

Planning to Change the World

A PLAN BOOK FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHERS 2008-2009

...an imaginative and innovative idea in the field of education. It is something that teachers all over the country who have social consciences will find useful because it will give them an opportunity and a framework for putting into practice what they believe. I hope it will be widely adopted.

– Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*

Planning to Change the World is a plan book for educators who believe their students can and will change the world. It is designed to help teachers translate their vision of a just education into concrete classroom activities. This unique resource has all the things you would expect in a lesson plan book plus:

- Weekly planning pages packed with important social justice birthdays and historical events
- Lesson plans and resources related to those dates
- Tips from social justice teachers across the country
- Inspirational quotes to share with students
- Thought-provoking essential questions to spark classroom discussions on critical issues
- Reproducible social justice awards for students

...and much more.

Here's what educators and activists had to say about *Planning to Change the World*:

Finally, a plan book that is enlightening, provocative and fun. A unique and powerful teaching tool that honors students by bringing to the forefront the stories of their communities. It's a weekly reminder of how much we've achieved and how much we have left to do.

– Lisa Delpit, author of *Other People's Children*

Planning to Change the World, for me, is an integration of the multitude of elements that I have tried to combine...to make my classroom a transformative environment. The advantage of having all of these pieces embodied in one book...is immeasurable.

– Cristen Chapman, public high school social studies teacher

Useful, hopeful and visionary. Planning to Change the World is just what every radical teacher needs. Pick up a copy today if you want to teach towards a more equitable and just world.

– Wayne Au, *Rethinking Schools*

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2008
2009

Planning to Change the World

A PLAN BOOK FOR
SOCIAL JUSTICE
TEACHERS

Edited by Tara Mack
and Bree Picower

A NYCORE and
Education for Liberation
Network Publication



education
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network
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Introduction

Planning to Change the World is a plan book for teachers who believe their students can create meaningful social change. It was created by two education networks—the **New York Collective of Radical Educators (NYCoRE)** and the **Education for Liberation Network**—with input from teachers across the country who struggle daily to put their values into practice. As educators, our vision of teaching for liberation often gets buried under the every day realities of teaching. Bombarded with paperwork, tests, curriculum mandates, we feel frustrated, overwhelmed, alone.

This plan book is designed to help teachers translate their vision of a just education into concrete classroom activities. It is both a daily reminder of the importance of teaching for justice and a collection of tools to help you do just that. *Planning to Change the World* is packed with important social justice birthdays and historical events, words of wisdom from visionary leaders, lesson plans, resources, social justice education happenings and more.

It also connects you to a national community of educators who are interested in social justice teaching. In this book we hear from teachers like you who care about their students, respect them and think they can and will change the world. Teachers who believe it is their job to help them learn how to do that. This plan book was created to make that job just a little easier by helping you turn your daily lesson planning into a strategy for teaching toward democracy, equity, fairness and peace.

education
for liberation
network



About Our Organizations

The **Education for Liberation Network** (www.edliberation.org) is a national coalition of teachers, community activists, youth, researchers and parents who believe a good education should teach people—particularly low-income youth and youth of color—to understand and challenge the injustices their communities face. The network aims to help improve the practice of Education for Liberation by bringing people together to learn from each other's experiences. If you would like to join this community of educators, you can sign up for our listserv on www.edliberation.org/join-us.

Looking for social justice teaching materials? Check out the Education for Liberation Network's online database (www.edliberation.org/resources). Called the EdLib Lab, the database is a collection of hundreds of lesson plans and other resources from teachers, organizations and researchers across the country. The Lab allows you both to search for materials and to post your own.

The **New York Collective of Radical Educators** (www.nycore.org) is a group of public school educators in New York committed to fighting for social justice in our school system and society at large by organizing and mobilizing teachers, developing curriculum and working with community, parent and student organizations. We are educators who believe that education is an integral part of social change and that we must work both inside and outside the classroom because the struggle for justice does not end when the school bell rings. Please visit our website to learn more about us or to join our organizing groups on issues such as high stakes testing, military recruitment and supporting queer youth. Also available are announcements about upcoming events and NYCoRE created curricula, including our first book, *Camouflaged: Investigating How the U.S. Military Affects You and Your Community*.

NYCoRE and the Education for Liberation Network would like to thank the following people for their assistance in creating this plan book.

Curtis Acosta, Sam Coleman, Geoffrey Enriquez, Salina Gray, Daniel Hildreth, Alanna Howe, Kari Kokka, Janet Mack, Ariana Mangual, Edwin Mayorga, Daniel Morales-Doyle, Barbara Picower, Neil Rathan, Elizabeth Whittaker.

School year at a glance

July 2008							August							September						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

October							November							December						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

January 2009							February							March						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4							1							1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30	31					

April							May							June						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

How to use this book

First, a note about the dates featured in this book. There are so many events and people that could be included in a planner like this, we had to find a way to narrow the possibilities. So for this calendar we chose significant anniversaries and birthdays, which generally meant (with a few exceptions) anniversaries/birthdays that fell on the 10 year mark (i.e. Richard Wright's 100th birthday, 40th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising etc.).

The weekly planning pages include several special features:

Social justice birthdays and historical events, religious and federal holidays

Social justice conferences

These are events for teachers that have a social justice theme. See page 122 for full descriptions of these events.

Resources

- E** Elementary school lesson plans/resources icon
- M** Middle school lesson plans/resources icon
- H** High school lesson plans/resources icon
- TR** Teacher Resources icon

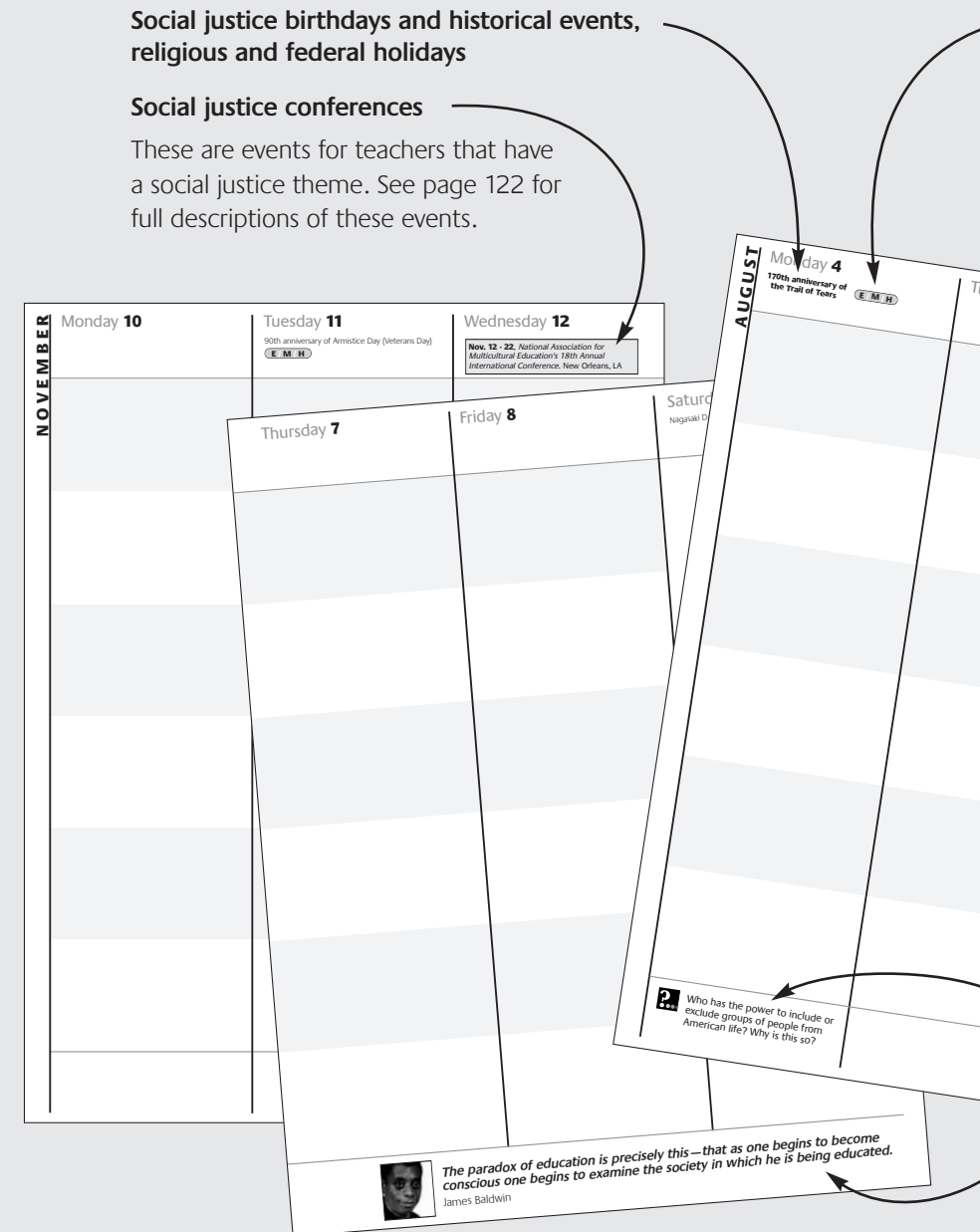
E / M / H / TR

When you see these icons turn to page 110, where you will find a list organized by date of online lesson plans, articles, videos or other resources that will help you teach about that particular event or person. Or you can go to a web version of this page (www.justiceplanbook.com/resources) where you will be able to click on the recommended websites and link to them directly.

Essential Question

A question you can use to start a discussion with your students.

Quote of the week



This book has other important features:

- **Reproducible social justice awards for students** (see pages 120-121).
- **A list of organizations** where you can find more resources or meet teachers who share your concerns (see page 123).
- **Tips from fellow social justice educators** (see pages 16-17, 52-53, 88-89).
- **Student information pages** (see pages 124-127).

Monday 22

Tuesday 23

Wednesday 24

Thursday 25

Friday 26

Saturday 27 Sunday 28

140th anniversary of Grito de Lares
40th anniversary of founding of
the Young Lords **H**

Sept. 23 - Oct. 1, New York City Hip-Hop Theater Festival. New York, NY

Sept. 26 - 28, Critical Resistance 10. Oakland, CA

Sept. 26, Hip Hop Education Conference.
Washington, DC

Sept. 27,
Defining Democracy
Curriculum Fair.
St. Louis, MO



There's nothing more solemn than truth. There's no greater grievance to a tomb than hypocrisy, or a greater tribute to death than truth.

Luis Muñoz Marín, Puerto Rican activist and former governor of Puerto Rico

Monday 29

Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown
Navaratri, beginning of nine night festival honoring the Divine Mother, Shakti (Hinduism)

Tuesday 30

Wednesday 1

Eid al-Fitr, celebration of the end of Ramadan. Begins at sundown **E / M / H**
First day of GLTB History Month
60th anniversary of California Supreme Court lifting the state's ban on interracial marriage
E / M / H / TR

Thursday 2

40th anniversary of Tlatelolco Massacre
H

Friday 3

Saturday 4

Rethinking Our Classrooms, Organizing for Better Schools, Northwest Conference on Teaching for Social Justice. Seattle, WA

Sunday 5

World Teachers' Day **TR**
110th anniversary of Battle of Sugar Point
E / M / H



What role can young people play in changing society?

In the name of the respect I should have toward my students, I do not see why I should omit or hide my political stance by proclaiming a neutral position that does not exist. On the contrary, my role as a teacher is to assent the students' right to compare, to choose, to rupture, to decide.

Paulo Freire

Monday 6

50th anniversary of California lifting legal ban on interracial marriage

E M H TR

Tuesday 7

Wednesday 8

Yom Kippur begins at sundown

13th Annual New England Conference on Multicultural Education. Hartford, CT

Thursday 9

Friday 10

Oct 10 - 11, Achieving Academic Excellence Through Multicultural Education. Springfield, MO

Saturday 11

National Coming Out Day

E M H

Teaching for Social Justice: Building Power, Making Change. San Francisco, CA

Sunday 12

Día de la Raza or Day of la Raza

10th anniversary of death of Matthew Shepard a college student murdered for being openly gay



Why is it that, as a culture, we are more comfortable seeing two men holding guns than holding hands?

Ernest Gaines, author

Monday 13

Disability History Week begins **E / M / H**
Indigenous People's Day **E / M / H**
("Columbus Day" observed)
Sukkot begins at sundown (Judaism)

Tuesday 14

Wednesday 15

Fela Kuti born (1938 to 1997) **E / M / H**

Thursday 16

40th anniversary of the 1968 Olympics Black Power salute **M / H**

Friday 17

10th anniversary of demonstrations at Nike store in Oregon to protest inhumane working conditions **E / M / H**

Saturday 18 Sunday 19

When a white army battles Indians and wins, it is called a great victory, but if they lose it is called a massacre.

Chiksika, Shawnee

Disability is not a brave struggle or 'courage in the face of adversity.' Disability is an art. It's an ingenious way to live.

Neil Marcus, playwright and actor



Do you think Columbus should be considered a hero?
How do you think it came to be that Columbus Day is a national holiday?



List of resources

(Key: **E** = Elementary, **M** = Middle, **H** = High, **TR** = Teacher Resources)

To see an on line version of this list with clickable links, visit www.justiceplanbook.com/resources

AUGUST

- 4 170th anniversary of the Trail of Tears.** The Trail of Tears was the forced relocation of Native Americans from their homelands to the Western United States. Approximately 4,000 of 18,000 removed Cherokees died.

A Walk of Betrayal: The Trail of Tears by Mary Towles, The Apple. This lesson plan traces the history of the Cherokee, discusses the impact of the white man and studies the Trail of Tears. Students examine the survival of the Cherokee and explore their accomplishments into the 21st century. **(E, M)** <http://www.theapple.com/training/articles/2154-3-5-a-walk-of-betrayal-the-trail-of-tears>

And justice for all: the Trail of Tears, Mexican deportation, and Japanese internment by Patricia Camp. Many textbooks mention the Trail of Tears, but fail to mention that this early displacement of an ethnic minority is only one of many legally-sanctioned forced relocations. This lesson addresses the displacement of American Indians through the Trail of Tears, the forced deportation of Mexican Americans during the Great Depression and the internment of Japanese American citizens during WWII. **(M, H)** <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/pcamp012606>

- 6 Hiroshima Day**

Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb by Ronald Takaki. In this book, Takaki considers the ways in which stereotypes of the Japanese influenced public opinion and policymakers. Useful for educators teaching about Hiroshima or U.S. foreign policy. **(H, TR)** <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=3009874075652>

WWII: The Pacific by Marilyn Fenichel, Discovery Education. This lesson allows students to study WWII in depth and engages them in analysis and debate on whether the use of nuclear bombs was the best way to end the war. **(H)** <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/worldwarII/>

- 10 20th anniversary of Civil Liberties Act of 1988.** This act required payment of \$20,000 and an apology to approximately 60,000 Japanese held in U.S. internment camps.

Journal to Topaz, a Literature based Approach; Building Awareness of the Japanese American Wartime Experience; Understanding the Bill of Rights and the Japanese American Internment Experience by Rosalyn Tonai, Chizu Iiyama and Bess Ricketts. These lessons put students in the role of the Japanese Americans in order for them to "experience" what life was like in the camps. They will also think about how the Bill of Rights and civil liberties should have played a role for these individuals. **(E, M, H)** <http://bss.sfsu.edu/internment/lessonplans.html>

Children of the Camps: Internment History by PBS. This documentary captures the experiences of six Americans of Japanese ancestry who were confined as innocent children to internment camps by the U.S. government during World War II. A teacher's guide is available through distribution@asianamerica.nmedia.org. **(E, M, H)** <http://www.pbs.org/childofcamp/>

- 12 20th anniversary of the death of Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960 to 1988)**

Street to Studio: The art of Jean-Michel Basquiat by the Brooklyn Museum of Art. This web site examines his works of art in depth. **(E, M, H)** <http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/basquiat/street-to-studio/>

International Youth Day, created by the UN, is designed to draw attention to cultural and legal issues surrounding youth. <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyouthday.htm>

Youth Media Info Center by the FreeChild Project. One way for students to participate in International Youth Day is to use media to examine their world and the issues they face and to tell their own stories. This website provides a list of youth media organizations, resources and publishers to support your students' projects. **(E, M, H)** <http://www.freechild.org/youthmedia.htm>

- 22 40th anniversary of the 1968 Democratic National Convention riots.** Anti-Vietnam war protesters clash with police who tried to prevent them from reaching the convention site.

Rebels with a Cause: A feature documentary about the hopes, rebellions and repression of the 1960s as told by members of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) **(M, H)** <http://www.sdsrebels.com/>

- 29 4th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina**

An Unnatural Disaster: A Critical Guide for Addressing the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in the Classroom by NYCORE. Created by teachers immediately after the hurricane, *An Unnatural Disaster* is a series of resources and lesson ideas on issues such as race, class and inequality. **(M, H)** <http://www.nycore.org/katrina.html>

Teaching the Levees by Teachers College, Columbia University. *Teaching the Levees* takes Spike Lee's documentary *When the Levees Broke*, as impetus, touchstone and text for democratic dialogues in schools. This curriculum aims to stimulate dialogue about these tough issues by posing the questions: Who are we as a country? What kind of country do we want to be? **(M, H)** <http://www.teachingthelevees.org/>

Got Music? by Finding our Folk. This is an 8-week music-learning experience to educate, inspire and engage youth in the history, music and culture of New Orleans. This curriculum gives youth the opportunity to develop leadership skills; become familiar with various musical instruments and techniques; learn the history of musical greats and develop the capacity to give back to their communities as activists dedicated to social justice. **(M, H)** <http://www.findingourfolk.org>. Click on the "Curriculum" link at the top. To order the curriculum, scroll to the bottom of that page to find the email address of the contact person.

- 30 Fred Hampton, Sr. born (1948 to 1969).** Hampton, a leader of the Black Panther Party in Chicago, was murdered in his apartment during a police raid.

The Murder of Fred Hampton (1971). This film documents the Chicago police murder of Fred Hampton. The New York Times reviews the film and provides a link to where it can be purchased. It is also available on YouTube. **(H)** <http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/155135/The-Murder-of-Fred-Hampton/overview>

SEPTEMBER

(Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 Hispanic Heritage Month)

- 1 Labor Day**

By the Numbers at Inequality.org. This website hosts extensive data, graphs and information about the growing economic gaps in America with specific statistics about wealth, income and wages. A "wealth" of information for math and social studies teachers to provide students with the data they need to have informed discussions about inequality and its impact on democracy and society. **(M, H)** <http://www.demos.org/inequality/numbers.cfm>

Who Built America: Working People and the Nation's History by the American Social History Project. A two-volume textbook examining the history of the United States from the perspective of working people with a collection of videos that accompanies it. **(M, H)** <http://www.ashp.cuny.edu/wba.html>

40 Books about Labor compiled by The Cooperative Children's Book Center. A bibliography of 40 children's books about labor. **(E, M)** <http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=104>

- 4 Richard Wright born (1908 to 1960)**

Richard Wright and the Library Card by William Miller, illus. by Gregory Christie. A wonderfully illustrated picture book that describes Richard Wright's attempt to get access to all-white libraries. **(E)** Available at <http://www.amazon.com>

- 12 50th anniversary of a U.S. Supreme Court decision forcing Arkansas schools to desegregate.** Following a tense year in which the Little Rock school system was forced to accept nine African American students, local school officials appealed to the Supreme Court for relief from having to enforce Brown v. Board of Education. In Cooper v. Aaron, the U.S. Supreme court decision unanimously affirmed that local school officials were bound by federal court orders to desegregate.

Little Rock 9 Integration 0? by AT&T Education Knowledge Network Explorer. Students are placed into three different groups, each group taking a different role: historians, social scientists and news reporters. With these roles students analyze this Supreme Court case, desegregation and integration. Students also make connections to local events happening in their communities. **(H)** http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/BHM/little_rock/intro.html

A School Year Like No Other by Bill Bigelow, Rethinking Schools. Lesson plan using *Fighting Back: 1957-1962*, episode two of the PBS series *Eyes on the Prize*. Provides talking points and a writing activity. **(H)** http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/18_03/year183.shtml

Warriors Don't Cry: Brown Comes to Little Rock by Linda Christiansen, Rethinking Schools. A tea party where students take on the roles of individuals involved in the desegregation of Central High. **(M, H)** http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/18_03/warr183.shtml

- 15 First day of Hispanic Heritage Month**

The ABC's of Teaching about Latino Heritage Month by Teaching Tolerance. A compilation of essays, lessons, videos and activities to help students gain a deeper understanding of past and present struggles for Latino civil rights. **(E, M, H)** <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=709>

iViva la Causa! 500 Years of Chicano History by the Southwest Organizing Project and Collision Course Video Productions. Based on the book *500 Years of Chicano History in Pictures* edited by Elizabeth Martínez, this two part video in English offers a

compelling introduction to the history of Mexican American people. **(M, H)** <http://www.highlandercenter.org/r-b-videos.asp>

- 20 Upton Sinclair born (1878 to 1968)**

"Raking Muck," from Freedom: A History of Us. Video series based on Joy Hakim's *History of Us*. Includes images, links and excerpts from the writings of muckrakers like Sinclair. **(M)** Webisode: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/historyofus/web10/segment5.html>. Resources: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/historyofus/teachers/pdfs/segment10-5.pdf>

- 23 40th anniversary of the founding of the Young Lords.** On September 23, 1968, Jose "Cha-Cha" Jimenez reorganized the Young Lords gang in Chicago into a political human rights movement, later to be known as the Young Lords Organization. The Puerto Rican group fought for economic, racial and social justice in Chicago, New York and other urban areas.

iPalante, Siempre Palante! The Young Lords by Iris Morales. Documentary and book distributed by The Latino/a Education Network Service (LENS). This documentary features interviews with former members and footage from their organizing activities. The website provides information about the Young Lords and links for further resources. **(H)** <http://palante.org/>

OCTOBER

(GLTB History Month)

- 1 Eid al-Fitr, celebration of the end of Ramadan. Begins at sundown.**

BBC Schools: Guide to Ramadan. This site includes basic information about Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, links to lesson plans intended to help students understand beliefs and practices of Muslim people. A lesson on Islamic art is included here. Follow links to "BBC Food" for information on Eid al-Fitr around the globe. **(E, M, H)** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/islam/ramadan.shtml>

- 60th anniversary of California Supreme Court lifting the state's ban on interracial marriage.**

Multiethnic Education Program by iPride. This site provides educators and families culturally competent resources and strategies for related to multiracial, multiethnic, transracially adopted youth including films and children's books recommendations. **(E, M, H, TR)** <http://www.multiethniceducation.org/index.html>

- 2 40th anniversary of the Tlatelolco Massacre,** in which Mexican students demonstrating for democratic reforms were shot by police.

The Tlatelolco Massacre, U.S. documents on Mexico and the events of 1968 by Kate Doyle. Although not a formal lesson plan, this website presents a comprehensive collection of texts that can be used for informational purposes or in analysis of primary and secondary sources. Some materials are available in Spanish. **(H)** <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB99/>

- 5 World Teachers' Day.** Created by the United Nations, it is celebrated in more than 100 countries.

Stop the Tests Day! The Trinational Coalition links teachers' unions in the U.S., Mexico and Canada and hosts an annual conference. They are calling for the 2008 World Teachers' Day to be a "Stop the Tests Day!" in recognition of the harmful and racist impact of high stakes testing. **(TR)**

Teacher²Teacher

Part I: Getting Started

Social justice educators talk about how they get the year off to a good start.

Classroom Community

Elizabeth Whittaker



From day one of Elizabeth's 9th- and 10th-grade English and history classes, she and her students talk about their ancestors. Who are they, and what makes them an ancestor? Are they just the people who came before us? She points to walls covered with the watchful gazes of freedom fighters such as Frederick Douglass, Queen Mother Moore, Ella Baker and the Mau Mau. As they look at the photos, students discuss the idea of righteousness. Then Elizabeth asks them to write down the name of an ancestor they would like to honor and tape it to the wall. These stay up all year.

This first step in the process of building classroom community involves creating a space in which students can take pride in who they are and where they come from. "The space is sacred," Elizabeth explains. "You honor it and respect it. You don't pop each other in the head, you don't use disrespectful language." In her Chicago public school most of her students are of African descent. She teaches



Clinton, Elizabeth's student, performs movement interpretation of Ben Harper's song "My Own 2 Hands."

them to value the African aesthetic physically, mentally and spiritually. From playing music from the Diaspora to decorating her classroom with colorful African cloths to movement warm-ups such as African dance, Elizabeth shows her students that their classroom is a learning community. "When you teach students to recognize the divine within themselves and in each other, it impacts how you treat one another," she says. "It impacts how you value things. If you learn how to value people, you walk a little different, talk a little different."

For detailed classroom portraits of other teachers who have created culturally relevant classroom communities, read Gloria Ladson-Billings' *Dreamkeepers: Successful Teaching of African American Children*.

Developing Curriculum

Salina Gray



"If teachers and students want to create a different world," says Salina Gray, a 5th-grade teacher from Los Angeles, "teachers must prepare students to compete with those who want to maintain social injustice." To do that, Salina developed a system called "Five Step Lesson Design" (5SLD). The

5SLD ensures that social justice lessons meet state standards and are relevant to the students' lives.

In "Mystery to Medicine," a unit she taught on health, Salina first identified the objectives of the six-week scripted



Salina (back, third from left) with her students in their classroom.

curriculum and checked for the academic content standards. To get her students interested in the subject, she then introduced relevant issues such as unequal access to healthcare. And she discussed problems that affect the health of children around the world such as the diamond trade in West Africa and the enslavement of West African children on cocoa plantations. She showed them "John Q," a Denzel Washington movie about unequal access to healthcare. As a culmination, Salina's students put the knowledge they learned into action by creating protest posters, keeping a health journal, researching and writing medical articles and writing letters to government agencies to express the need for equitable healthcare.

The Five Step Lesson Design "helps them see the relevance in learning," Salina says. "Once you do this for a few units, your kids are just going to experience school in a much different way. I believe that there's a direct relationship between their level of engagement and how well they do on the test."

Five Step Lesson Design

- 1 Identify the theme, goal, and/or objective.
- 2 Identify state, local, or school standards.
- 3 Find relevant current events/issues that will address the theme, goal and/or objective.
- 4 Utilize popular media to engage students.
- 5 Facilitate an experience or activity which allows for use of praxis.

For more information on Five Step Lesson Design Plan see <http://www.edliberation.org/resources/records/educate-to-liberate-the-truth-will-set-us-free/>.



2008 ItAG participants share their action projects.

Teacher Networking

Bree Picower



As a member of the New York Collective of Radical Educators (NYCoRE), Bree Picower has met many teachers who feel isolated in schools that don't share their vision of education as a vehicle for social change. They rarely get a chance to talk to other teachers about social justice or critical pedagogy. To help connect these

educators, Bree coordinates study groups called Inquiry to Action Groups (ItAG's) through NYCoRE.

The ItAG's meet for 10 weeks on topics including integrating Friere and Boal into the classroom, supporting immigrant youth and radical math. Facilitated by teachers and community organizers and held in donated space, the ItAG's provide opportunities for teachers to reaffirm their commitment to social justice. As one participant said, "I chose to participate in the ItAG because I felt like I was letting my revolutionary orientation fall by the wayside of the day to day of teaching."

"The power of the ItAG's," Bree explained, "is that you don't need a lot of resources to start them in your own community. Our 'For Teachers, By Teachers' model is a great way to bring committed teachers together on topics that they care about in ways that lead to more long-term organizing."

The ItAG's culminate with participants sharing action projects such as teacher training workshops, resources and curriculum guides. Bree said starting small doesn't mean you have to stay small. "NYCoRE was formed by a small group of teachers who came together protesting the U.S. invasion in Afghanistan," she said. "Five years later, we are bigger than ever, still run by and for educators."

Learn more about ItAG's at www.nycore.org.

Interested in finding out about other teacher activist groups across the country? Visit http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/20_02/orga202.shtml.

Teachers 4 Social Justice in San Francisco also hosts teacher study groups. Visit <http://www.t4sj.org> and click "study groups" for materials that could assist you in starting your own.

Freedom Fighter Award

This recognition goes to

.....
S/he stood up for freedom and justice by
.....
.....

"It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains."

Assata Shakur



Knowledge is Power Award

This recognition goes to

.....
for using his/her knowledge to make a difference.
.....

"The end of all education should surely be service to others."

César Chávez



Social justice conferences

September 2008

- September 23 to October 1, New York, NY. **New York City Hip-Hop Theater Festival.** www.hhtf.org
- September 26 to 28, Oakland, CA. **Critical Resistance 10.** 10th year anniversary conference on ending the prison industrial complex. www.criticalresistance.org
- September 26, Washington, DC. **Hip Hop Education Conference,** sponsored by the International Association for Hip Hop Education. <http://iahhe.org/>
- September 27, St. Louis, MO. **Defining Democracy Curriculum Fair,** sponsored by the Literacy for Social Justice Teacher Research Group. www.umsl.edu/~lsjtrg/

October 2008

- October 4, Seattle, Washington. **Rethinking Our Classrooms, Organizing for Better Schools,** Northwest Conference on Teaching for Social Justice, sponsored by Puget Sound Rethinking Schools, Olympia Educators for Social Justice, Tacoma Friday Club and Portland Area Rethinking Schools. Contact Sarah McFarlane for more info: shmcfar@earthlink.net
- October 8, Hartford, CT. **13th Annual New England Conference on Multicultural Education.** www.necme.org
- October 10 to 11, Springfield, MO. **Achieving Academic Excellence Through Multicultural Education,** 2nd Annual Missouri National Association for Multicultural Education Conference. www.name.org
- October 11, San Francisco, CA. **Teaching for Social Justice: Building Power, Making Change,** sponsored by Teachers 4 Social Justice. 8th annual conference. www.t4sj.org

November 2008

- November 12 to 22, New Orleans, LA. **National Association for Multicultural Education's 18th Annual International Conference.** www.nameorg.org.
- November 16 to 18, San Francisco, CA. **2008 Public Education Network Annual Conference.** <http://www.publiceducation.org/events.asp>
- November 22, Chicago, IL. **Curriculum Fair,** sponsored by Teachers for Social Justice. www.teachersforjustice.org

April 2009

- April 13 to 17, San Diego, CA. 2009 **American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting.** www.aera.net

June 2009

- Jun. 25 to 28, Houston, TX. **Free Minds, Free People.** A national conference on education for liberation sponsored by the Education for Liberation Network. www.edliberation.org

July 2009

- July 28 to 30, Hyde Park, NY. **Teaching about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.** www.TeachingtheHudsonValley.org

