



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

2024 Theme
African Americans and the Arts



BLACK HISTORY MONTH FEBRUARY 1 - MARCH 1

- Tips for Honoring Black History Month
- Black History Month 2024 Theme
- Notable Figures in Arts
- Lesson Plans and Resources
- Spotlight on FCUSD Employees



The Road to Black History Month

1915

Carter G. Woodson traveled from Chicago to Washington, DC to participate in a national celebration of the 50th anniversary of the emancipation.

1916

Woodson established the Journal of Negro History. Woods urged black civic organizations to promote the achievements that researchers were uncovering.

1924

Creation of Negro History and Literature Week which was later renamed Negro Achievement Week.

1926

Woodson sent out a press release announcing Negro History Week in February. He intentionally chose February to follow tradition. The Black Community had already been celebrating these days.

1969

Black educators and Black United students at Kent State proposed Black History month.

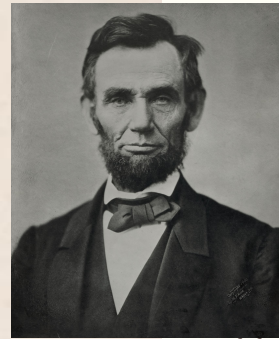
1976

The week-long event in February officially became Black History Month by U.S. President Gerald Ford.



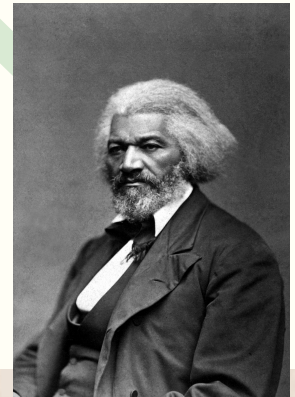
Black History Month

- February was selected to encompass the birthdays of two great Americans who played a prominent role in shaping black history, Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, whose birthdays are the 12th and the 14th, respectively



FEBRUARY '24

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	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21			
25	26	27	28			



The background is a light beige watercolor wash. It is decorated with various elements: orange flowers with green centers, green circular dots, green wavy lines, and stylized brown and green foliage. Two watercolor portraits of Black women are positioned on the left and right sides. The woman on the left has dark skin, voluminous dark green hair, and is wearing a red top and a large white earring. The woman on the right has light brown skin, short brown hair, and is wearing a brown top. The central text is bold and black, with the number '1' in orange.

1 TIPS FOR HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH.



TIPS FOR TEACHERS: Honoring Black History Month

Know your own story. Teacher educator Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz uses the phrase “Archaeology of the Self” to describe how teachers should dig deep, peel back layers of themselves and think about how issues of race, class, religion and sexual identity live within. Recognize that what is beneath these layers will affect relationships with your students. And if these issues go unexamined, they may even cause harm. Teaching requires more than academic study. Re-evaluate why you teach and be willing to think beyond pedagogy to holistically serve Black students. Practice critical humility and avoid speaking for Black students and their communities.

Decolonize your curriculum. Make historical literacy a priority. Representation matters, but historically, Eurocentric narratives and perspectives have been elevated in curricula. Instead, learn and teach full histories that accurately reflect a real, diverse world.

Be mindful. Recognize that some communities, particularly those that have been historically marginalized, need to heal. This certainly includes many of your Black students’ communities. Allow Black children to just be, don’t expect them to share personal experiences during these discussions, and reject anti-Black attitudes.

Be a first responder. School and district leaders play an important role here: You can ensure that your staff become mental health literate and get trained in “mental health first aid.” This knowledge is critical so they know what resources to refer to when the need arises.

(Dillard 2019)

Expectations for Classroom Conversations for Teachers & Students

Be respectful of yourself - Share your truth and know you can learn so much from your students and their experiences

Be responsible for your words - Think of how your words, or lack thereof can affect others.

Be Safe - Create a safe space to listen to different perspectives.

Be Kind - Treat everyone as a valued member of the classroom community.



Resources for cultivating meaningful and safe conversations



Mining the Jewel of Black History Month by Emily Chiarello

Planning for Black History Month can be authentic without falling into the pitfalls of the “heroes and holidays.” Look for ways to involve the entire school community and teach about the history and experiences of African Americans across the curriculum and throughout the year.

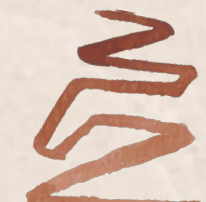

Do's and Don'ts of Teaching Black History

How do you ensure students get the most out of black history and Black History Month? Here are some suggestions.



Black Minds Matter by Coshandra Dillard


Interrupting school practices that disregard the mental health of Black youth.






The background is a light beige watercolor wash. It is decorated with various hand-drawn elements: orange flowers with green centers, green wavy lines, brown wavy lines, and two stylized human figures. The figure on the left has dark skin, long dark hair, and is wearing a red garment. The figure on the right has light skin and short brown hair, with an orange flower in their hair. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

2 BLACK HISTORY 2024 MONTH THEME

Themes for Black History Month



“The intention has never been to dictate or limit the exploration of the Black experience, but to bring to the public’s attention important developments that merit emphasis.”



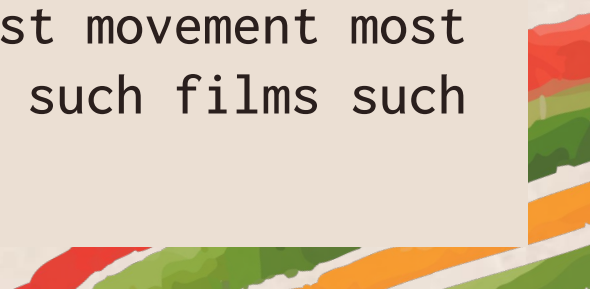
PAST BLACK HISTORY MONTH THEMES

- 1936 African Background Outlined
- 1941 The Career of Frederick Douglass
- 1946 Let Us Have Peace
- 1949 The Use of Spirituals in the Classroom
- 1970 15th Amendment and Black America in the Century (1870-1970)
- 1972 African Art, Music, Literature; a Valuable Cultural Experience
- 1996 Black Women
- 2017 The Crisis in Black Education
- 2020 African Americans and the Vote
- 2021 The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity
- 2022 Black Health and Wellness
- 2023 Black Resistance
- 2024 African Americans the Arts

2024: African Americans and Arts



- African American art is infused with African, Caribbean, and the Black American lived experiences
- Beginning with "Negro spirituals" and blues music that brought solace to a life of enslavement in the South
- Later popular forms of African-American music emerged in urban jazz in New Orleans and Chicago
- Meanwhile, the Great Migration to the north offered new opportunities for expression and creativity as the Harlem Renaissance in New York City had black music and entertainment at its center
- From the 1950s-1970s, popular musical entertainment such as doo wop, soul, R&B and even rock & roll were distinctly developed by the African American community before they hit the American mainstream
- Most recent form of African-American self-expression -- relying on synthesized sounds and sci-fi influences -- is reflected in the Afrofuturist movement most popularly seen in the music of Sun Ra and Janelle Monáe and in such films such as "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever"



The background is a light beige watercolor wash. It is decorated with various hand-drawn elements: orange flowers with green centers, green leaves, and brown wavy lines. On the left, there is a watercolor illustration of a woman with long, dark green hair and a red top. On the right, there is a watercolor illustration of a woman with short, brown hair and a brown top. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

3 NOTABLE FIGURES IN ARTS

Blues

Black musicians suffering in bondage relied heavily on spiritual connection. Blues musicians gravitated towards this and set the bedrock for gospel and soul music.



Phillis Wheatley

Phillis was the first African American and second woman to publish a book of poems. Phillis spent most of her life enslaved in Boston, Massachusetts but did receive an education that helped her produce her poems. Her poems reflected her life and her pride in her African heritage. She wrote her poems in elegies.



Video of Phillis Wheatley history



Phillis Wheatley poem recital

Riley “BB” B. King



Robert Johnson



Black Renaissance

Black culture and Black aesthetics are showcased internationally with regard to Langston Hughes and Josephine Baker.



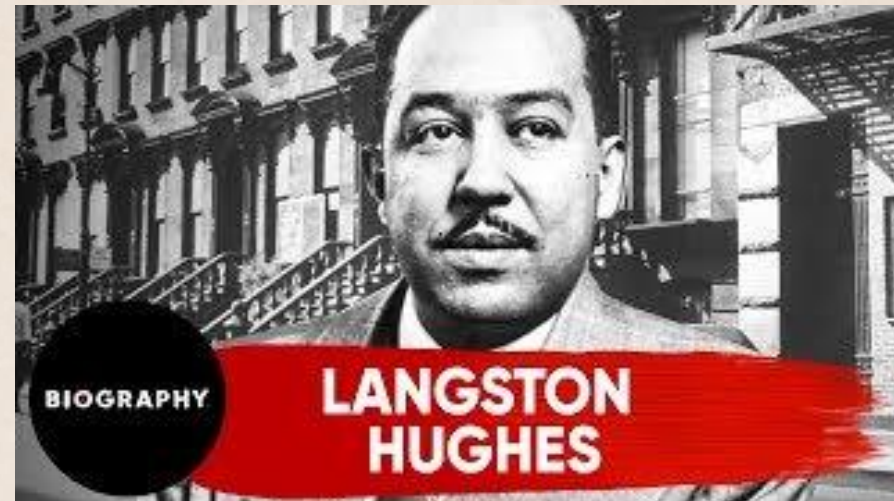
Josephine Baker

Josephine Baker was a French dancer and singer. At 15 years old she joined a theater troupe. When she was older she was an active member in the Harlem Renaissance. She eventually went on to perform in Paris. While in Paris she joined the resistance against the Nazi's and would trade secrets and important enemy information from the Nazi's and give it to the French Military. She would use invisible ink on music sheets. When returning to America she would not perform for segregated groups, forcing club managers to integrate the audience.



Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist from Joplin, Missouri. He was one of the earliest innovators of the literary art form called jazz poetry. Hughes is best known as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance.



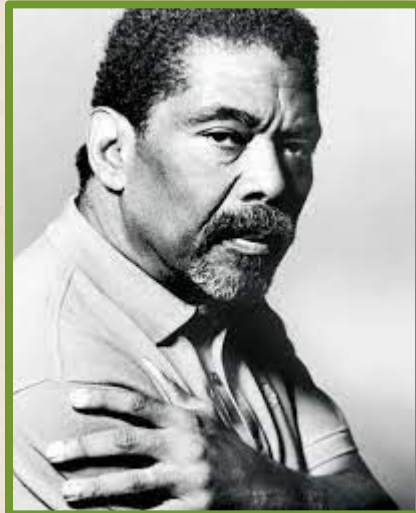
Black Arts

In the 1960's many Black artists covered pride on one's heritage and created places and opportunities to showcase their own work and other Black artists work.



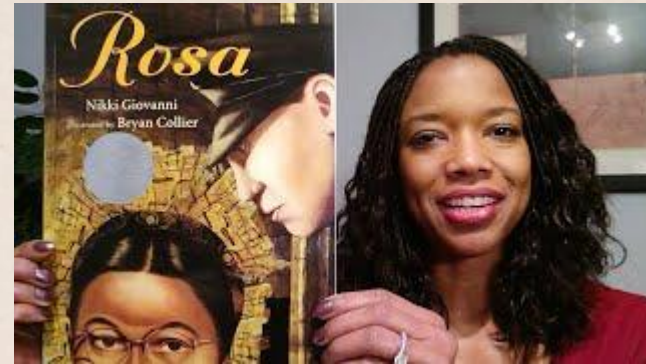
Alvin Ailey

Alvin Ailey is well known for being a Broadway dancer and eventually opening up his own dance company. His pieces centered on roots from the southern roots and African American music. It balanced gospel, soul and Blues music. He was also a Black Activist for Black dancers in the industry.



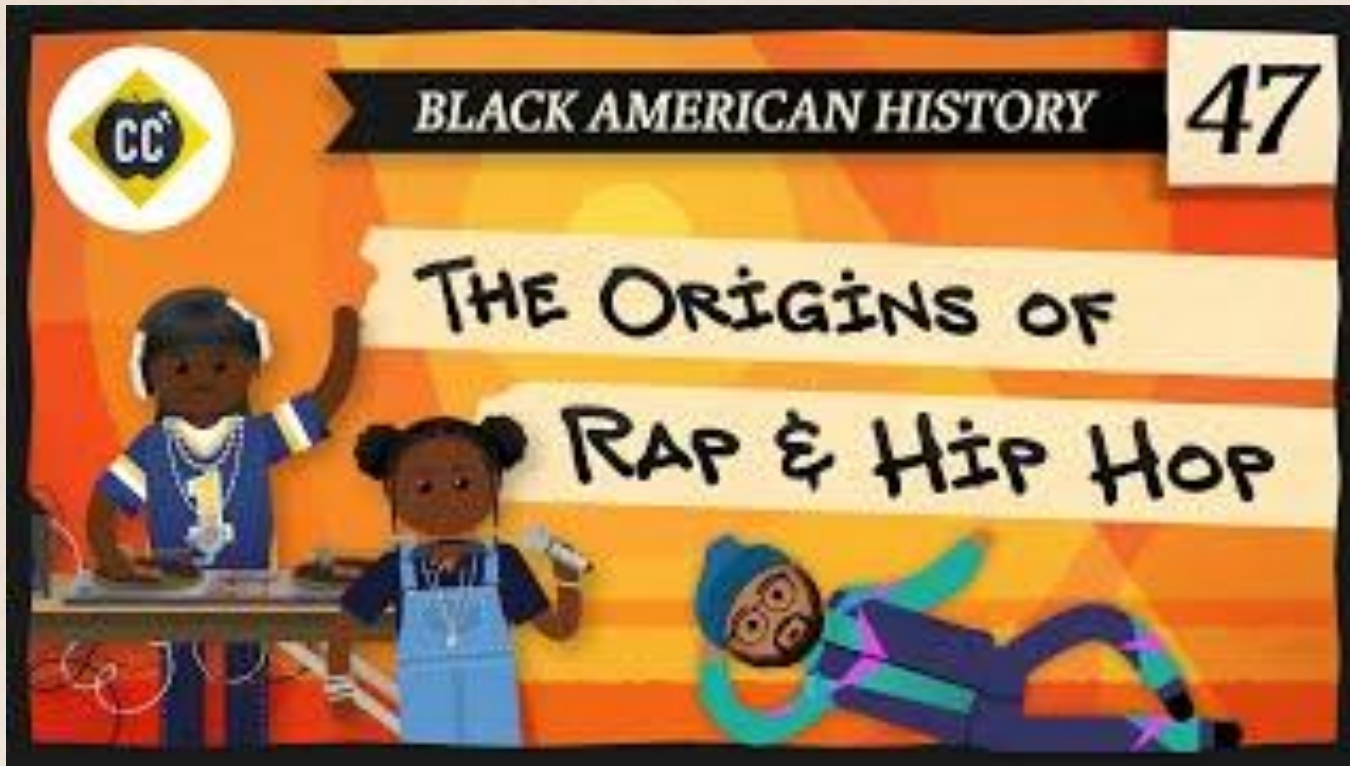
Nikki Giovanni

Nikki Giovanni was a poet, writer, commentator, and activist. She has written many books; two of the most acclaimed being Black Judgement (1968) and Those Who Ride the Night Winds (1983). She also wrote the children's book Rosa (2005).



Hip-Hop

NY Black musicians (i.e. DJ Kool Herc and Coke La Rock) started a new genre of music called hip-hop, which is composed of five foundational elements - DJing, MCing, Graffiti, Break Dancing and Beat Boxing.



Afrofuturism

Black Panther



Janelle Monáe



Jimi Hendrix



4 LESSON PLANS AND RESOURCES





K-5

- Musical Harlem
 - In this 3-5 lesson, students will learn about the Harlem Renaissance and create original jazz artwork. They will listen to audio samples, analyze elements of jazz, research musicians, and learn how jazz became a unifier between community and culture.
- Jazz Music, Dance, and Poetry
 - In this 3-5 lesson, students will explore jazz music and dance, then write a jazz-inspired cinquain poem. They will build their background on the history of jazz and its use of improvisation to demonstrate jazz dance movements.





6-8

- Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series: Removing the Mask
 - Students in grades 6-8 analyze and compare visual and poetic works by Jacob Lawrence, Helene Johnson, and Paul Laurence Dunbar and consider how they represent changing roles of African Americans.
- The Poet's Voice: Langston Hughes and You
 - Students in grades 6-8 investigate “voice” in Hughes’s poetry, develop their own distinctive voices in journal entries, and write an original poem or critical essay on an aspect of Hughes’s poetic voice.





9-12

- Rhythm & Improv: Jazz & Poetry
 - Students in grades 9-12 analyze jazz music, considering sound, rhythm, and improvisation in order to identify jazz characteristics in poems by Yusef Komunyakaa, Sonia Sanchez, and Langston Hughes. They will then incorporate the elements in their own poetry.
- PBS Black History Lesson Plans
 - These lesson plans and resources cover topics ranging from civil rights events to discussions about race in current events. These lessons are appropriate for history, ELA and social studies classrooms.






Arts Resources

- Poems to Celebrate Black History Month
 - Poems and articles by African-Americans.
- Jazz: A Film by Ken Burns
 - Online activities and biographies, transcripts of many interviews with musicians, K-12 lesson plans, and a music study guide for grades 5-8.
- The History of Hip-Hop
 - A collection of interviews from National Public Radio (NPR) that chronicle the seminal people and events in the hip-hop movement.
- African American Visual Art and the Black Arts Movement
 - The Black Arts Movement (BAM) began in the mid-1960s to provide a new vision of African Americans. This site provides images galleries a theoretical essay, timeline, and links to other online art sources. Note: the top banner links are dead but the bottom links are functional.
- The Black Past: Remembered and Reclaimed
 - African American and Global African history resources.



The background is a light beige watercolor wash. It features several decorative elements: a stylized figure with long dark hair and a red top on the left; a stylized figure with short brown hair on the right; orange star-like flowers scattered around; and green wavy lines and dots. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

5 BLACK LEADERS IN FCUSD



Terry Douglas



Terry Douglas is a campus monitor and mentor at Mills Middle School. “One of the things I do to support black health and wellness is build water wells and schools in Africa. Once or twice a year I head to Africa with a group of friends to help outlying village communities get access to clean drinking water. We raise all the funds and supplies to ensure that no life is lost due to dirty water in that village. My school, Mills Middle School, helped build a well three years ago. The other thing we do is build schools in different communities where kids have no physical building to go and learn. Last year, we built a school in a town called Keta in Ghana Africa, which is now completely full. FCUSD has also donated books for me to take to schools which the students are still using to this day. We took enough books to supply two schools where every student was able to get their own book to learn. I have done this for the past 22 years. Here at home, I work with our students in sports and mentoring programs. I believe when students are physically active it leads to a healthy lifestyle and they will feel better about themselves. Also having a positive black role model will encourage students of color to remain focused on their goals and help them make healthy decisions in their lives.”






Iyuanna Pease, Ed.D



Dr. Iyuanna Pease is FCUSD Director of Social Emotional Learning and Equity. “I am excited about this year’s Black History Month theme of Health and Wellness. For me, health means that my body functions as its designed to , free of ailments or disease. Wellness encompasses numerous aspects of life to include my physical, social, spiritual and emotional wellbeing in various environments. While society continuously seeks to invalidate the importance of Black health and wellbeing, It brings me great joy to see Black people investing in their physical health and overall wellbeing by developing a mindfulness or yoga practice, making healthy food choices, exercising and accessing mental health support when needed. Like the old saying goes, Health is Wealth! Be well my friends. #BlackHistory365”





**“Do the best you can until you
know better, then when you
know better, do better.”**

– Maya Angelou



THANK YOU!

Did you try and any lessons in your classroom?

[Click here to submit student work to be showcased.](#)

