



# “Creative” Projects

## Black & Latino Studies

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Portland High School  
Ryan Ott



# Overview

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1. PHS BLS class demographics
2. Netflix Project
3. Abstract Art Project
4. Blackout Poetry Project
5. Project: BLS in the Arts
6. Ideas for the future
7. Field Trip - YUAG
8. Field Trip - Amistad

# Class Info

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→ PHS = ~300 students

→ 9 students (Year 1)

- All seniors (because of course sequencing, hard for non-seniors to enroll)
- 7 male, 2 female
- 7 white, 1 bi-racial, 1 white with Dominican step-mom and sibling

→ 20 enrolled (Year 2)

# Netflix Project

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The Netflix logo is displayed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters with a slight 3D effect, set against a solid red rectangular background.

Original idea stolen from Adrian at Abbott Tech (SERC presentation)

- Adapted, expanded, and switched to other content/unit (not the one he shared)

Create – historical drama series

- Action, Suspense, Heroics, Violence, Emotion
- 7 episodes (or more, or less)
- Groups of 2 or 3

\*Especially effective (imo) in distant past, where less multimedia resources exist, where less has been covered by Hollywood



**CQ: How did Black Americans resist slavery's dehumanization, protest for reform, and fight to win freedom? And how did white allies assist in the efforts to abolish slavery?**

**Resistance:**

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1. Historical drama/fiction episode = enslaved black family, faith, art, music, poor work quality, and/or tampering/interference with plantation production
2. Pick one - Nat Turner or Denmark Vesey
3. Historical drama/fiction episode = enslaved person (or pair, or small group) escapes and joins the union army to fight the confederacy (include Emancipation Proclamation)

**Abolitionist Movement:**

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Pick four. Include diverse representation (male, female, Black, white, northern, southern).

1. William Lloyd Garrison
2. Frederick Douglass
3. David Walker
4. Harriet Tubman
5. Sojourner Truth
6. Angelina Grimke or Harriet Beecher Stowe or Lucretia Mott
7. Elizabeth Jennings
8. John Brown
9. Captain Robert Smalls
10. Massachusetts 54th (include the role of Lincoln's "Emancipation Proclamation")

# This Is America

2022 TV-PG

After Bella is shot and put into a coma, she gains time travelling abilities. Bella is forced to go through terrible times in history but through it she meets amazing people. Inspired by what she has seen during her coma, Bella becomes a heroic figure of her own time by igniting one of the nation's largest movements.



PLAY

+ MY LIST



Creator: Camille Kopacz, Mason Tuttle, And Olivia Hungerford  
Genre: Action, Historical Fiction, Drama

This Show is: Heart Wrenching, Beautiful, Inspiring

[OVERVIEW](#)

[EPISODES](#)

[TRAILERS & MORE](#)

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# This Is America

Season 1 ▼



## Comatose

After a tragic incident involving police brutality protagonist Bella Argentina enters into a coma. With Bella in an unconscious state and her friend Thomas deceased the town explodes into a state of chaos. They crowd the streets and won't stop the fight until they receive justice for this horrifying event. Everything changes when Bella shifts to a different reality and finds herself in the early 1830s. Andrew Jackson is president, and she has landed right in a southern plantation.

[OVERVIEW](#)[EPISODES](#)[TRAILERS & MORE](#)[MORE LIKE THIS](#)[DETAILS](#)



# This Is America

Season 1 ▼



## Sticking To Our Roots

Bella finds herself on a Virginia Plantation surrounded by inspiring men and women being treated like animals. She quickly connects with a young woman,

Emily finds most of her motivation through her husband and two daughters. As the days pass by Emily and Bella are filled with more and more rage about what is happening to them and the people around them.

The two girls begin making toys out of the tools. The toys are their way of giving back a part of the children's childhoods. Breaking the tools is their way of rebelling against the evil man that took them away from the lives they could have had. As the girls begin to feel like eyes are on them they slow down their manufacturing. It isn't until a early Saturday morning that they realize they had been caught, and this was not going to be an easy thing to get out of.

# This Is America

Season 1 ▼



## Nothing But Pain

Emily and Bella's toys are discovered by the plantation owner. While the kids do not tell the man who made the toys, but they are all punished nonetheless. However, Emily doesn't find out about this until she realizes her daughter is missing. When she goes looking for her, she hears her screams coming from a shed. Emily walks in to see her daughter being whipped, bleeding from the back. In a fit of rage, she tackles the overseer and shoots him with the pistol he had on his waist. The gunshot rang out across the campus, and the owner came running. Upon being discovered, Emily tries to run away, but cannot get far enough. The next morning she is hanged, while the plantation owner makes her own daughter watch. Bella then meets with a mysterious man who arrived on the plantation the night before...

# This Is America

Season 1 ▼



## The Apple Falls Far

Bella travels through the streets confused of where she is. She asks a woman the date and is surprised when she tells her it is now 1829. Confused by her new found ability to transcend time and distraught by what she has seen, Bella heads to the nearest church to sit with her thoughts.

She is surprised when the white women standing at the altar in the South Carolina church begins preaching for the abolishment of slavery. The women in front of her, Angelina Grimke, begins pleading for the women around her to read, speak and act on the issue of slavery.

Bella approaches Angelina as they both exit the church sharing her appreciation and interest in her words.

Angelina invites Bella to her house for lunch, hesitant to follow.

As they sit down at the extravagant dining table Angelina's father, John Grimke arrives back at home. He begins shouting out slurs and throwing silverware at the girls. This seems to be Angelina's final straw as she packs her bags and leaves. She leaves it all behind. Her family, her wealth, her comfort to start a new life. A life where she is no longer wrapped up in hatred, where she is able to fight for what she believes in, equality.



# Eleven

2022

TV-R

The story and bravery by Elijah James as he and his friends are freed by a radical man. In search of their freedom and through their journey to the north they meet different activists while also avoiding the dangers of the south and seeing the horrors. They are crucial to helping bring the fight and freedom to the slaves.



PLAY

+ MY LIST



Creators: Ethan Krasniewski,  
Harrison Collins, Ben Fecteau  
Genre: Historical Fiction



# America's Pastime

2022

TV-MA

TOP 10 #1 in TV Shows Today

This series highlights the truth of American history. The dehumanization and injustice of Black American's fulfilled the white Americans racist mindset. The struggle, discrimination, and suffering of black American's plagued such a long timeperiod of America's pastime. This series brings you through the heroic action of many black Americans who risked their lives for just a chance at freedom and justice.



PLAY

+ MY LIST



Creator: Will Favale/Ryan Kerr

Genre: Historical  
fiction/non-fictionThis Show is: Captivating,  
Inspiring, Eye-Opening



# Abstract Art Project

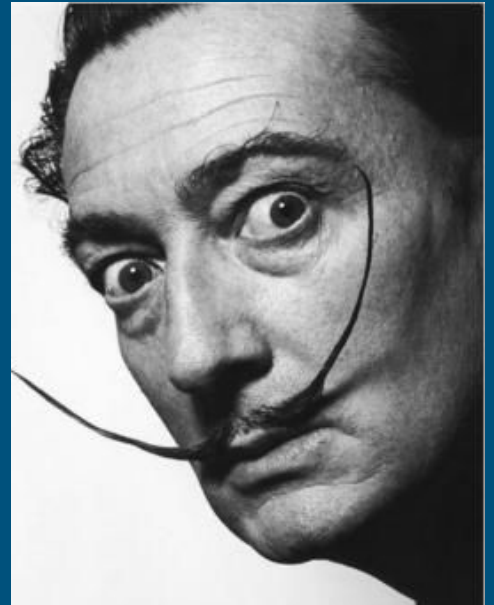
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Could fit anywhere in the course curriculum

- perhaps best with philosophical ideas at the center
- CRM - Protest philosophy of Malcolm X vs MLK

## Key elements:

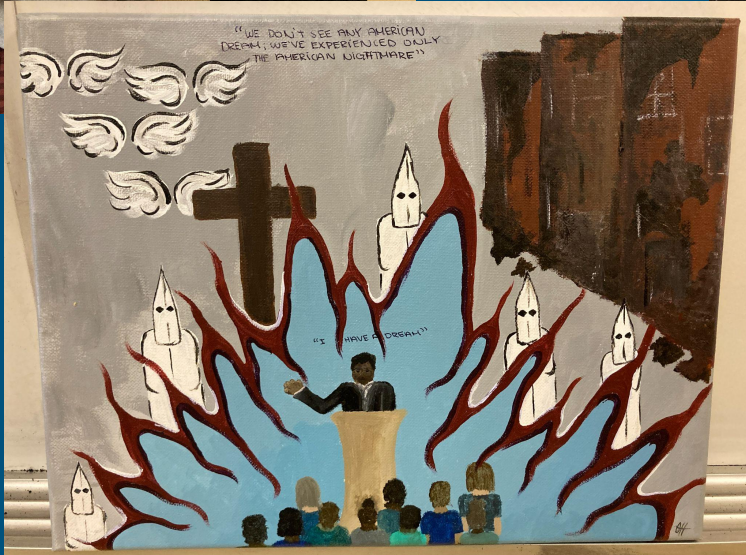
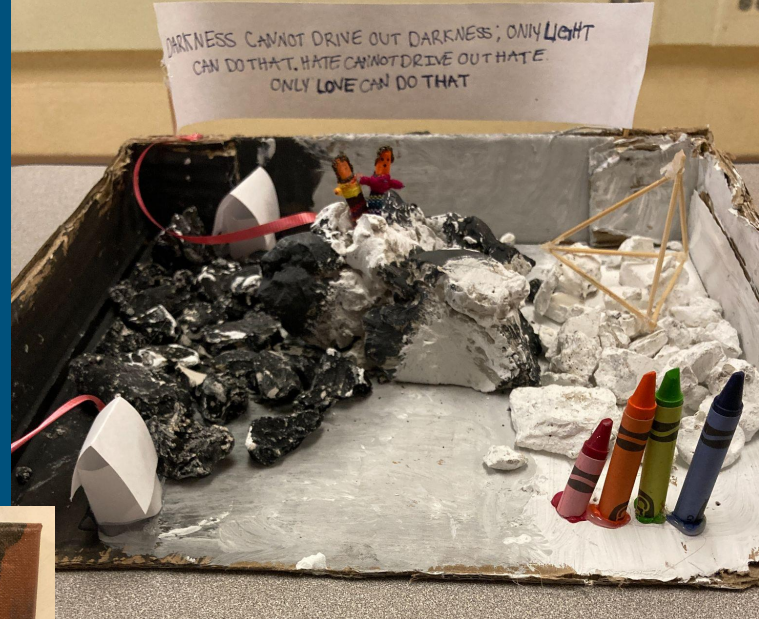
- “abstract” - problematizes the project for deeper analysis
  - “If I understand your artwork without you explaining it to me, it is not abstract enough”
- Must be presented to audience (class, teacher, guests – principal etc)
  - Do not do a “gallery walk” to save time
- Must require an “**artist statement**”



# abstract/symbolic/interpretive

- Sculpture
- Painting
- Drawing
- Woodworking/Wood Carving
- Statue
- Legos
- Original Clothing
- Play-Dough
- Pottery
- Pasta Art
- Combination of the above?
- Mixed Media
- Ceiling Mobile
- Puppet Show
- Political Cartoon
- 2-D or 3-D?
- Both?
- Graffiti Art
- Original Music/Song
- Original Video/Cartoon
- Poetry
- Diorama
- Original photography
- Original Theatre/Play
- Magnetic Animation on the Whiteboard
- Welding
- Original comic strip/book
- digital art
- decorative cake
- Other creative ideas???
- Far more possibilities...
- New types every year...

**BUT NO COLLAGES!!!**







# Blackout Poetry

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Anywhere in the course curriculum, but especially with famous speeches

- A singular text (longer) or with multiple smaller texts
- Can allow for splitting up different texts among the class
  - allow them to read multiple texts and then choose the 1 (or 2) they want to use to create their blackout poetry
- Require symbolic visuals inside or alongside the blackout poetry
- Require the inclusion of founding documents (Preamble, DOI, etc)
- **Must include an "artist statement"**

STATEMENT BY CESAR CHAVEZ  
ON THE CONCLUSION OF A 25 DAY FAST FOR NON-VIOLENCE

I have asked the Rev. James Drake to read this statement to you because my heart is so full and my body too weak to be able to say what I feel

My warm thanks to all of you for coming today. Many of you have been here before, during the Fast. Some have sent beautiful cards and telegrams and made offerings at the Mass. All of these expressions of your love have strengthened me and I am grateful.

We should all express our thanks to Senator Kennedy for his constant work on behalf of the poor, for his personal encouragement to me, and for taking the time to break bread with us today.

I do not want any of you to be deceived about the nature of the 25 day Fast of water only which I undertook on February 13 ended after the 21st day because of the advice of our doctor, James McKelvey, and other physicians. Since that time I have been taking liquids in order to prevent serious damage to my kidneys.

We are gathered here today not so much to observe the end of the Fast but because we are a family bound together in a common struggle for justice. We are a Union family celebrating our unity and the non-violent nature of our movement. Perhaps in the future we will come together at other times and places to break bread and to renew our courage and to celebrate important victories.

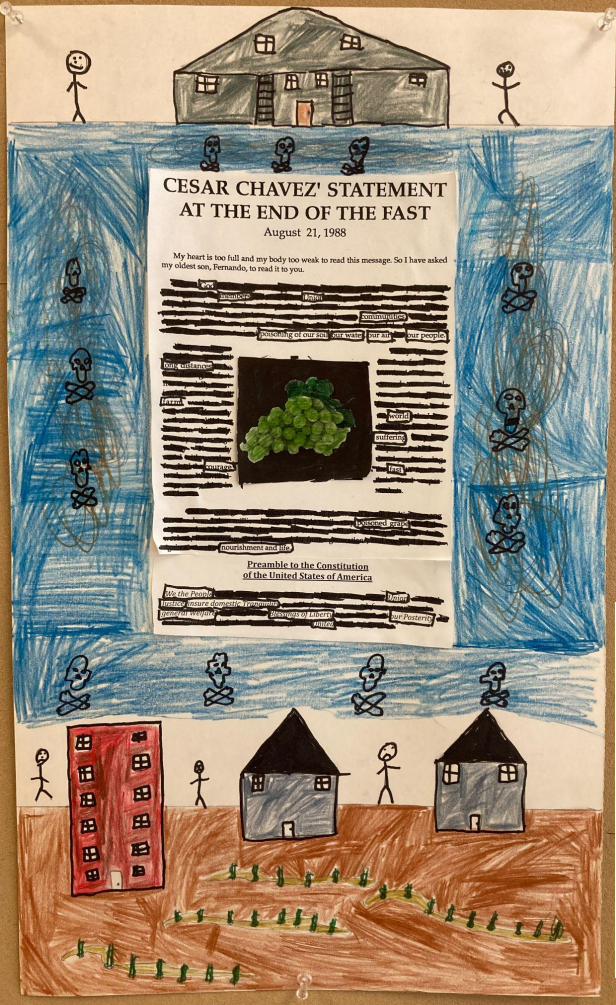
The Fast has had different meanings for different people. Some of you may still wonder about its meaning and importance. It was not intended as a pressure against any growers. For that purpose we have suspended negotiations and arbitration proceedings and relaxed the militant picketing and boycotting of the strike during this period. I undertook this Fast because my heart was filled with grief and pain for the sufferings of farm workers. The Fast was first for me and then for all of us in this Union. It was a Fast for non-violence and a call to sacrifice.

Our struggle is not easy. Those who oppose our cause are rich and powerful and they have many allies in high places. We are poor. Our allies are few. But we have something the rich do not own. We have our own bodies and spirits and the justice of our cause as our weapons.

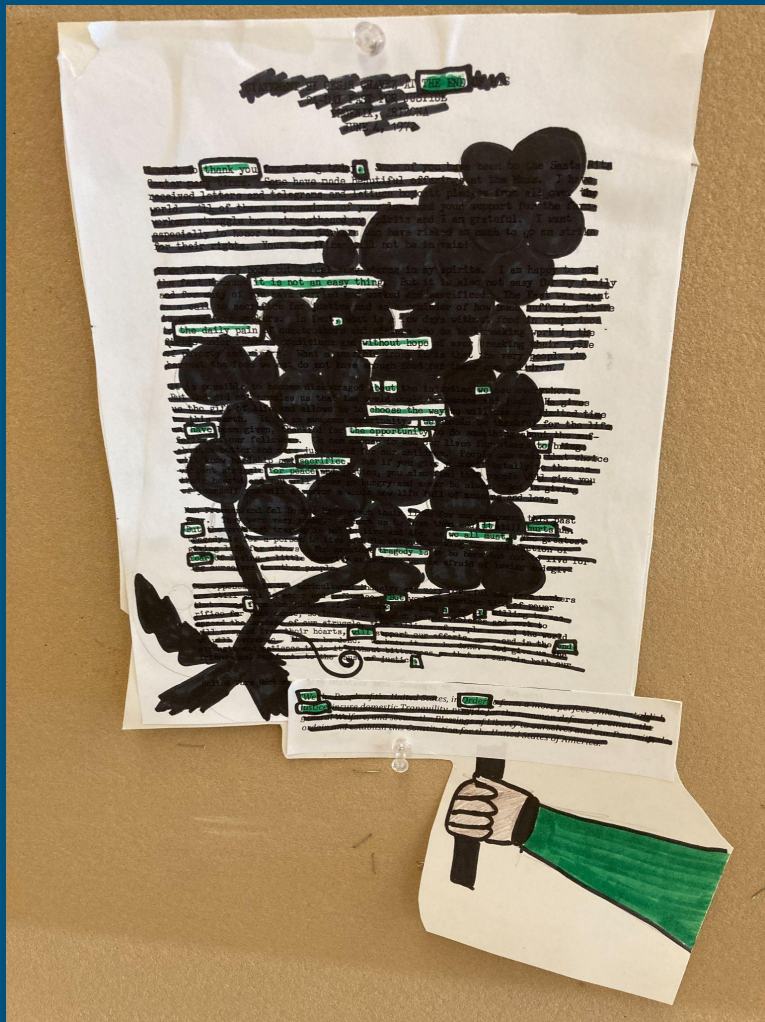
When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us. So, it is how we use our lives that determines what kind of men we are. It is my deepest belief that only by giving our lives do we find life. I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of manliness, is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally non-violent struggle for justice.

To be a man is to suffer for others. God help us to be men!





When we began to discuss this topic the biggest thing that came to mind was the economy. You can't make changes with rights and powers without increasing your social standings so I focussed on how the white farm owners would poison the grapes but in turn hurt the workers and destroy their communities rising out of the ground. Over time this poison seeps into the ground poisoning the roots of our economy. I felt like it was important to highlight the atrocities by having the people be poisoned as well showing that not only were communities hurt but also the people as well.



When watching the Cesar Chavez movie I knew that I wanted my piece to be very personal and emotional. There was a lot of fear in this event and that is what I wanted to focus on with my art. I made a poem that acknowledged the fear people felt but also showed that they had the strength to overcome it. My poem was titled “THE END” as my whole piece revolved around the idea that fear would end and justice would be served. I had a few lines that discussed the fact that although it is terrifying the people during this time had to take the opportunity to make a change. I wrote the poem as though I was someone involved in the protests. I decided to cover my blackout poem with a bunch of grapes to represent the protest that they took part in. The grapes were colored black to represent the boycott from both working in the fields and purchasing the grapes. The other words were colored green because green represents new beginnings and growth. I made the preamble into the short phrase “We Order Justice”. This was placed at the bottom of my piece to really bring home what they were fighting for.



# Project: **BLS Arts Podcast/Screencast**

## *Student Choice Project - 3 Options*

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### 1. Broadway Musicals

- Its efforts toward social and racial justice. Pick at least 3.

### 2. Hip Hop

- History, social/political/economic influence and significance, role as critic of American injustices. PBS 4-part docu-series.

### 3. CT Museums & Galleries

- “Highlights Tour” of Black, Latino, Hispanic, and Indigenous art across CT. Pick at least 3.

### **CQ:**

How did the artists utilize and portray the role of Black and Latino history, culture, and artists in their artwork? What political, social, economic, cultural messages and themes did they focus on delivering to their audiences? How did/does their art push America forward toward greater social and racial justice?

# Future Creative Project Ideas

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1. Design a Black & Latino Mt Rushmore national monument
  - With interactive signage/placards for visitors (QR codes for each hero)
  - Geographic location? Design elements? Design materials?
2. Build an Interactive Artistic BLS Timeline for school library or classroom
  - With creative art/visuals and QR codes of students narrating the artwork and historical events
  - Emphasis on 400+ years (1619)
3. Design an MLK 39 RiseUp for the Arts CT Mural
  - Inside the school... the library? the classroom? the cafeteria?
4. Myth/Misconception vs Reality (format tbd)
  - love this pseudo-theme through most of the SERC curriculum

# Field Trips - YUAG





# Field Trips - YUAG





# Field Trips - The Amistad



regional and international levels. This site fulfills the quality criteria set by the UNESCO Slave Route Project in conjunction with the Managers of Sites and Itineraries of Memory.

In 1738, the ship *Martha & Jane*, owned by Abraham Redwood, arrived at Middletown's riverfront carrying 126 enslaved Africans disembarked. During the voyage, 23 of their fellow captives had perished, and 74 surviving. The names of the men, women and children who perished during the Middle Passage, with 74 surviving. The names of the men, women and children who perished during the Middle Passage, with 74 surviving. The names of the men, women and children who perished during the Middle Passage, with 74 surviving.

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Erected by the Citizens of the City of Middletown, 2019