

**YWCA Greater Pittsburgh Center for Race and Gender Equity**  
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**2010 Dr. Helen S. Faison Racial Justice Student Essay Contest**

Lesson Plan: Grades 6-8

Standards:

*The content provided in this lesson plan may be used to address the academic standards that are listed below. The standards are drawn from "Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education, Fourth Edition." ([www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks](http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks))*

Language Arts Standards:

1. Standard: *Writing for Audience and Purpose.*

*Benchmark 6-9: Uses content, style and structure appropriate for specific audiences and purposes.*

2. Standard: *Verbal and non-verbal communication.*

*Benchmark 7-8: Uses word choice appropriate for specific audiences and purposes.*

3. Standard: *Understands the characteristics and components of the media.*

*Benchmark 6-8: Understands the different purposes of various media (e.g., to provide entertainment or information, to persuade, to transmit culture, to focus attention on an issue.)*

U.S. History Standards:

1. Standard: *Understands economic, social and cultural developments in the contemporary U.S.*

*Benchmark 9-12: Understands major contemporary social issues and the groups involved.*

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**I. Resources and Materials**

- a. Dictionary and/or other reference materials.
- b. Samples and resources that provide details about individuals involved in racial justice activities.

**II. Objective:**

- a. Students will be able to recognize and analyze racism, racial justice, and the importance of young people working together to accomplish the common goal of eliminating racism.
- b. Students will discuss racism and enacting racial justice in order to answer the essay question as completely as they can: **How would you design a media campaign (for example: newspaper/print, tv/film, radio/music, internet or social media site such as Facebook or Twitter) to challenge and eliminate racism? Please describe your concept.**

**III. Activities**

- a. Ask students to collect stories and examples of racism, prejudice and racial justice to bring to class. Examples can include newspapers and other forms of media, family documents and pictures, diaries, biographies, and/or websites. These resources will provide examples of young people (and adult role models) taking action against racism and will generate class discussion about possible media campaigns for challenging and eliminating racism and prejudice.

*Note: The instructor should also be prepared with several examples from a range of sources to ensure that a variety of actions will be represented.*

- b. The class will explore and discuss the terms “media,” “racism,” “justice,” and “racial justice.” Ask students to use a dictionary or other sources to create working definitions. Encourage students to think about examples of racism that they have witnessed or learned about from parents, acquaintances, and the media. What actions have young people taken in response to prejudice and racism? How can media be used to promote racial justice?
- c. The students will participate in a dialogue about the role media campaigns can play in promoting racial justice, and how they might implement a plan for their own campaign.
  - i. Discuss present (and past) examples of people or groups that have used media campaigns to challenge racism. Sources for inspiration can include reading textbooks, personal experiences, family interviews and stories, news and media stories, and/or documentaries about groups and individuals who are currently promoting racial justice and taking action against racism.
  - ii. Talk about the leadership and organizational skills that the students might find useful as they develop their concept: Will they act alone, or ask for support and participation from others? What resources can they utilize in developing media campaigns? Possible topics for consideration include: knowledge about racism; skills for solving problems; ability to organize people and activities; talent for creating art, speaking, or writing; influence to get people to listen and take action.
  - iii. The teacher can guide the discussion with such questions as: “What audience is your media outlet targeting?” “What are the signs that this example is geared toward this group?” “Is there a certain message that is predominant?” “How can you tell if your campaign is successful?”

#### **IV. Conclusion**

- a. Upon completing the discussion, the students can respond to the essay question (*in 300 words or less; please see registration form for full details*) for the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh’s 2010 Dr. Helen S. Faison Racial Justice Student Essay Contest:  
**How would you design a media campaign (for example: newspaper/print, tv/film, radio/music, internet or social media site such as Facebook or Twitter) to challenge and eliminate racism? Please describe your concept.**