

QUESTION BRIDGE

QUESTION BRIDGE CURRICULAR TOOLS FOR GRADES 9-12

MODULE 3 – THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

“AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS A PROBLEM EATING CHICKEN, WATERMELON, AND BANANAS IN FRONT OF WHITE PEOPLE?”

THE TEACHER’S GUIDE

Question Bridge: Black Males was conceived by Chris Johnson. The project was *created by* Chris Johnson and Hank Willis Thomas, in collaboration with Bayete Ross-Smith and Kamal Sinclair. The Executive Producers are Delroy Lindo, Jesse Williams and Deborah Willis.

Question Bridge Curriculum written by Kamal Sinclair in consultation with Question Bridge Collaborators, Education Consultant Jinan Sumler, and scholarship advisors Dr. Joy Angela DeGruy, Dr. Deborah Willis.

The **Question Bridge Curricular Tools** were updated by Chris Johnson and James E. Ford.

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Note: If you encounter a broken link in our suggested readings you may still be able to find those resources by searching for the relevant titles with your internet browser.

Important: Your feedback on these materials is essential. Please forward comments and suggestions to the appropriate designated administrators of your school and directly to the Question Bridge Education Initiative at the following email address: feedback@questionbridge.com

MODULE 3: THE BLACK EXPERIENCE

ART PROJECT QUESTION: “AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS A PROBLEM EATING CHICKEN, WATERMELON, AND BANANAS IN FRONT OF WHITE PEOPLE?”

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

“How do we create equitable environments of inclusion in a diverse society, both within and between identity groups?”

LEARNING GOALS

- Students will explore the dynamics of familiarity among members of a demographic group.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Engage in weekly dialogue with their peers.
- Apply critical thinking skills to daily routines.
- Write about complex issues related to race, gender, and class.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Composition notebook for journaling
- Chart paper, blackboard, or computer with Excel
- Art material to make identity map or computers with design programs to generate identity maps
- A Module 3 print out for each student
- Computer projector with the ability to: play video from a video file downloaded or played from the “Question Bridge Curricular Tools” Dropbox Folder : QBCT Module 3.

Use either of these links to access all of the Question Bridge Modules:

<https://showcase.dropbox.com/doc/Question-Bridge-Curricular-Modules-Y05lKDxi4ct9AchAmC9OL>

<https://showcase.dropbox.com/doc/Question-Bridge-Curricular-Modules-Y05lKDxi4ct9AchAmC9OL>

PRE-WORK FOR EDUCATORS

- Read recommended articles:
Black American Culture and the Racial Wealth Gap, Published by Coleman Hughes, *Published on July 19, 2018*
<https://quillette.com/author/coleman-cruz-hughes/>
- Black Experience (blog) – The Black Youth Project.
<http://blackyouthproject.com/category/featured/>
- Harmful Policies Are Giving All Americans a Black Experience, David A. Love. . Huffington Post (July 2011) : http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-a-love/harmful-policies-are-givi_b_886423.html
- View recommended videos:
 - The Black Experience in the 1950s: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYEUTQLphVU>
 - Joys of a Share Identity: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx3OWEWI8DI>
 - African American Identity – Dr. Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.
 - Part 1 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRVeEt03wy8&feature=related>
 - Part 2 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Plap3YSDo0&feature=related>
 - Part 3 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDT6L9eIPfw&feature=related>
 - Part 4 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s11Q_6-hpxg&feature=related
 - Part 5 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6FgCFMXmZ4&feature=related>
 - Part 6 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWgRDDTE_vc&feature=related
- View recommended websites:
 - Kamoinge founded by Louis Draper, Ray Francis, Herbert Randall and Albert Fennar, with Roy DeCarava serving as its first director. <http://www.kamoinge.com/>

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 (Observe) – Share Module 3 Video: The Black Experience.

Activity 2 (Reflect/Discuss) - Engage in dialogue about video.

Discussion questions:

Please Note: space is for personal notes. The “Deep Dive” questions and “Activity Extra” instructions are **optional**.

1. Describe one answer in the video that resonated with you. Explain why. _____

DEEP DIVE DIALOGUE

A. Is this an important dialogue to have among Black men in America? Why? _____

TALKING POINTS

Most participants responded with laughter to the question: “Does anyone else have a problem with eating chicken, watermelons, and bananas in front of white people?” We assume the laughter emerged from the recognition of a shared experience. Other questions were asked and answered in a similar way, which could indicate a shared experience of being Black and male in the United States.

2. What are some widely shared historical conditions shared by African American men that inform this dialogue on Black male identity or “The Black Experience?” _____

TALKING POINTS

Artists, cultural critics, scholars, sociologists, and others have tried to define “the Black experience” for generations. However, no single voice has been able to adequately define it, because the experience of being Black in America is as individual as one’s fingerprint. Although there is no single “Black experience,” there are shared historical conditions that inform individual experiences. For Black men, some of these conditions are as follows:

- The exposure or participation in various arts movements within African American culture (e.g. Jazz, Hip Hop, Blues, Funk, etc.)
- History of enslavement, subordination, and oppression.
 - Statistical likelihood of being dead or in jail by the age of 21 years old.
 - Higher likelihood of being incarcerated than white male peers for the same offenses
 - Exposure or awareness of negative stereotypes about Black men and the experience of being feared by others because of these stereotypes.
- The celebration and commodification of the Black male body in sports and entertainment.

(Visit the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture’s Studies on The Black Experience: <http://ssbe.chadwyck.com/marketing/>)

DEEP DIVE DIALOGUE

B. When did the concept of being “Black” begin for people of African descent in the Americas? _____

TALKING POINTS

The concept of being “Black” was not likely a part of the identity of the first people of African descent on the North American continent. They more likely identified themselves by their tribe, family, religious, or kingdom affiliations. The construct and definition of being “Black” or “negro” was created by the institution of slavery for people of African descent in America.

Reference: Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity. Ron Eyerman. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001

3. What are some experiences shared by the members of one of your identity groups that characterize the experience of that identity group? How is it truly unique to your identity group? How is it universal? _____

ACTIVITY EXTRA

GAME: **Who knows the lyrics?** Each group will compete on who is able to sing or rap the most lyrics in unison. The group that is able to sing or rap the most songs as a group, without messing up the lyrics, wins a prize or privilege (to be determined by the teacher).

1. Divide the class into four groups.
2. Give the groups five minutes to consult about three songs they all think they know the lyrics to. (Happy Birthday is not allowed)
3. Ask them to select a “conductor.”
4. Give each group the opportunity to sing a song in unison with their conductor leading the sing-a-long. The group that was least able to sing in unison is eliminated (by judgment of the teacher).
5. Repeat for two more rounds until you have a winning group.

Discuss the fact that the winning group had a shared knowledge base and explore why they all knew the lyrics to the same songs. Are they all into the same bands? Do they come from the same cultural background and therefore know the same cultural songs? Are they part of the school choir?

Ask the winning group about the experience of being an individual in a group with a shared experience. Find out how the individuals came to know the lyrics.

DEEP DIVE DIALOGUE

C. What negative stereotypes do you face, or feel people ascribe to you, when you are in diverse environments? _____

Activity 3 (Reflect/Discuss) – Sharing our shared experiences.

1. Instruct the students to break up in to small groups.
2. Ask them to find one shared experience they all identify with; it could be the experience of eating lunch in the school cafeteria, attending the same after-school program, or playing on the same sports. Identify something they all like or dislike about the experience.
3. Invite each group to share the experience they discussed with the class.
4. List each group on the board, write out their shared experience, and take a tally of all the other students in the room who feel they share that experience as well.

Activity 4 (Write) – Write a summary: *What did you learn today?*

- a. Return to the art project question when writing your summary: ***Am I the only one who has a problem eating chicken, watermelon, and bananas in front of white people?***
- b. Return to the essential question: ***“How do we create equitable environments of inclusion in a diverse society, both within and between identity groups?”***

TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENT

Choose at least one at-home assignment to complete over the next week:

1. DESIGN – prepare to tell a folktale, recite a poem, sing a song, bring in a culinary dish, or demonstrate a ritual/custom that is shared widely among the members of one of your personal identity groups.
2. WRITE – write an essay on “The _____ Experience.” Filling in the blank with one of your identity groups.
3. READ/WRITE - chose an item from the module research resource list (e.g. book, article, film, song, or visual/performing art work) and write a report or make an oral presentation in class.

MODULE 3 RESEARCH RESOURCE LIST

VIDEO LECTURES AND DISCUSSION

- The Black Experience in the 1950s: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYEuTQLphVU>
- Joys of a Shared Identity: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx3OWEWI8DI>
- Segregated Warriors: The Black Experience in WWII: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pj8S4uObPnk>
- African American Identity – Dr. Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.
 - Part 1 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRVeEt03wy8&feature=related>
 - Part 2 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Plap3YSDo0&feature=related>
 - Part 3 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDT6L9eIPfw&feature=related>
 - Part 4 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s11Q_6-hpxg&feature=related
 - Part 5 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6FgCFMXmZ4&feature=related>
 - Part 6 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWgRDDTE_vc&feature=related
- Kevin Sippon Traditional African American Narrative: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qa9dWOS0s2M&feature=related>

PODCAST

- *Sam Harris Podcast #134 - BEYOND THE POLITICS OF RACE, A Conversation with Coleman Hughes*
- <https://samharris.org/podcasts/134-beyond-politics-race/>

THEATRE PERFORMANCES

- *Mule Bone: a Comedy of Negro Life*, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston. Harper Perennial, 1991
- *Three Plays*, August Wilson. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994 (Ma Rainey's Black Bottom,

Fences, and Joe Turner's Come and Gone)

- *The Piano Lesson*, August Wilson, Toni Morrison. Theatre Communications Group, 20

VISUAL ART

Adrian Piper's Show at MoMA is the Largest Ever for a Living Artist. Why Hasn't She Seen It? The conceptual artist's life and work push against the boundaries of race and identity in America.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/27/magazine/adrian-pipers-self-imposed-exile-from-america-and-from-race-itself.html>

- Kamoinge founded by Louis Draper, Ray Francis, Herbert Randall and Albert Fennar, with Roy DeCarava serving as its first director. <http://www.kamoinge.com/>

MUSIC

- The Blacker the Berry – Kendrick Lamar
 - <https://genius.com/Kendrick-lamar-the-blacker-the-berry-lyrics>
 - The Story of OJ – Jay-Z
 - <https://genius.com/Jay-z-the-story-of-oj-lyrics>
 - Legacy – Jay-Z
 - <https://genius.com/Jay-z-legacy-lyrics>
- The Voice, The Black Experience. Video (June 19 2011)
<http://www.thevoicevideos.com/thevoice-the-black-experience/>
 - Sound of Da Police, KRS-One.
Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxBs4f4RIU>.
Lyrics: <http://www.lyricsdepot.com/krs-one/sound-of-da-police.html>

FILMS

- ***'Blindspotting' is a bracing look at race, class and masculinity***

https://www.washingtonpost.com/goingoutguide/movies/blindspotting-is-a-bracing-look-at-race-class-and-masculinity-oh-and-its-funny/2018/07/18/5f98bbfe-860a-11e8-8f6c-46cb43e3f306_story.html?utm_term=.d96c9ecc1316

- *500 Years Later: Directors Cut* (2005) Dr. Kimani Nehusi (Actor), Molefi Kete Asante (Actor), Owen Alik Shahadah (Director)
- *Africans in America: America's Journey Through Slavery* (1998). Angela Bassett (Actor), Jeremy Rabb (Actor), Noland Walker (Director), Jacquie Jones
- *Amistad* (1997) Director: Steven Spielberg
- *Glory* (1989) Denzel Washington (actor), Morgan Freeman (actor), Andre Braugher (actor), and

(Matthew Broderick).

- *Tuskegee Airmen* (1995), Lawrence Fishbourne (actor), Courtney B. Vance (actor), & Cuba Gooding Jr. (actor)
- *Roots*—TV Mini Series (1977) Directors: Marvin J. Chomsky, John Erman Stars: LeVar Burton, Olivia Cole and Ben Vereen
- *A Raisin in the Sun* (1961) Director: Daniel Petrie, Writers: Lorraine Hansberry (play), Lorraine Hansberry (screenplay), Stars: Sidney Poitier, Claudia McNeil and Ruby Dee
- *Malcolm X* (1992), Director: Spike Lee, Writers: Alex Haley (book), Malcolm X (book), Stars: Denzel Washington, Angela Bassett and Delroy Lindo

4.

ARTICLES

- Now Read This: Brainwashed, Challenging Black Inferiority
- <http://www.blackenterprise.com/now-read-this-brainwashed-challenging-black-inferiority/>

- Negative Images 'Brainwash' African Americans
- <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=124828546>

- How Respectability Politics Stifle Black Expression
- <https://medium.com/@sheneversleeps/how-respectability-politics-stifle-black-self-expression-c162d9418ff>

- A Black Man Wore Different Types of Clothing to See If People Treated Him Differently
- https://www.buzzfeed.com/pedrofequiere/i-dressed-up-and-dressed-down-for-a-week-and-this-is-what-ha?utm_term=.paRb0XNmN#.jyga5EGpG

- Michael Vick Advises Colin Kaepernick Cut Hair in Effort to Rebuild Image
- http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_/id/20090307/michael-vick-advises-colin-kaepernick-cut-hair-effort-rebuild-image

- Systemic Racism Could Not Care Less About Your Respectability Politics
- <https://www.thenation.com/article/systemic-racism-could-care-less-about-your-respectability-politics/>

- *BET Networks: A High-Definition Cultural Experience*, Lee Chapman. August 21, 2010. <http://technorati.com/business/article/bet-networks-a-high-definition-cultural/>
- *Black Experience* (blog) – The Black Youth Project. <http://www.blackyouthproject.com/blog/2011/05/15503/>
- *Harmful Policies Are Giving All Americans a Black Experience*, David A. Love (July 2011).. Huffington Post http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-a-love/harmful-policies-are-givi_b_886423.html

POETRY

- Black & Strong (Homesick) – Last Poets Link: <http://www.lyrics.com/black-and-strong-homesick-lyrics-the-last-poets.html>

BOOKS

- *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*, W.E.B. DuBois, A.C. McClurg & Co., 1903
- *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*, Joy DeGruy. Joy DeGruy Publications, 2006
- *Colored People: A Memoir*, Henry Louis Gates. Vintage Books, 1995
- *Black Voices: An Anthology of African-American Literature*, Abraham Hapman, Ed. Penguin, 2001
- *Long Memory: The Black experience in America*, Mary Frances Berry, John W. Blassingame. Oxford University Press, 1982
- *The Classic Slave Narratives*, Henry Louis Gates. Penguin, 2002
- *The Black Experience: American Blacks Since 1865*, Mary Ellison.
- *Achieving Blackness: Race, Black Nationalism, and Afrocentrism in the Twentieth Century*, Algernon Austin.
- *America behind the Color Line: Dialogues with African Americans*, Henry Louis Gates. Hachette Digital, Inc., 2004
- *The Anatomy of Blackness: Science and Slavery in an Age of Enlightenment*, Andrew Curran.
- *The Black Experience in America: From Civil Rights to the Present*, Britannica Educational. The Rosen Publishing Group, 2010

MODULE 3 GLOSSARY

Commodification (noun): the act of treating (something) inappropriately as if it can be acquired or marketed like other commodities.

Cultural Critic (noun): one who analyzes and critiques a given culture, usually as a whole and typically on a radical basis.

Dialogue (noun): conversation between two or more persons; the conversation between characters in a novel, drama, etc.; an exchange of ideas or opinions on a particular issue, especially a political or religious issue, with a view to reaching an amicable agreement or settlement.

Experience (noun): a particular instance of personally encountering or undergoing something; the process or fact of personally observing, encountering, or undergoing something; the observing, encountering, or undergoing of things generally as they occur in the course of time.

Family (noun): a basic social unit consisting of parents and their children, considered as a group, whether dwelling together or not: the traditional family; a social unit consisting of one or more adults together with the children they care for.

Generation (noun): the entire body of individuals born and living at about the same time; the term of

years, roughly 30 among human beings, accepted as the average period between the birth of parents and the birth of their offspring; a group of individuals, most of whom are the same approximate age, having similar ideas, problems, attitudes, etc.

Identity (noun): the state or fact of remaining the same one or ones, as under varying aspects or conditions; the condition of being oneself or itself, and not another; condition or character as to who a person or what a thing is.

Kingdom (noun): a state or government having a king or queen as its head.

Religion (noun): a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs; a specific fundamental set of beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects; the body of persons adhering to a particular set of beliefs and practices.

Scholar (noun): a learned or erudite person, especially one who has profound knowledge of a particular subject; a student; pupil.

Sociology (noun): the science or study of the origin, development, organization, and functioning of human society; the science of the fundamental laws of social relations, institutions, etc.

Stereotype (noun): a set of inaccurate, simplistic generalizations about a group that allows others to categorize them and treat them accordingly.

Subordinate (adjective): placed in or belonging to a lower order or rank; of less importance; secondary; subject to or under the authority of a superior.

Tribe (noun): any aggregate of people united by ties of descent from a common ancestor, community of customs and traditions, adherence to the same leaders, etc.

Voice (noun): written or spoken expression, as of feeling, opinion, etc.; a stated choice, wish, or opinion or the power or right to have an opinion heard and considered.

Source: dictionary.com, Wikipedia.com

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