

Police Shooting in St. Louis Brings New Tension to Ferguson – Student Handout

Introduction

There was new unrest in Ferguson, Missouri yesterday, after police shot and killed a robbery suspect in nearby St. Louis who reportedly threatened them with a knife.

Warm Up Questions

1. What do you already know about the fatal shooting of Michael Brown?
2. What do you think the term “over use of force” means when it is used to describe police action?

Critical Thinking Questions

1. How much of a role do you think race has played in how people are reacting to the shooting of Michael Brown and now the fatal shooting of a robbery suspect? Do you think if both shooters and victims were of the same race there would be as much controversy surrounding the events? Explain why or why not.
2. Using the graphic above with statistics from the Pew Research Center, explain in your own words what the chart is showing. Make sure to include who was being polled and the questions asked. Do you think this graphic does a good job showing the information? Specifically, is it clear or difficult to interpret who believed what?
3. Briefly list the steps it would take for you to poll students at your school about the role of race in the shooting in Ferguson. What challenges might you face by polling students about race? Would you present the results of your poll the same way as they did in the chart above, or would you do it differently? Make sure to explain your decisions.

