Essential Questions

1. How did the major events/important people of the African-American Civil Rights Movement affect Democratic change?
2. Why would an individual choose nonviolent means of protest - like civil disobedience, sit-ins, and poetry - over violent means of protest - such as war - as his/her method of activism? What are the pros and cons of each?
3. How is racism against African-Americans still an issue in modern America?
4. How do themes in modern-day and classical poetry relate to the emotional tensions and attitudes toward political activism during the African-American civil rights movement?
5. How is poetry used/written to express political attitudes and beliefs?
6. Why is poetry an effective medium for expression, protest, and/or political commentary?
7. What form of poetry is most conductive to social and political expression - written or spoken-word?
8. How do literary elements affect/contribute to themes in poetry?
9. What is the "good fight"? How is the "good fight" fought? What does the "good fight" fight for?
10. Why is it important to stand up for what you believe in? How can we stand up for what we believe in?

Learning Objectives

1. Students will find relevant and appropriate textual evidence – from literary nonfiction and fiction – in order to support their interpretations and opinions of how the primary and supplemental texts of the unit interconnect through theme.
2. Students will summarize a variety of texts concisely, objectively, and purposefully in order to identify and convey the major themes and ideas in a text.
3. Students will analyze a variety of text forms - print, visual, and auditory - for literary element incorporation and effect.
4. Students will examine primary and secondary historical documents/sources in order to understand the major people and events of the African-American civil rights movement.
5. Students will deduce author purpose in a variety of poems in order to understand the real-life function of texts.
6. Students will gain awareness of the ongoing issues of White privilege and racism toward African-Americans evident in modern-day America in order to realize the importance of studying the past.
7. Students will research - via the Internet and other library resources - high-quality and credible websites, articles, and/or books in order to synthesize the research in an informative and reflective discussion for peer teaching.
8. Students will form and articulate opinions and arguments - expressed primarily through an original slam poem - on modern-day topics of racism in order to become personally invested in the content material and their research.
9. Students will analyze how literary elements are used by poets and speaker's to persuade an audience, appeal to an audience, move an audience, and enhance the audience's overall receptiveness to their poems and speeches.
10. Students will not only realize the importance of political/social awareness, but also the necessity of activism and action in response to that awareness.