Rising 8th Grade ELA Summer Project
8th Grade Year-Long Investigative Question:
“How does identity shape perceptions of the world?”

Step 1: Use the list below to choose one current social issue in 2020 that is relevant to you, your family or community. If you have a different issue outside of the list that you’re passionate about, you may choose that instead!!

- Police brutality
- Black Lives Matter
- The role of government leadership
- Protests and activism
- The future of schools/ education
- Gay, Queer and Tans rights
- Science and the environment
- Science and healthcare (epidemiology; hospital systems)
- Disbursement of information during the pandemic
- Anti-Chinese/Asian racism since the pandemic
- The economic impact of a global pandemic
- Access to healthcare, clean water, food
- Indigenous rights
- Right vs. Left political divisions in the U.S.
- Individual rights vs. collective good
- Volunteerism and Mutual Aid
- Voter suppression in primaries and elections

Step 2: Do some serious research and reading using credible sources (see below for a recommended list). Read at least 3 different sources on your topic. Sources can be fiction or non-fiction books, interviews, podcasts, news articles, blogs, or documentaries. Don’t forget to keep a record of your sources for the annotated research log (Step 4).

Step 3: Use your reading and research to respond to the following questions in a 2 - 4 page essay: What aspect(s) of my identity am I invoking to explore and research this social issue? How is this aspect of my identity directly impacted and influenced by this social issue?

Your written response needs to include:
- Brief description of the current event that you’ve chosen for your topic.
- Explanation of the context - What was the situation in the past, and how long has this topic been discussed?
● Discuss what you’ve learned in your research about the topic. Cite at least one detail and quote per source and analyze the significance of that quote.

● Describe your unique perspective on the topic - Has your opinion or understanding changed as a result of research? What do other perspectives say? Do you have recommendations for what the reader should do about this current event?

● What aspects of your identity consciously or unconsciously affected your choice of topic, your opinions, and your life in response to the current situation?

Step 4: Create an annotated research log of sources - cite the resources used by title, author, website, url, etc. Write 3 sentences per resource summarizing the text and telling how you used the information for your response.

Annotated Research Log (use this as a template and create your own doc with all 3 resources)

Resource #1 Title: _________________________________

Resource #1 Category (documentary, article, etc.): _____________________________

In three sentences, describe what this was mostly about (summarize):
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Some sources to get you started:
NewsELA  Readworks  DemocracyNow News
BuzzfeedNews  chalkbeat.org  National Geographic
NY Times  Teen Vogue  npr.org


Social Justice booklists: socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/, Books for kids about racism and protest