

Anti- Racist Learning Experience Vetting Tool

An anti-racist curriculum in Albemarle County Public Schools is guided by the following tenets:

- It honors all students' racial and ethnic identities
- It explicitly acknowledges and challenges inequities related to race
- It interrogates power structures and inequalities through critical thinking
- It empowers students with the tools needed to examine bias in order to resist oppression in their everyday lives

If actions and behavior are the hallmarks of anti-racism, then an educator's expression of these is instruction and curricula. This vetting tool provides a tangible metric to ensure that resources, units, lessons, sources, and tasks reflect our tenets. Through media, families, and our institutions (including public education) the dominant narrative is pervasive. This tool does not seek to erase that story. Rather, this tool creates a structure to address the fact that a variety of people and groups have contributed to our shared history and continue to contribute to our communities. Many of these people and groups and their stories are often missing or underrepresented in our curriculum. Anti-racist curriculum promotes a more accurate understanding of history, civics, and all of our social studies, and allows a previously marginalized and large proportion of our student population to be seen and heard.

Scope:

This tool serves to vet all curriculum units for Social Studies in Albemarle County. A single lesson may not meet every indicator, but should meet multiple indicators across the six categories. Over the full course of instruction, all indicators should be met regularly. The rubric may not work as well with smaller lesson units such as a shorter video clip, single primary or secondary source, etc.

Using the tool:

Familiarity with the curricular content, required resources, and teacher and student actions is necessary for applying this tool. Lessons using the ACPS Learning Plan Template should have much of this information provided, while resources coming from outside sources (Choices, DBQ Project, etc.) may require a deeper look to find relevant indicators. If an activity or resource does not meet a particular indicator, thought should be given as to why, or how it can be modified to better meet the indicator.

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Lesson _____ Source _____ Reviewer _____

Multiple Perspectives				
Indicator: Does the learning experience (lesson, series of lessons, project, unit, etc.)	0	1	2	3
• Present multiple, diverse, and non-dominant perspectives with nuance, respect, and equity?				
• Express and value non-dominant cultural voices (scholars, artists, thinkers, etc.)?				
• Invite students to use their voices and activate their own perspective?				
Critical Lens				
Indicator: Does the learning experience (lesson, series of lessons, project, unit, etc.)	0	1	2	3
• Encourage critical examination of content, paying particular attention to addressing power, position, and bias?				
• Create opportunities to identify, address, and counteract stereotypes, assumptions, and dominant narratives?				
• Promote understanding that systems are the product of human choices that can be made better?				
• Provide opportunities for constructing knowledge and enduring concepts?				
Relevance				
Indicator: Does the learning experience (lesson, series of lessons, project, unit, etc.)	0	1	2	3
• Drive learning through connection to students' identities and their communities?				
• Connect lines of inquiry to meaningful action impacting students' communities and world?				
Rigor				
Indicator: Does the learning experience (lesson, series of lessons, project, unit, etc.)	0	1	2	3
• Promote student growth as independent, lifelong learners with goals extending beyond the classroom?				
• Provide rigorous opportunities to promote personal and academic growth?				
• Build knowledge, understanding and skills that will have a lasting effect on them beyond this learning experience?				
Relationships				
Indicator: Does the learning experience (lesson, series of lessons, project, unit, etc.)	0	1	2	3
• Facilitate students becoming better known to their teachers, to each other, and to themselves?				
• Encourage students to believe they are capable and worthy human beings?				
Technical Considerations				
Indicator: Does the learning experience (lesson, series of lessons, project, unit, etc.)	Yes		No	
• Support academic standards for the class (SOLs, Lifelong Learner, etc.)?				
• Require an appropriate amount of time in relation to the content/skills learned?				
• Accessible to all students (e.g., individuals with differing abilities such as physical, language, or sensory)?				
• Promote application of relevant social studies skills by students?				
• Include a plan for assessing if students have met learning outcomes?				

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Multiple Perspectives Continuum Tool

Traditional			Transformative
<p>Level 0: Dominant Perspective</p> <p>Representation: The curriculum ignores the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups.</p> <p>Respect: The curriculum portrays the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups with inadequate respect or nuance.</p> <p>Contribution: The curriculum is exclusively comprised of works and/or contributions by individuals in dominant groups.</p> <p>Expertise: The curriculum exclusively presents individuals in dominant groups as experts or authorities in the discipline.</p> <p>Students: The curriculum neglects students' perspectives and voices.</p>	<p>Level 1: Limited Inclusion</p> <p>Representation: The curriculum emphasizes the experiences and perspectives of the dominant group, providing limited time and space for the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups.</p> <p>Respect: Representations of marginalized groups are free of dehumanization, stereotype, othering, and implied inferiority.</p> <p>Contribution: Works and contributions of people from marginalized groups are included in a limited way (e.g. as supplementary texts or separate units).</p> <p>Expertise: The curriculum infrequently presents people from marginalized groups as experts or authorities in the discipline</p> <p>Students: The curriculum provides some opportunities for students to contribute their perspectives and voices.</p>	<p>Level 2: Multicultural Representation</p> <p>Representation: The curriculum equitably represents the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups.</p> <p>Respect: The experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups are represented with respect and nuance. Representations affirm human dignity and foster empathy.</p> <p>Contribution: An equitable proportion of the curriculum includes works and/or contributions by people from marginalized groups, and many of these are core texts.</p> <p>Expertise: The curriculum often presents people from marginalized groups as experts or authorities in the discipline</p> <p>Students: The curriculum often provides opportunities for students to contribute their perspectives and voices.</p>	<p>Level 3: Transformation</p> <p>Representation: The experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups challenge and reframe traditional or dominant ways of understanding course content.</p> <p>Respect: The experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups are represented with respect and nuance. Representations affirm human dignity and foster empathy.</p> <p>Contribution: Works and/or contributions by people from marginalized groups challenge and reframe traditional or dominant ways of understanding course content.</p> <p>Expertise: The curriculum often presents people from marginalized groups as experts and authorities in the discipline and fosters opportunities to critically examine expertise and authority (e.g. barriers to entry, underrepresentation , expertise as a tool of power)</p> <p>Students: The curriculum supports students in learning through connections to their own experiences and contexts, and from the voices and perspectives of their peers.</p>

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Critical Examination of Knowledge and Power

Traditional			Transformative
<p>Level 0: Inculcation</p> <p>Knowledge: The curriculum presents disciplinary knowledge as a set of objective facts to be memorized by the student. Learning and teaching about social studies appear to be ideologically neutral acts.</p> <p>Power: The ideas of power, position, and bias are absent from the curriculum as factors that influence the past, present, and future (and their interpretation).</p> <p>Concepts: The curriculum is organized chronologically, geographically, or in some other way that emphasizes discrete facts or skills over enduring concepts and essential questions.</p> <p>Choices: The curriculum presents human systems and events as inevitable realities to be accepted rather than questioned.</p> <p>Position: The curriculum presents key events, institutions, and representations primarily from the perspective of the dominant group (without explicitly noting this bias).</p>	<p>Level 1: Activation</p> <p>Knowledge: The curriculum provides opportunities for students to construct knowledge. Students are sometimes encouraged to identify bias, with the goal of an ideologically neutral approach to learning and teaching about social studies.</p> <p>Power: The curriculum sometimes frames power, position, and bias as factors that influence the past, present, and future.</p> <p>Concepts: The curriculum includes concepts and essential questions.</p> <p>Choices: The curriculum presents few opportunities for students to question the way things were, are, or could be.</p> <p>Position: The curriculum presents key events, institutions, and representations through multiple perspectives.</p>	<p>Level 2: Critical Examination</p> <p>Knowledge: The curriculum often calls attention to how disciplinary knowledge is constructed through a continuing history of social relations. Learning and teaching about social studies are presented as inherently ideological acts.</p> <p>Power: The curriculum often frames curriculum materials and course content through a critical examination of power, position, and bias.</p> <p>Concepts: The curriculum is organized around concepts and essential questions.</p> <p>Choices: The curriculum often calls students' attention to the ways in which human systems are the product of choices that could have been made differently.</p> <p>Position: For key events, institutions, and representations, the curriculum calls students' attention to who is there, who is missing, who benefits, and who is harmed.</p>	<p>Level 3: Empowerment</p> <p>Knowledge: Students are supported in identifying how disciplinary knowledge is constructed through a continuing history of social relations. Students reflect on and identify ways in which learning and teaching about social studies are inherently ideological acts.</p> <p>Power: The curriculum supports students in critically examining curriculum materials and course content through the lens of power, position, and bias.</p> <p>Concepts: The curriculum is organized around relevant, enduring concepts and essential questions (some of which students identify for themselves) that foster students' ability to transfer and apply their learning.</p> <p>Choices: Students critically examine the ways in which human systems are the product of choices, and supports students in imagining and taking action for more just systems.</p> <p>Position: The curriculum prepares students to examine events, institutions, and representations by identifying who is there, who is missing, who benefits, and who is harmed.</p>

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Relevance and Authenticity

Traditional	Transformative		
<p>Level 0: Disconnection</p> <p>Inquiry: Content coverage drives the curriculum. The curriculum requires students to demonstrate comprehension of prescribed content in prescribed ways. The curriculum does not acknowledge that how students think and live matters.</p> <p>Connection: Curriculum materials are one-sided rather than a collaborative exchange with students: the curriculum emphasizes things to be understood and work to be completed, and reflects the assumption that all students might understand the things and complete the work in roughly the same ways. The curriculum creates no opportunities for students to connect personally or culturally to what or how they are learning. Students whose personal and cultural identities are historically or currently marginalized in American education systems are particularly disadvantaged by the curriculum's indifference to students' contexts.</p> <p>Action: Students experience and apply their learning in ways that are limited to the course itself and disconnected from the community or world. The curriculum creates no opportunities for students to make reflective decisions, take meaningful action, or contribute to their communities or to the world.</p>	<p>Level 1: Disconnection with Bright Spots</p> <p>Inquiry: Content coverage is the main organizing principle, but the curriculum includes questions that connect to students' communities and to the world.</p> <p>Connection: The curriculum emphasizes things to be understood and work to be completed, but also includes some limited opportunities for students to connect personally and culturally to what and how they are learning. Students whose personal and cultural identities are historically or currently marginalized in American education systems have inequitable opportunities to access and demonstrate learning by drawing on their own contexts.</p> <p>Action: Students mostly experience and apply their learning in ways that are limited to the course itself, but the curriculum sometimes fosters student thinking about how their learning might connect to their communities or world. Students are rarely, if ever, supported in taking action.</p>	<p>Level 2: Relevance for Some</p> <p>Inquiry: Questions drive the curriculum, though they may not consistently foster connections to students' communities and to the world.</p> <p>Connection: The curriculum supports students in connecting personally and culturally to what and how they are learning. The curriculum's approach to "relevance" may reflect assumptions about students that privilege dominant groups; students whose personal and cultural identities are historically or currently marginalized in American education systems may need additional support in accessing and demonstrating learning by drawing on their own contexts.</p> <p>Action: The curriculum includes some opportunities for students to make reflective decisions, take meaningful action, and contribute to their communities and to the world.</p>	<p>Level 3: Student Ownership</p> <p>Inquiry: Questions that connect to students' communities and to the world drive the curriculum. The curriculum encourages students to form and pursue their own questions, including questions that challenge existing systems and the curriculum itself.</p> <p>Connection: The curriculum designs learning experiences so that they are shaped by students' personal and cultural connections to what and how they are learning. Students whose personal and cultural identities are historically or currently marginalized in American education systems have equitable opportunities to access and demonstrate learning by drawing on their own contexts.</p> <p>Action: The curriculum consistently empowers students to make reflective decisions, take meaningful action, and contribute to their communities and to the world.</p>

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Rigor

Traditional

Transformative


Level 0: Rote Passivity	Level 1: Some Rigor for Some Kids	Level 2: Rigor for All Kids	Level 3: Liberated Learners
<p>Processing: The curriculum emphasizes passivity, rote memorization, and basic recall. There are few or no opportunities for students to process, reflect, and think critically about their learning.</p> <p>Transfer: The curriculum provides few or no opportunities for students to transfer their learning. Students can successfully demonstrate mastery of the curriculum without considering how their learning connects to anything outside of the curriculum.</p> <p>Inclusion: Where rigor is present in the curriculum, it is offered as an extension for certain students, and no supports are offered so that all students can access opportunities for rigorous learning.</p>	<p>Processing: The curriculum provides some opportunities to process, reflect, and think critically about their learning. Processing opportunities rarely or never support students in drawing on their personal and cultural contexts.</p> <p>Transfer: The curriculum provides some opportunities for students to transfer their learning. Transfer opportunities rarely or never support students in drawing on their personal and cultural contexts.</p> <p>Inclusion: The curriculum provides some scaffolds for students to access rigor. Scaffolds rarely or never support students in drawing on their personal and cultural contexts.</p>	<p>Processing: The curriculum provides students opportunities to process, reflect, and think critically about their learning by drawing on their personal and cultural contexts. The curriculum supports students in naming and directing their thinking moves.</p> <p>Transfer: The curriculum provides opportunities for students to transfer their learning by drawing on their personal and cultural contexts.</p> <p>Inclusion: The curriculum provides scaffolds for students to access rigor, and scaffolds support students in drawing on their personal and cultural contexts.</p>	<p>Processing: Students' growth as independent learners drives the curriculum (including its approach to assessment), and students with marginalized personal and cultural identities have equitable opportunities to demonstrate mastery by learning through their contexts.</p> <p>Transfer: The curriculum is shaped by students' drawing on their personal and cultural contexts to transfer their learning.</p> <p>Inclusion: The curriculum is shaped by students' drawing on their personal and cultural contexts as scaffolds for rigorous learning. The curriculum operationalizes the values that 1) all students deserve equitable access to rigor and 2) all students can grow as independent learners.</p>

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Culturally Responsive Curriculum: Relationships

Traditional

Transformative

Level 0: Harm	Level 1: Positive Relationships	Level 2: Transformative Relationships
<p>The curriculum undermines positive relationships between teachers and students, and among students, by designing learning experiences that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create few or no opportunities for students to know or be known by their teachers and peers. • Foster few or no connections to students' personal and cultural contexts. • Represent the experiences, cultures, or histories of people in ways that are dehumanizing , stereotypical, hierarchical, or disrespectful. • Engage students in learning that is unimportant or irrelevant, or that can only be justified because it is required by the curriculum. 	<p>The curriculum fosters positive relationships between teachers and students, and among students, by designing learning experiences that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for students to know and be known by their teachers and peers. • Foster connections to students' personal and cultural contexts. • Represent the experiences, cultures, and histories of all people with respect. • Engage students in important, challenging, and relevant learning. 	<p>The curriculum fosters transformative relationships between teachers and students, and among students, by designing learning experiences that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for students to know and be known by their teachers and peers, and to draw on these identifications to deepen their understanding of who they think they are and who they are capable of becoming. • Are shaped by students' learning through their personal and cultural contexts. • Represent the experiences, cultures, and histories of all people as worthy of respectful study, in ways that promote human dignity and empathy • Engage students in learning they have decided is important, challenging, and relevant, and foster opportunities for students and teacher to reflect on what makes learning important, challenging, and relevant to them.