keep marching: the road to the march on washington
Keep Marching: The Road to the March On Washington is a new production with music by Mad River Theater Works. Bringing collected oral history to life, the one-act play explores the historic 1963 March On Washington. Revered as the day that Martin Luther King, Jr. made his famous “I Have A Dream” speech, the event was a shining moment in the progression of equality in America, as well as a pivotal action in the Civil Rights movement. Keep Marching brings to life many iconic figures including Martin Luther King, Jr., Bayard Rustin and John Lewis.

About the performance

Keep Marching: The Road to the March On Washington is a new production with music by Mad River Theater Works. Bringing collected oral history to life, the one-act play explores the historic 1963 March On Washington. Revered as the day that Martin Luther King, Jr. made his famous “I Have A Dream” speech, the event was a shining moment in the progression of equality in America, as well as a pivotal action in the Civil Rights movement. Keep Marching brings to life many iconic figures including Martin Luther King, Jr., Bayard Rustin and John Lewis.

About NJPAC On the Mic

NJPAC On the Mic is an audio resource that takes SchoolTime performances to the next level. This podcast series features three exclusive, curriculum-aligned episodes for all of NJPAC’s 2023-2024 SchoolTime performances. On the Mic offers students the opportunity to engage their listening skills, deepen their understanding of the performance and learn about the process of bringing a live or recorded production to life. This immersive audio experience features a theme song by students in the NJPAC arts education program.

How to listen to this episode of NJPAC On the Mic

Scan the QR code or visit njpac.org/arts-education/teacher-resources to access the podcast and the following show notes:

Part 1: About | Pre-show audio, 6 minutes
Includes: An introduction to the performance, artists, venue and welcome message
Welcome message voiced by Daniel Carlton, writer and director of Keep Marching

Part 2: Connect | Post-show audio, 8 minutes
Includes: Reflection question, a look at the evolution of the protest anthem “We Shall Overcome”
Opening question voiced by Daniel Carlton

Part 3: Spotlight | Post-show audio, 10 minutes
Includes: An interview with the writer and director of Keep Marching, discussion starters
Interview guest: Daniel Carlton

Additional Episode Credits

Series producers: Michael Aquino and Dania Ramos
Written and hosted by Dania Ramos
Additional writing by the team behind Keep Marching: The Road to the March On Washington
Theme and outro music: NJPAC Hip Hop Arts & Culture students
Additional music from Epidemic Sound
Sound editing, sound design and voiceover by Michael Aquino

More information on njpac.org/education
**Inspired Ideas in the Classroom**

### Teacher Focus

**Prep for the Performance**
- If you have 15 minutes: Listen to NJPAC On the Mic: About. Create community and classroom agreements with the class that fosters a space where students feel heard and respected. Facilitate a discussion and gauge what students already know about the March on Washington, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. Then watch the video and ask students to list key points on the board.
- If you have 40 minutes: Have students review the vocabulary for Keep Marching: The Road to the March on Washington so they have the tools to discuss civil rights further. Then, ask students to read about the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Allow students time to ask questions about the article and the timeline during which discrimination was prohibited.
- Have students watch the following videos: What is Journalism? | What is Investigative Journalism? | Scholastic Kids Press Encourages Young Journalists.

**Experience the Performance**
- Before the show: Define investigative journalism for your students and discuss what it means for Daniel Carlton, the author and director of the play, to use aspects of investigative journalism to research and write the script. In his investigation, Carlton found a list of music that played a crucial role in the Civil Rights Movement.
- Play the recording of “We Shall Overcome,” one of the oldest African-American songs of freedom, featured in the play. Provide students with the lyrics so they can read along. Facilitate a discussion with students about how music can help express emotions and unite people.
- After the show: Listen to On the Mic: Connect. Discuss the songs in the play and how they were (or were not) effective in telling the story. Ask the students if hearing “We Shall Overcome” in this context gives it new meaning.
- Play the video about the history of “We Shall Overcome,” and discuss the impact of music on social justice movements. Explore how each iteration of “We Shall Overcome” was representative of social justice movements and the needs of people at various points in history.

**Reflect, respond and read**
- Reflect: Explore the term “activism” by asking students the following questions: 1. What are ways everyday people can use their voices to create change? 2. What characteristics have used their voice for activism? 3. When you think about the world around you, what would you like to change?
- Read: Have students read an article about the history of protest songs. Then, have students research the top 10 leaders who attended the March on Washington.
- Respond: Have students use the Activity Sheet to develop four or five questions they can use to interview their peers about the changes they wish to see in the world. These interviews will be the sources of content for students to write lyrics with later.

**Focus**
- Listen to NJPAC On the Mic: Spotlight. Revisit the community and classroom agreements and divide the class into pairs. Give students 15 to 20 minutes total to interview each other (seven to 10 minutes each). Ask students to switch partners, so everyone is with someone new. Give students an additional 15 – 20 minutes for the next round of interviews. Note that students have examples of the changes their peers around them wish to see in the world, facilitate a discussion about what they found in their interviews. Note the themes that students are passionate about discussing.

**Originate**
- Ask students to create a new set of lyrics to “We Shall Overcome” based on their interviews. Encourage them to include: 1. The dreams the class has for humanity, their country, their community and their families. 2. Why their dreams matter. Discuss the song’s structure and what can stay the same or be changed in their updated lyrics. Make yourself available to guide students as they rewrite the lyrics to focus on modern-day issues and interview responses.

**Form**
- Write your own version of “We Shall Overcome” based on what you learned in your interviews. Consider the following:
  1. What dreams would your classmates most like to see come true?
  2. Why are these dreams important?
  3. How can you use the lyrics to show what you learned in your research?

**Rehearse**
- Break the class into small groups of three or four. Have the students rehearse reciting their lyrics with their groups. After each student recites their new version of the song, allow time for the other students to offer constructive criticism on the imagery, wording or rhythm of the new lyrics. Once all students have received feedback, give everyone individual work time to make final edits.

**Make Magic**
- Provide students with a hard copy or digital version of each set of lyrics. Make space for a performance area where each student can recite their final lyrics to the class. Facilitate a Q&A session at the end so students can ask questions about the topics and movements raised in the lyrics.

### Student Activity

**Prep for the Performance**
- If you have 15 minutes: Listen to NJPAC On the Mic: About. Think about what makes you feel heard and respected during difficult discussions. Make sure these elements are included in the Community and Classroom Agreements.
- Watch the video about the March on Washington and take notes on any key points.
- If you have 40 minutes: Review vocabulary for Keep Marching: The Road to the March on Washington. Read the article about the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and come up with questions about the Civil Rights Movement.
- Watch the following videos about journalism: What is Journalism? | What is Investigative Journalism? | Scholastic Kids Press Encourages Young Journalists.

**Experience the Performance**
- Before the show: Think about what it means to conduct investigative journalism.
- Listen to “We Shall Overcome” and consider how music unites people.
- After the show: Listen to NJPAC On the Mic: Connect. Discuss the following questions and share your answers:
  1. How did the songs in the play help tell the story?
  2. Was it different hearing “We Shall Overcome” in person and as a part of a larger story?
- Watch the video about the history of “We Shall Overcome.” Why do you think music has an impact on social justice movements?
- Why are there so many versions of the song?

**Reflect, respond and read**
- Reflect: What is activism? How can you use your voice to create change? Do you know any celebrities who are activists?
- If you were an activist, what change would you promote?
- Read: Read the articles about the history of protest songs and the top leaders who attended the March on Washington.
- Respond: Use the Activity Sheet to come up with four or five questions to ask your peers about the kind of activism they care about, and how they want to see the world change.
- Here are some sample questions:
  1. Are you an activist?
  2. What are your dreams for humanity?
  3. When you think about the world around you, what would you like to change?
  4. Can you describe what an ideal world looks like?

**Focus**
- Listen to NJPAC On the Mic: Spotlight. Remember what it means to be respectful in the classroom by revisiting the community and classroom agreements. Then, conduct two sets of interviews to learn about the changes your classmates want to see in the world. Be ready to discuss your findings.

**Originate**
- Write your own version of “We Shall Overcome” based on what you learned in your interviews. Consider the following:
  1. What dreams would your classmates most like to see come true?
  2. Why are these dreams important?
  3. How can you use the lyrics to show what you learned in your research?

**Rehearse**
- Share your version of “We Shall Overcome” with your group. Take turns offering and receiving feedback. Then make final edits to your song.

**Make Magic**
- Recite your lyrics. Be prepared to ask other students about their work and answer any questions students might have about your piece.
English Language Arts
NJSLSA.SL.1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
NJSLSA.SL.2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJ Social-Emotional Learning
Relationship Skills Sub-competency 16 Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
Self-Awareness Sub-competency 3 Recognize one’s personal traits, strengths, and limitations.
Self-Management Sub-competency 6 Recognize the skills needed to establish and achieve personal and educational goals.

Social Studies
6.1.5.CivicsCM.1 Use a variety of sources to describe the characteristics exhibited by real and fictional people that contribute(d) to the well-being of their community and country. 6.1.2.CivicsPD.1 Engage in discussions effectively by asking questions, considering facts, listening to the ideas of others, and sharing opinions. 6.1.5.CivicsPD.2 Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g., fairness, civil rights, human rights).
6.2.12.HistoryUP.2.a Analyze the impact of new intellectual, philosophical, and scientific ideas on how humans viewed themselves and how they viewed their physical and spiritual worlds.

Activist
A person who uses direct or confrontational action, such as a demonstration or strike, to call attention to a cause, such as civil rights, labor rights or climate change.

Boycott
When an individual or group protests by either withdrawing from activities or refusing to purchase goods and services.

Civil Rights
Guaranteed rights for everyone regardless of gender, race, abilities, or religion. These include the right to vote, personal freedom, and equal access to education, housing, and public areas.

Civil Rights Act of 1964
The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. It was signed into law by Lyndon B. Johnson, the 36th president of the U.S. It is considered one of the crowning legislative achievements of the Civil Rights Movement.

De Facto Discrimination
Unfair treatment of someone in practice but not based on law.

Discrimination
When one group is treated differently than another group based on class or category rather than merit.

Investigative Journalism
A form of journalism in which reporters deeply investigate a single topic of interest, such as serious crimes, racial injustice, political corruption or corporate wrongdoing.

John F. Kennedy

NAACP
Established in 1909, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the oldest and largest civil rights organization, spearheaded the drive to win passage of the major civil rights legislation of the era: the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

Vocabulary
- Activist
- Boycott
- Civil Rights
- Discrimination
- De Facto Discrimination
- Discrimination
- Investigative Journalism
- John F. Kennedy
- NAACP
- Nonviolence
- Prejudice
- Protest
- Segregation
- The Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
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