



All resources, strategies and text in this document are meant as tools to support you and your students as you grapple with this complex issues, and form connections, opinions and questions.

Some of the text shared is meant for you, the educator. Often we don't spend much time reflecting on these issues ourselves, and subsequently walk into our classrooms emotionally unprepared to lead these important conversations. Hopefully, these resources will prove helpful in providing some much needed reflection for both you, and your students.

Goals for our students and ourselves:

- Learn to research, and ask questions, before cultivating an opinion or point of view about a particular issue.
- Assume best intentions when engaging with others in complex conversation
- Lead our students safely into, and out of, difficult classroom content
- Build space for reflection
- Provide room for discourse, helping students see the difference between disagreement and disrespect
- Maintain the values inherent in us, and the Jewish institutions for which we work, and be a light onto the nations.

Essential Questions to Consider:

- How do our religious, ethnic, and national identities shape the way we construct our universe of moral responsibility?
- What's your definition of home? (experiences, traditions, not just a physical space)
- What's your definition of community? Who is part of your community; who is outside it?
- What are we capable of ignoring, turning our back on or rationalizing when we put distance (physical or metaphorical) between ourselves and others?
- What is justice? Why is justice important?
- For whom is justice important; does everyone deserve it?
- How can we view working towards equity as the pursuit of justice (Tzedakah)?
- How do I find reliable information about a particular issue or current event?



ARTICLES/RESPONSES ON EXECUTIVE ORDER OF IMMIGRATION:

Dan Rather's Posts on the Executive Order

Attached to email

How America's rejection of Jews fleeing Nazi Germany haunts our refugee policy
<http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/1/27/14412082/refugees-history-holocaust>

Jewish groups add their voices to protest immigration ban

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/jewish-groups-add-their-voices-to-protest-immigration-ban-142004790.html>

Statement by Senators McCain and Graham on Executive Order of Immigration

<http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=587F2A2D-8A47-48F7-9045-CF30F0A77889>

Statement by Steven Goldstein, Executive Director of the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect

<https://www.facebook.com/AnneFrankCenterforMutualRespect/posts/10155065271124040>

FACING HISTORY RESOURCES

www.facing.org

Facing Ferguson: News Literacy in a Digital Age:

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/facing-ferguson-news-literacy-digital-age>

Fostering Civil Discourse: A Guide to Classroom Conversations

Attached to email

Religion, Immigration and Belonging

<https://www.facinghistory.org/civic-dilemmas/religion-immigration-and-belonging>

Sacred Texts, Modern Questions: Connecting Ethics and History Through a Jewish Lens

<https://www.facinghistory.org/books-borrowing/sacred-texts-modern-questions>

Standing Up to Hatred and Intolerance

<https://www.facinghistory.org/standing-up-hatred-intolerance>

Stories of Identity: Religion, Migration and Belonging in a Changing World

<https://www.facinghistory.org/books-borrowing/stories-identity-religion-migration-and-belonging-changing-world>



FACING HISTORY LINKS, BLOGS, ARTICLES

Bringing the “Beloved Community” to the Classroom:

<http://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/author/steven-becton>

Bryan Stevenson: “We Need to Talk About Injustice” (excerpts)

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/we-need-talk-about-injustice>

Entire TED Talk (23 minutes):

https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice/transcript

“The Danger of a Single Story”:

<https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-1/danger-single-story>

Or watch all, or parts of, the author’s TED Talk (18:49)

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Facing History Post Election Resources:

<http://bit.ly/2jOe5Q1>

How to Assess the Strength of a Democracy:

<http://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/how-to-assess-the-strength-of-a-democracy>

Inspire Students with Hope In Times of Uncertainty:

<http://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/inspire-students-with-hope-in-times-of-uncertainty>

FHAO has partnered with the [Hearts on Fire Movement](#) to offer teachers tools to fire up their students and inspire them to become future leaders for social justice and change.

Text to Text: Comparing Jewish Refugees of the 1930’s with Syrian Refugees Today

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/04/learning/lesson-plans/text-to-text-comparing-jewish-refugees-of-the-1930s-with-syrian-refugees-today.html?_r=0

Three Ways to Address the Latest News on Immigration with Your Students

<http://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/3-ways-to-address-the-latest-news-on-immigration-with-your-students>

Understanding the Global Refugee Crisis

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/understanding-global-refugee-crisis>

“We Need to Talk”:

<http://bit.ly/2gh9zsB>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

“Dear Jews” A Letter by Josh Radnor

<http://letterstotherevolution.com/josh-radnor>

Statement from Head of School-Chicago Day School

<https://www.chicagojewishdayschool.org/head-of-school-blog>

Video: “No Human Being was Born Illegal” (length: 5:31)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Dt6slKKnvE>

Taken from: Immigration videos (Not In Our School Project)

<https://www.niot.org/immigrantcollection>

Lessons from Memphis

<http://fusion.net/story/379938/comic-trump-election-protest-civil-rights-movement-memphis/>

Bryan Stevenson’s Four Elements for Creating Change:

Bryan Stevenson is the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative

1. We must get “proximate” to suffering and understand the nuanced experiences of those who suffer from and experience inequality. If you are willing to get closer to people who are suffering, you will find the power to change the world.
2. We must change the narratives that sustain problems. Narratives that fail to acknowledge or accurately portray the reality of inequality only serve to perpetuate it. Stevenson references the politics of fear and anger that led to “zero tolerance” policies and armed officers in schools that promote a narrative that students in schools are criminals to be punished rather than children to be taught.
3. We must stay hopeful about what we can do to end injustice.
4. We must be willing to do things that are uncomfortable. Fighting, sometimes in vain, for the rights of some of the most downtrodden members of society can feel uncomfortable. However, there is restorative power in doing so. We must commit to working for equality not only because we want to fix a broken system, but because we recognize our own brokenness in the brokenness of those we serve.

QUOTES/TEXT:

The Danger of Distance

The idea Bryan Stevenson discusses of getting "proximal" to issues we're exploring. Often, our students look at people in need as "others" and keep or create distance. "Those people" need help etc. Not in a malicious way, but our students can tend to be somewhat removed from the world around them. Only by recognizing that when someone happens to one of us, it happens to all of us, can we act justly.

From Sacred Texts/Modern Questions

<https://www.facinghistory.org/books-borrowing/sacred-texts-modern-questions>

Page 41-42 An excerpt from the Joseph story. There is a line, towards the middle of page 42, that states "His brothers saw him from afar, and decided to kill him.

- Can have students engage with this text using the "Big Paper" teaching strategy: <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/big-paper-silent-conversation>
- Then guide the conversation toward what we're capable of doing/not doing when we view people and their problems from a distance.

"I used to think that the most important line in the Bible was "Love your neighbour as yourself". Then I realised that it is easy to love your neighbour because he or she is usually quite like yourself. What is hard is to love the stranger, one whose colour, culture or creed is different from yours. That is why the command, "Love the stranger because you were once strangers", resonates so often throughout the Bible. It is summoning us now. A bold act of collective generosity will show that the world, particularly Europe, has learned the lesson of its own dark past and is willing to take a global lead in building a more hopeful future. Wars that cannot be won by weapons can sometimes be won by the sheer power of acts of humanitarian generosity to inspire the young to choose the way of peace instead of holy war." –*Rabbi Jonathan Sacks*

"The influx of refugees overwhelming parts of Europe is a massive crisis, but it is at just such times that it is worth remembering that the Chinese ideogram for "crisis" also means "opportunity." *Rabbi Jonathan Sacks*

"The Torah tells us, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself, so we make it impossible for them to be our neighbor.'" - *Rabbi Heschel*

"Even with the evidence before our eyes, we hesitate to accept the worst."
- *Professor Larry Langer*

“Are these migrants fleeing for their lives, or are they trying to find a better economic and social future for their families? How will this influx of people change the face of Europe? Will they prove willing to be integrated into European society? And conversely, is Europe willing to do what is necessary to integrate them? And why, for that matter, have so many Muslim countries shut their doors to them? While huge numbers of those fleeing Syria have found refuge in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, what of the oil-rich Gulf States? They have welcomed none.”

- *Deborah Lipstadt, Professor of Holocaust Studies, Emory*

“The human conscience just isn’t pricked by mass suffering, while an individual child (or puppy) in distress causes our hearts to flutter.”

- *Nicholas Kristof, New York Times Reporter*

“Confronted with knowledge of dozens of apparently random disasters each day, what can a human heart do but slam its doors? No mortal can grieve that much. Our defense is to pretend there’s no thread of event that connects us, and that those lives are somehow not precious and like our own.”

- *Barbara Kingsolver, Author*

“We cannot depend only upon our moral feelings to motivate us to take proper action against genocide. We need stronger international laws to prevent and stop large scale acts of violence.”

- *Dr. Paul Slovic, Professor of Psychology, University of Oregon*

Crisis brings out the best and worst in people. Sudden mass influx of refugees has triggered an amazing readiness to help as well as outpouring of xenophobia. Which type of response prevails will depend to a large extent on political leadership.

- *Maha Yahya, Carnegie Foundation*

“...I needed to do what I ask our students to do. When confronting different historical moments or current events, I ask students to resist generalizations, to judge responsibly, to consider reliable sources, and to make conclusions without prejudice. I ask them to avoid retreating from uncomfortable conversations, to participate in them actively and thoughtfully instead...I know that if I fall into the troubling pattern of seeing these experiences only from my own perspective, it would lead to drawing simplistic and divisive conclusions...As I engaged in conversation with others, I was reminded of the privilege and responsibility of living in a democracy, even an imperfect one.”

- *Facing History Staff Member, Steve Becton*

How do we live with moral difference and yet sustain an overarching community?
“The answer is conversation- the disciplined act of communication- the disciplined act of communicating (making my views intelligible to someone who does not share them) and listening (entering into the inner world of someone whose views are opposed to my own). Each is a genuine form of respect, or paying attention to the other, of conferring value on his or her opinions even though they are not mine. In a conversation neither side loses and both are changed because they now know what reality looks like from a different perspective. That is not to say that either gives up its personal convictions. That is not what conversation is about. It does mean, however, that I may now realize that I must make space for another deeply held belief. That is how public morality is constructed in a pluralistic society- a sustained act of understanding and seeking to be understood across the boundaries of difference.”

- *Rabbi Jonathan Sacks in The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*

Psalm 82:3-4

Defend the poor and the orphan; deal justly with the poor and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

Therefore, only one person was created to teach you that whosoever kills a single soul the Bible considers to have killed a complete world. And whosoever sustains and saves a single soul, it is as if that person sustained a whole world.

Pirke Avot 2:5

Hillel said, do not separate yourself from the community.

Gittin 61a

Our Rabbis taught, “Give sustenance to the poor of the non-Jews along with the poor of Israel. Visit the sick of the non-Jews along with the sick of Israel. Bury the dead of the non-Jews along with the dead of Israel. [Do all these things] because of the ways of peace.”

Midrash Tannaim on Numbers 28:2

God says to Israel, “My children, whenever you give sustenance to the poor, I impute it to you as though you gave sustenance to Me.” Does God then eat and drink? No, but whenever you give food to the poor, God accounts it to you as if you gave food to God.

Midrash Tehillim 82:3

Defend the poor and the orphan; do justice to the afflicted and needy.



Rabenu Bahya (late 13th century)

Job lauds himself that his home was wide open to all wayfarers, strangers, and sojourners and that he endured that no one regardless of his nationality ever lodged in the street. Job was a righteous person and he was kind to all people as well as to his own countrymen. This should be an inspiration for man to broaden the extent of his compassion, as the sages said, “one who shows mercy to God’s creatures will be shown mercy in heaven” (Shabbat 1516). We may conclude a fortiori that if Job, who did not know Torah, practiced this quality of kindness, the Israelites, who have accepted the Torah, are certainly obliged to practice it in all aspects. Seder Hasidim If a community lacked a synagogue and a shelter for the poor, it was first obligated to build a shelter for the poor.

Rabbi Shelom of Karlin (18th Century)

If you want to raise a person from mud and filth, do not think it is enough to keep standing on top and reaching a helping hand down to the person. You must go all the way down yourself, down into mud and filth. Then take hold of the person with strong hands and pull the person and yourself out into the light.