

# ARE PROTESTS NECESSARY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE?

**THIS ACTIVITY SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 90 MINUTES. IF STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO REVIEW MEDIA FOR HOMEWORK, IN-CLASS TIME SHOULD BE 45 TO 60 MINUTES.**

## INVESTIGATE

Read, watch, and listen to the three media resources on the [Thinkalong module](#). Students can use the Investigate graphic organizer to summarize each piece of media and record new information. Below are summaries of the three pieces of media curated in the Thinkalong module.

### IN SAN FRANCISCO, LOCAL TEENS CONSIDER PROTESTING RIGHT-WING MARCHES

Youth Voices | August 25, 2017 | Audio

4:07 minutes

A youth radio story about teens in San Francisco, who are considering whether to attend the counter-protests against right-wing marchers in their city.

- Youth Radio host Amber Ly interviews teens and parents in a classroom in Oakland, CA about the counter-protests that are planned for the upcoming weekend.
- High school teacher Chela Delgado speaks with a student, Gabriela Ojeda, about attending the counter-protests and whether non-violence would be a successful strategy for the moment. Ojeda thinks non-violent counter-protests would work, but Delgado says due to the violence that occurred in Charlottesville, not participating might also be a good strategy.
- Mila de la Torre in West Oakland is determined to go to the counter-protests, even though her activist mom is concerned that people will purposefully instigate fights.
- Sayyid-Ali Abdel-Qawi's dad thinks he should be at the counter-protests so that his voice can be heard. His father, Matin Abdel-Qawi, acknowledges that Sayyid-Ali may be targeted by white nationalists and police at the protest, but he thinks that's even more of a reason to be present.

### MESSAGE TO 'RESISTORS' FROM OCCUPY CO-CREATOR: STOP PROTESTING. RUN FOR OFFICE

NPR | March 28, 2017 | Audio

5:20 minutes

An NPR story about Micah White, one of the creators of Occupy Wall Street, who wants activists to stop protesting.

- Micah White, who created Occupy Wall Street, says large street protests don't work.
- Micah White and a friend created Occupy Wall Street, which became a global movement that ultimately petered out. Now White is saying that protesters today should learn a lesson from Occupy's failure and instead run for local office.
- White decided to run for local office in rural Oregon because he thinks Occupy and more recent demonstrations repeat the same mistakes of making protests into a show for online followers.
- He's encouraging protesters to stop protesting and instead join local committees and work on city budgets. He did the same by running for mayor in his small rural town and pushing for change.

*Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help students to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.*

- However, the citizens of the small town where White was running said he was using the town for a social experiment and they didn't like it. He lost his run for mayor 139 to 36 votes. But White says he's learning from his failure like he learned from the failure of Occupy Wall Street.

## RESEARCHERS EXAMINE THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PROTEST MOVEMENTS

NPR | April 18, 2017 | Article

An article on what kind message gets through to an audience during protests.

- Social scientists found that many protesters equate media and public attention to effective protesting.
- The scientists presented volunteers with different kinds of protest ranging from holding signs and chanting to blocking traffic. They measured the effects of each type of protest on the volunteers.
- They found that extreme protest tactics—like blocking streets—made people not want to support the protesters.
- Robb Willer, one of the scientists who worked on the study, thinks it's because people cannot identify with the protesters when they use extreme tactics. He says if outsiders cannot identify with the protest movement and see themselves joining, then they will turn away from it.
- Willer says protest movements often have to choose between visibility and effectiveness because mild tactics may get more people to join, but won't get much attention whereas extreme tactics get attention but may keep people away.

## KEY WORDS

Look out for these important keywords in the news stories. Discuss the definitions with your classroom and see how they affect the understanding of the story.

- Protest
- Nonviolence
- Activism
- Populist

## CONTEMPLATE

Students will use media literacy questions to critically engage with news by thinking about its purpose, searching for bias and discussing missing perspectives. They will answer the 5 Key Questions of Media Literacy created by the Center for Media Literacy, which are:

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently than me?
4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

A graphic organizer is included in this guide and the Thinkalong website to help students answer these five questions about each piece of media.

## DEBATE

*Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help students to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.*



Students will engage their peers in an evidence-based debate using the media they just analyzed. Use the debate tool on the module webpage to help form an evidence-based response to the debate question.

In addition to rich in-class discussions, teachers can also connect with other classrooms through the Thinkalong website. [Sign up here](#) to be connected.

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# LET'S INVESTIGATE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this worksheet to help you investigate the media sources in the Thinkalong module.



## SUMMARIZE THE TOPIC

## KEY VOCABULARY

## MEDIA RESOURCE 1

TITLE

DATE PUBLISHED

## MAIN IDEAS

## MEDIA RESOURCE 2

TITLE

DATE PUBLISHED

MAIN IDEAS

## MEDIA RESOURCE 3

TITLE

DATE PUBLISHED

MAIN IDEAS

# CONTEMPLATE YOUR SOURCES

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

After watching the media in the module, answer the questions below.

1. AUTHORSHIP: Who created this message?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

2. FORMAT: What creative techniques are being used to grab my attention?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

3. AUDIENCE: How might different people understand this message differently than me?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

4. CONTENT: What values and points of view are represented? What's left out of this message?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3

5. PURPOSE: Why is this message being sent?

MEDIA 1

MEDIA 2

MEDIA 3



# CREATE YOUR ARGUMENT

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Create strong arguments for both sides from the resources in the Thinkalong module.



DEBATE QUESTION	
PRO ARGUMENT	CON ARGUMENT
REASONING	REASONING
EVIDENCE	EVIDENCE