1, 6-P3.1.1

Why do you teach Black History?

Teaching Black history is essential to ensuring students are seen and represented in their learning and that all students have joyful and accurate depictions of people who may not look like them, but whose stories have not always been honored. Historically, American history has been taught through the purview of the dominant culture. Teaching Black history provides opportunities for all students to celebrate the contributions of African Americans, to develop criticality, empathy, and empowerment through understanding. It is a call for social justice. Using literature brings to life the soul of human interaction, and the nuances of relationships through complex issues. It is our responsibility, as educators, to continue learning (and unlearning) so as to provide experiences that empower students as leaders. This necessary learning promotes competent, critical thinking so that youth might use their voices to enhance their community and beyond.

Lesson Description/Summary: In this lesson students practice developing ELA comprehension and writing skills related to a public policy issue that impacts the individual, community, or a group of people. Students conduct research related to advocacy, movement history, and on a public policy area of their choosing. Students develop an understanding that historically all people have not had the same rights as others. Through this learning, students take a position on a public policy issue, justify the position with a reasoned argument, and choose an action they wish to take to inform others in an effort to further the public good.

Resource: [Advocates: Character and Leadership Lesson Plan](#)

February

27

Vikki Kasperek & Jodi Berger

Oakland Elementary, Royal Oak Schools

Grade Band:
PreK–2

Content Area(s):
Social Studies
and English
Language Arts

Standard(s):
ELA RI.K-5.1 &
10; SS K-2.H2.01,
1.H2.02, 2-H2.0.6

Why do you teach Black History?

Black history is all around us. Not just famous people, not just in big cities, or not just in the south. It doesn't end with one person, but lives on. Every day people in our own community made or are making history. The Hamers were the first black settlers in Royal Oak. Descendants of the Hamers still live in Royal Oak. This helps students make personal connections to their community, Black history and Black excellence.

Lesson Description/Summary: In this lesson students learn local history, making connections to local historical figures and places. The lesson includes suggested accommodations to make the lesson accessible to all learners.

Resource: [Learning Local History in Royal Oak](#)

February

28

Joan Moul

McGrath Elementary, Grand Blanc Community Schools

Grade Band: 3–12

Content Area(s): English Language Arts,
Social Studies, Art, Technology

Standard(s):
ELA RI.3-8.2, 7, 9 & 10; RI.9-12, 2, 7,
& 10, SL.3-12.4, 5; & 6; SS 3-H3 0.1,
4-H3.3, 4, & 6, 5-U1.3, 5-U2.1, U2.2,
U3.2, 7-H1.2.6, 8.U5.2.4, 3.3, USHG 8.3,
HS-C5.1.3

Why do you teach Black History?

Students need to know the contributions that our amazing African American citizens have made to our country.

Lesson Description/Summary: Students are researching a famous African American and doing a Wax Museum in our small gym to present a 3 to 5 -minute speech pertaining to their person.

February

29

Candice Jackson

Mann Learning Community, Detroit Public Schools Community District,
2023-2024 Michigan Teacher of the Year

Grade Band: 3–5

Content Area(s):
English Language
Arts

Standard(s):
ELA L.3-5.5

Why do you teach Black History?

Students are more likely to engage in learning when they see their own cultures reflected in the curriculum. For that reason, I believe in incorporating culturally responsive teaching practices all year long especially during Black History Month.

Lesson Description/Summary: [I Am Enough](#) by Grace Byers is all about accepting our differences. Before you dive into it, discuss figurative language and how words can mean more than what they say. Explain that this is a tool to make our writing more interesting. While reading the book, add a bit of rhythm to make those similes pop. After, explore topics such as diversity, emotions, empowerment, and acceptance. For the final project, get creative! Have the students use figurative language to write poems about themselves. It's a fun way to celebrate the awesome diversity in our classes.

Thank you to all of the Michigan educators who shared their why for teaching Black history and submitted their lessons. For diverse literature recommendations please visit MDE's [Equity in Literacy webpage](#).