

SHOULD GENTRIFICATION BE STOPPED?

THIS ACTIVITY SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 90 MINUTES. IF LEARNERS ARE ABLE TO REVIEW MEDIA PRIOR TO THE LESSON, ACTIVITY TIME SHOULD BE 45 TO 60 MINUTES.

INVESTIGATE

Read, watch, and listen to the three media resources on the Thinkalong module. Learners 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.

WHAT I HEAR WHEN YOU SAY: GENTRIFICATION

PBS | March 15, 2017 | Video

7:11 minutes

Author Desiree Cooper, professor Kelly Anderson, and filmmaker Shukree Tilghman discuss what gentrification means to them.

- Tilghman calls gentrification “a double-edged sword” and explains that gentrification can bring beneficial changes to a community including better stores, food, and access to education. However, people of color who once lived there are often priced out which means they don’t benefit from the improvements to their former communities.
- Professor and filmmaker Anderson discusses her film, *mybrooklyn*, which examines the gentrification of downtown Brooklyn, New York. Anderson explains that white residents of surrounding areas used coded language like “rundown”, “dirty,” or “dump” to describe areas where Black people lived. Large corporations like banks and real-estate developers are often the driving force behind gentrification and have used existing public policies and laws in their favor in order to displace Black residents and people of color from Brooklyn.
- Cooper defends early gentrifiers in Detroit who were not wealthy people, but rather those with an interest in urban farming. Now that more traditional gentrification is occurring and new businesses are arriving, Cooper sees these changes as incompatible with the existing population.
- Cooper argues that discussions need to occur among local businesses around homelessness, crime, and healthcare so that a happy medium is found between existing businesses and inhabitants and new arrivals to the area.

AS SEAS RISE, MIAMI’S BLACK COMMUNITIES FEAR DISPLACEMENT FROM THE HIGHER GROUND

WLRN | November 4, 2019 | Audio

7:48 minutes

In Little Haiti, a neighborhood in Miami, Florida, Black residents find they are being forced out by “climate gentrification.”

- Historically, the neighborhood, built by working class Haitian immigrants, has been inhabited by lower-income Black residents. In the last few years, development projects have begun arriving, which will inevitably lead to gentrification.
- The area’s proximity to Miami’s city center and its relatively higher elevation in an area threatened by rising sea levels makes it highly valued real estate.
- The environmental factor of rising sea levels is accelerating gentrification in areas like Little Haiti. This phenomenon was labeled “climate gentrification” by Harvard scholar Jesse Keenan.
- A study by the NIH found that the trend of relegating Black communities to lower-elevation neighborhoods in flood prone areas has occurred all over the country, in places like New Orleans. The fact that this is only now happening in Miami is because lower-lying beachfront properties were deemed more desirable and thus were more expensive. With the effects of climate change threatening those areas of Miami, the city’s predominantly white, higher-income residents are looking to move into the higher elevation areas once inhabited by Black residents and people of color.

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

EAST AUSTIN RESTAURANT OWNER ON GENTRIFICATION: 'IT AIN'T ABOUT THE BLACK OR WHITE OR MEXICAN'

KUT Austin | July 31, 2019 | Audio

7:27 minutes

In Austin, TX, Black restaurant owner and chef Darold Gordon admits that while his business might benefit financially from a wealthier customer base arriving with the gentrification of East Austin, the changing demographics of the neighborhood is detrimental to the local Black community.

- Gordon established his restaurant and two food trucks in the area when he moved to Austin from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Originally, the neighborhood was a predominantly Black and low-income community where a business might not thrive. He said he could already see some initial signs of gentrification in the area, which prompted him to sign a long-term lease for his restaurant space.
- Gordon says there have been changes in the area's affordability since he opened his restaurant: "The people who actually grew up here can't stay here now." For Gordon, Gentrification is not about race, but rather income.
- While Gordon can see the benefits of a wealthier customer base, he is also anticipating the long-term effects of the area's gentrification when small business like his will also be priced out of the neighborhood.

KEY WORDS

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

- Displacement
- Redlining
- White flight

CONTEMPLATE

Learners 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 learners answer these five questions about each piece of media.

DEBATE

Use the debate tool on the module webpage to help form evidence-based responses to the debate question.

Thinkalong is designed to help learners engage with real issues that are relevant to their lives. [Structured discussions](#) allow learners to practice their critical thinking skills through evidence-based debate with their peers. Discussions are designed to take about 30 minutes. Educators are encouraged to modify aspects that work best for their learners.

To encourage civil discourse, please review the [Code of Conduct](#) with your learners.

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