LGBTQ+ History Lesson

Inquiry Question: Through analyzing Audre Lorde’s essay on multiple identities and systems of oppression, how do power and privilege impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions?

Standards: 11.11; 12.2; 12.2.5; 12.3
Inquiry Question:
Through analyzing Audre Lorde’s essay “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” on multiple identities and systems of oppression, how do power and privilege impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions?

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Content Standards:
HSS 11.11: Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

HSS 12.2: Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.

HSS 12.2.5.: Describe the reciprocity between rights and obligations; that is, why enjoyment of one's rights entails respect for the rights of others.

HSS 12.3: Students evaluate and take and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (i.e., the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social, and economic relations that are not part of government), their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.

CCSS Standards:
Reading, Grades 10-11
• CCSS RI 8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

Writing, Grades 9-10; 11-12
• CCSS W.1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Overview of Lesson
In this lesson, students will familiarize themselves with the concept of intersectionality—how intersecting identities and oppressions shape perspectives and experiences. Through the close reading and discussion of the article “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” featured in the influential book Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audre Lorde, students will think critically about how multiple identities and systems of oppressions impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions. Audre Lorde, Black lesbian poet and feminist writer, signed a contract with The Crossing Press on November 19, 1982 to publish her monumental book Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches. Sister Outsider is celebrated as a historic piece of literature exploring the intersections of race, sexuality, gender, poverty, and politics.

Learning Goals:
• Students will be able to understand the concept of intersectionality through analyzing the writing of Audre Lorde.
• Students will be able to evaluate the arguments made by Audre Lorde through writing a Power Paragraph.
• Students know that all their group identities and the intersection of those identities create unique aspects of who they are and that this is true for other people too.

Sources
• Graphic and Quote
• Essay
• Biography
• Video Clips
• Photos
• Cartoon on Intersectionality

Procedures:
Day 1:
1. Teacher will review the objectives of the lesson and introduce the inquiry questions, essential questions, and learning goals:
   Inquiry Question:
   How do power and privilege impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions? What impact did Audre Lorde have in critically examining her own multiple identities?
   Essential Questions:
   • How does intersectionality relate to identity and justice?
   • How do our intersecting identities shape our perspectives and the way we experience the world?
   • How do power and privilege impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions?
   Learning Goals:
   • I will be able to understand the concept of intersectionality through analyzing the writing of Audre Lorde.
   • I will be able to evaluate the arguments made by Audre Lorde through writing a Power Paragraph.
   • I know that all my group identities and the intersection of those identities create unique aspects of who I am and that this is true for other people too.
2. Quick Write: Project an image of Audre Lorde’s quote on the graphic. It reads “There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.” – Audre Lorde. Ask students to reflect on whether or not they agree with this statement and to explain why. After students share, say that the meaning behind this quote will guide us through this lesson.
3. Ask students to deconstruct the concept of the word “intersectionality” and to make inferences of what it may mean based on it.
   • Project the word “intersectionality” on the board.
   • Ask students if they can identify any prefixes, suffixes, or word parts.
• What can they infer what the words mean based on what they’ve identified?
• Following a brief class sharing and discussion on their answers, show the video clip “Intersectionality 101” by Teaching Tolerance: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6dnj2hyYJE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6dnj2hyYJE)
• Based on what students learn, have them write down a definition of “intersectionality” and use it to write a class working definition of the term.

Give a brief historical context of the term:
Law Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term “intersectionality” as a framework to explore the dynamic of between co-existing identities (such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, etc.) and connected systems of oppression. The idea says that prejudices have the same root, growing from dominant power structures, and challenging only one aspect of structural power alone is ineffective. All aspects of identity and oppression must be analyzed and challenged. For effective movement making, all roots of oppression and inequality must be tackled. In the words of Audre Lorde, “there can be no hierarchies of oppression.” While Audre Lorde wrote about the concept of intersectionality before the official term was coined by Dr. Crenshaw, her body of work analyzes her own experiences as a Black woman, lesbian, mother.

4. Provide students with a history context of Audre Lorde, by sharing a short biography about her. (See attached document for a paper version.) [https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/audre-lorde](https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/audre-lorde)

5. Pass out copies of “Age, Race, Class, Gender: Women Redefining Difference.” (See attached PDF.)

- Read the first paragraph out loud with your students and model a “close reading” strategy, annotating the text and having student follow and do the same on their packet. Focus on key terms, main ideas, connections that are important to the text. Identify what you would like students to retain and focus on those key terms and concepts.
- Reading Focus Questions: How does Audre Lorde describe her experiences? How does intersectionality relate to identity and justice? How do our intersecting identities shape our perspectives and the way we experience the world? How do power and privilege impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions?
- If more time is needed, assign the rest of the close reading for homework. Have students annotate the text and be ready to discuss in class the following day.

Day 2:
1. *Save the Last Word For Me* Protocol: Now that students have the read and annotated “Age, Race, Class, Gender: Women Redefining Difference”, split students into groups of four and use the *Save the Last Word for Me* Protocol. This discussion technique encourages meaningful classroom conversations by eliciting differing opinions and interpretations of the text. Asking students to think about their reading stimulates reflection and helps to develop active and thoughtful readers. *Save the Last Word for Me* also prompts classroom interaction and cooperative group discussion. (See attached document for a paper version.) Walk around to monitor and listen to key points students are extracting from the text.
2. Debrief and lead students into Power Paragraph assessment.
Assessment
Students will construct a power paragraph responding to the follow prompt and will draw textual evidence for their claim based on their notes of “Age, Race, Class, Gender: Women Redefining Difference” by Audre Lorde using the following prompt:

Through analyzing Audre Lorde’s essay “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference” on multiple identities and systems of oppression, how do power and privilege impact the relationships people have with each other as well as with institutions?

See attached *Power Paragraph Rubric* to assist in assessing students’ responses.

Primary Documents:
- Pictures #1 and #2 of Audre Lorde by Stephen Stewart, Provided by ONE Archives

Bibliography
All primary sources courtesy of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive, http://one.usc.edu/
- Short biography on Audre Lorde: https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/audre-lorde
- Video clip on intersectionality by Teaching Tolerance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6dnj2lyYjE
- “Toolkit for ‘Teaching at the Intersections’” Article by Teaching Tolerance: https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2016/toolkit-for-teaching-at-the-intersections
- Website: An Open, Digital Classroom on Gender, Intersectionality & Black Women’s Rhetorics: http://www.blackwomenrhetproject.com/focus-on-intersectionality.html
- Save the Last Word for Me Protocol, adapted from School Reform Initiative
- Website: Power Paragraph Structure: Liberty High School
  https://liberty.asd20.org/writingcenter/Pages/Power-Paragraphs.aspx
- Power Paragraph Rubric made by Cleveland Humanities Magnet High School
- Audrey Lorde Quote Graphic retrieved at http://outnowyouth.org/on-intersectionality/
- Video clip “5 Tips Being an Ally”: (Optional Resource)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dg86g-QIM0

Additional Optional Resources:
- Cartoon Infographic on Intersectionality (Optional Resource—See attached document)
  http://www.blackwomenrhetproject.com/focus-on-intersectionality.html
Source A: Audre Lorde Quote Graphic retrieved at http://outnowyouth.org/on-intersectionality/.
Audre Lorde

1934-1992, New York City, NY, United States

Poet, essayist, and novelist Audre Lorde was born on February 18, 1934, in New York City. Her parents were immigrants from Grenada. The youngest of three sisters, she was raised in Manhattan and attended Catholic school. While she was still in high school, her first poem appeared in *Seventeen* magazine. Lorde received her BA from Hunter College and an MLS from Columbia University. She served as a librarian in New York public schools from 1961 through 1968. In 1962, Lorde married Edward Rollins. They had two children, Elizabeth and Jonathon, before divorcing in 1970.

Her first volume of poems, *The First Cities*, was published in 1968. In 1968 she also became the writer-in-residence at Tougaloo College in Mississippi, where she discovered a love of teaching. In Tougaloo she also met her long-term partner, Frances Clayton. *The First Cities* was quickly followed with *Cables to Rage* (1970) and *From a Land Where Other People Live* (1973), which was nominated for a National Book Award. In 1974 she published *New York Head Shot and Museum*. Whereas much of her earlier work focused on the transience of love, this book marked her most political work to date.

In 1976, W. W. Norton released her collection *Coal* and shortly thereafter published *The Black Unicorn*. Poet Adrienne Rich said of *The Black Unicorn* that “Lorde writes as a Black woman, a mother, a daughter, a Lesbian, a feminist, a visionary; poems of elemental wildness and healing, nightmare and lucidity.” Her other volumes include *Chosen Poems Old and New* (1982) and *Our Dead Behind Us* (1986). Poet Sandra M. Gilbert noted not only Lorde’s ability to express outrage, but also that she was capable of “of rare and, paradoxically, loving jeremiads.” Although her work gained wide acclaim, she was also sharply criticized. In an interview in the journal *Callaloo*, Lorde responded to her critics: “My sexuality is part and parcel of who I am, and my poetry comes from the intersection of me and my worlds. . . . Jesse Helms’s objection to my work is not about obscenity . . . or even about sex. It is about revolution and change. . . . Helms knows that my writing is aimed at his destruction, and the destruction of every single thing he stands for.”

Lorde was diagnosed with cancer and chronicled her struggles in her first prose collection, *The Cancer Journals*, which won the Gay Caucus Book of the Year award for 1981. Her other prose volumes include *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982), *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*.
(1984), and *A Burst of Light* (1988), which won a National Book Award. She received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1981.

In the 1980s, Lorde and writer Barbara Smith founded Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. She was also a founding member of Sisters in Support of Sisters in South Africa, an organization that worked to raise concerns about women under apartheid.


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The theme of women having such difficulty reaching back is a recurring question. But I believe one of the primary factors is some other explanations.

Women often describe their experiences of discomfort and pain, and it may be due to various factors. Women may experience this discomfort because of their bodies' natural curve, which can cause pressure on certain areas of the body during intercourse. Additionally, women's anatomy and the way their bodies are structured may contribute to this discomfort. It is important to note that these experiences are not unique to women and can also be felt by men who engage in certain sexual practices.

Color is often used to indicate the experience of women or girls, their interest in the experience, and their desire for connection. However, it is crucial to recognize that women are complex beings who have diverse and unique experiences. It is essential to respect and honor these experiences, and to provide women with the space to explore and express their feelings and desires.

The multiplicity of solutions that can arise from the multiplicity of colors indicates the multiplicity of experiences that can exist within the same space. Each color represents a unique perspective and can provide insights into the diversity of human experiences.

The challenge is to create a space where women and girls can express their experiences and desires without judgment or shame. This requires a shift in societal norms and expectations, and a commitment to creating safe and supportive environments for all individuals.

We must continue to listen, learn, and grow together, acknowledging the complexity and richness of women's experiences. Only then can we truly support and uplift one another on this journey towards greater understanding and compassion.

116 Style Observations, age 33, sex 117
The school principal states that black women are the focus of this discussion, not only because of the continuous pressure to provide quality education, but also because of the ongoing efforts to ensure that all students, regardless of race, are properly educated. A recent study conducted by the national education board revealed that black women, despite their efforts, still face significant challenges in terms of access to quality education. These challenges include discrimination, lack of resources, and a lack of support from the community. The principal emphasizes the need for a more inclusive approach to education, one that acknowledges the unique challenges faced by black women and provides them with the necessary resources to succeed. The school principal encourages all students, regardless of race, to support these efforts and work towards a more equitable future.
When we look for deeper and real understanding, we see that the relationship between the black woman and black leadership is a complex one. The black woman is often perceived as a symbol of strength and resilience, but her experiences are often overlooked or misinterpreted. The black woman is a key figure in the history of the black community, and her contributions have been instrumental in shaping the course of black history. However, the black woman has also been depicted in a negative light, as a symbol of weakness and vulnerability. This stereotype has had a lasting impact on the way black women are perceived and treated in society.

The black woman is often depicted as a mother figure, a symbol of domesticity and care, but this portrayal ignores the complexity of her experiences. The black woman is often depicted as a symbol of beauty and desirability, but this portrayal also ignores the reality of her struggles. The black woman is often depicted as a symbol of resistance and resilience, but this portrayal ignores the complexity of her experiences.

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Bob is a stripey blue triangle.
And should be proud.

Sadly some people do not like Bob. Bob faces oppression for being a triangle, & for having stripes.

Bob can't work out where to go.

Bob wishes that the triangles and stripes could work together.

Oppressions are not isolated.
Intersectionality now!
Handout 1 for Exercise

Purpose
To clarify and deepen our thinking about a text

Roles
Timekeeper/facilitator, who both participates and keeps the process moving

Time
Approximately 30 minutes

Process
• The process is designed to build on each other’s thinking, not to enter into a dialogue.
• Participants may decide to have an open dialogue about the text at the end of the 30 minutes.
• Timing is important; each round should last approximately 7 minutes.

1. Create a group of 4 participants. Choose a timekeeper (who also participates) who has a watch.

2. Each participant silently identifies what they consider to be (for them) the most significant idea addressed in the article and highlights that passage.

3. When the group is ready, a volunteer member identifies the part of the article that she/he found to be most significant and reads it out loud to the group. This person (the presenter) says nothing about why they chose that particular passage.

4. The group should pause for a moment to consider the passage before moving to the next step.

5. The other 3 participants each have 1 minute to respond to the passage — saying what it makes them think about, what questions it raises for them, etc.

6. The first participant then has 3 minutes to state why she/he chose that part of the article and to respond to — or build on — what they heard from their colleagues.

7. The same pattern is followed until all 4 members of the group have had a chance to be the presenter and to have the “last word.”

8. Optional open dialogue about the text and the ideas and questions raised during the first part of the protocol.

9. Debrief the experience. How was this a useful way to explore the ideas in the text and to explore your own thinking?
Handout 2 for Exercise: Power Paragraph

Power Paragraph Structure:

Power paragraphs are an organizational writing model that promotes analytical thinking instead of regurgitation of facts only; this model takes writers from topic sentence, to supporting details, analysis, and conclusion sentence.

Sentence 1, Topic Sentence: A topic sentence introduces the subject of the paragraph. It tells the basic/controlling idea the writer plans to discuss. If there is a prompt, the topic sentence is the answer to the prompt. It should include key words from the paragraph. (Pull words from the prompt.)

Sentence 2, Support/Concrete Details: These sentences should include facts, quotations, and descriptions, but not the writer's opinion. No one should be able to argue whether these things are true or not. These facts must prove the writer’s position in the topic sentence.

If using a quotation, a set-up or introduction should be included with these sentences. Without the set-up, the quotation would be marked as “floating,” a mark down in points.

* First, introduce the quotation.
* Then, use the quotation.
* Make sure you don’t create a run-on sentence.

Sentence 3 and 4, Commentary/Analysis: This is where the writer shares his or her opinions/interpretation/inference in at least two sentences. The writer explains/explores his or her thoughts/interpretations of what he or she thinks the quotations/facts mean or how the facts support the writer’s answer to the prompt or what the author/fact might be saying about the world in which we live.

Sentence 5, Support/Concrete Details: These sentences should include facts, quotations, and
descriptions, but not the writer's opinion. No one should be able to argue whether these things are true or not. These facts must prove the writer's position in the topic sentence.

If using a quotation, a set-up or introduction should be included with these sentences. Without the set-up, the quotation would be marked as “floating,” a mark down in points.

* First, introduce the quotation.
* Then, use the quotation.
* Make sure you don't create a run-on sentence.

**Sentence 7 and 8, Commentary/Analysis:** This is where the writer shares his or her opinions/interpretation/inference in at least two sentences. The writer explains/explores his or her thoughts/interpretations of what he or she thinks the quotations/facts mean or how the facts support the writer’s answer to the prompt or what the author/fact might be saying about the world in which we live.

**Sentence 8: Conclusion:** This sentence wraps everything up. It is not a repetition of the Topic Sentence! It should reveal a new or deeper understanding of the topic, taking into account the six sentences that the writer used to prove and explain the Topic Sentence. It should include key words from the paragraph.