

African American Studies

The African American Studies course in Richmond Public Schools is designed to develop an understanding of the causes, character, and consequences of the African American experience and its influence on the world, the United States, and the African American community. Beginning with a historical, geographical, social, political, economic, and cultural understanding of the African continent, the course will provide a descriptive and corrective overview which will introduce the student to the study of the African and African American experiences. This course is a survey of the African-American experience from the African background to the post-civil rights developments. It focuses on African-Americans' quest for the American dream and how they attempted to deal with the problems and challenges posed by enslavement and racism. Themes of change and continuity in the black experience, the struggles against Jim Crow, the civil rights struggles, and post-civil rights developments are also examined.

Essential Skills

- AAS.1 The student will demonstrate skills for historical thinking, geographical analysis, economic decision making, and responsible citizenship by
- a) synthesizing evidence from artifacts and primary and secondary sources to obtain information about events in African American history;
 - b) using geographic information to determine patterns and trends in African American history;
 - c) interpreting charts, graphs, and pictures to determine characteristics of people, places, or events in African American history;
 - d) constructing arguments, using evidence from multiple sources;
 - e) comparing and contrasting historical, cultural, economic, and political perspectives in African American history;
 - f) explaining how indirect cause-and-effect relationships impact people, places, and events in African American history;
 - g) analyzing multiple connections across time and place;
 - h) using a decision-making model to analyze and explain the incentives for and consequences of a specific choice made;
 - i) identifying the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and ethical use of material and intellectual property; and
 - j) investigating and researching to develop products orally and in writing.

African Beginnings

- AAS.2 The student will apply social science skills to understand early African civilizations and explain how humans originated by
- a) locating and describing the early civilizations of Egypt, Nubia, Meroë, Azum (present-day Ethiopia);
 - b) locating and describing the development of West African kingdoms of ancient Ghana, Mali and Songhai;
 - c) explaining the economic impact of trade and how it connected North African cities to West Africa with emphasis on the Trans-Saharan trade routes and trade with the Portuguese;
 - d) characterizing West African religion and culture with emphasis on village life, class, slavery, Islam and indigenous.

The Origins of Slavery and Expansion of Slavery to the Americas: 1450-1809

- AAS.3 The student will apply social science skills to understand the origins and the development of the slave trade and slavery in Africa by
- a) describing the impact of interethnic rivalries and warfare on the slave trade in Africa;
 - b) identifying and explaining the Middle Passage as one of the largest forced migrations in human history;
 - c) describing the sale of African slaves in the Americas and Caribbean;
 - d) explaining why the Atlantic Slave trade came to an end.

African Americans in Colonial America, the Revolutionary Era and Antebellum America: 1619-1860

- AAS.4 The student will apply social science skills to understand the economic, political and social impact of slavery by
- a) analyzing the social, religious and legal justifications for the establishment and continuation of slavery;
 - b) examining the economic dependency of northern and southern colonies on the institution of slavery;
 - c) identifying and evaluating the various ways Africans in America resisted slavery;

- AAS.5 The student will apply social science skills to understand the life of African-Americans during colonial times and Revolutionary Era by
- a) comparing and contrasting African-American communities in the North and the South;
 - b) comparing and contrasting the positive and negative effects of the Revolutionary War on blacks;
 - c) examining the emergence of free black communities with emphasis on free blacks in Northampton County, VA and Pocahontas Island (Petersburg, VA);
 - d) describing the development of African-American institutions such as religion, education and benevolent organizations with emphasis on Richard Allen;
 - e) examining the development of the abolitionist movement and key abolitionists and its impact on slavery and the nation;
 - f) analyzing the role slavery played in the development of nationalism and sectionalism.

African-Americans during the Civil War and Reconstruction: 1861-1877

- AAS.6 The student will apply social science skills to understand Abraham Lincoln's views on slavery and the roles of African Americans during the Civil War by
- a) describing the reaction of African-Americans to the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860;
 - b) evaluating President Lincoln's views on slavery and motives for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation;
 - c) identifying and explaining the roles of African-American soldiers, spies, slaves and women in the war effort in both the North and the South.

- AAS.7 The student will apply social science skills to understand the legal, political, social, educational and economic life of freedman during Reconstruction by
- analyzing the impact of 13th, 14th and 15th amendments on African-Americans;
 - comparing and contrasting “presidential reconstruction” and “radical reconstruction” and its impact on African Americans;
 - explaining the importance of education and the black church during the postwar years with emphasis on Hampton Institute, the Tuskegee Model, Baptists and the Holiness Movement;
 - examining the rise of black politicians;
 - explaining the successes and failures of Reconstruction in regards to African Americans.

African American Life from Post Reconstruction through World War I: 1878-1920

- AAS.8 The student will apply social science skills to understand the economic, political and social impact of segregation laws on African American during post-Reconstruction by
- analyzing the legal ramifications of Jim Crow laws and court decisions on American society;
 - comparing and contrasting the political movements that developed in response to Jim Crow laws, including the Niagara Movement, the NAACP, the Urban League and Richmond, VA streetcar boycotts;
 - differentiating between the approaches used by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois in fighting racial injustice;
 - describing the impact of African American regiments in the western campaigns, the Spanish-American War and World War I with emphasis on the Buffalo Soldiers .

African Americans from the Great Migration through the Great Depression: 1920-1940

- AAS.9 The student will apply social science skills to understand the economic, cultural and social impact of the Great Migration, Harlem Renaissance and Great Depression by
- evaluating the economic, cultural and social impact of the Great Migration of African Americans to the west and northern cities with emphasis on the rise of black ghettos and precursor to the Harlem Renaissance;
 - examining the Harlem Renaissance and identifying major figures in the areas of literature, music and art;
 - examining black organizations African Americans were engaged in during the 1920s with emphasis on Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association;
 - analyzing the impact of the Great Depression and the New Deal on the lives of African Americans.

World War II and Postwar Years: 1940-1955

- AAS.10 The student will use social science skills to understand the political, social and economic impact of the military experience and foreign policy on African Americans by

- a) describing and evaluating contributions of African Americans during World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam War;
- b) explaining the economic impact of African Americans' employment in the defense industry during World War II;
- c) examining the impact of World War II and the Vietnam War on the modern Civil Rights movement;
- d) describing the various discriminatory practices that black Virginians faced in the immediate postwar years.

The Black Revolution: 1954-1970

- AAS.11 The student will use social science skills to understand the effects of the legal, political, and social victories and setbacks of the modern Civil Rights and Black Power eras by
- a) describing various methods used to protest and obtain civil rights with emphasis on the NAACP, boycotts, sit-ins and marches including the Thalheimer sit-in (The Richmond 34);
 - b) describing key events and leaders of the Civil Rights and Black Power eras;
 - c) identifying various organizations and their role in the Civil Rights and Black Power era with emphasis on Congress for Racial Equality (CORE), National Southern Christian Leadership Council(SCLC), Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party;
 - d) differentiating between the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X.

The Struggle Continues: African American Issues in Contemporary Times: 1970-present

- AAS.12 The student will use social science skills to understand the gains that African Americans have made and the issues that continue to plague them by
- a) examining the significance of the Gary Convention in the shift in politics for African Americans;
 - b) identifying and evaluating major contemporary African American issues including affirmative action, the educational achievement gap, the wealth gap, poverty, AIDs, healthcare disparities and crime;
 - c) identifying major contributions of contemporary African Americans in business, education, entertainment, the arts, politics, sports, science and technology;
 - d) analyzing how hip hop music was used to depict the struggle of African Americans in the 1970s and 1980s;
 - e) evaluating the significance of the political positions held by African Americans in Richmond city government and Virginia state government from 1970 to the present.