

HELLO WORLD!

I Wear a Mask Because...

WRITERS MATTER
MIDDLE YEARS RESET CURRICULUM
2020-2021

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Students will talk about, respond to questions, and write about coronavirus.

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Students will analyze the different uses and meanings of wearing various masks.

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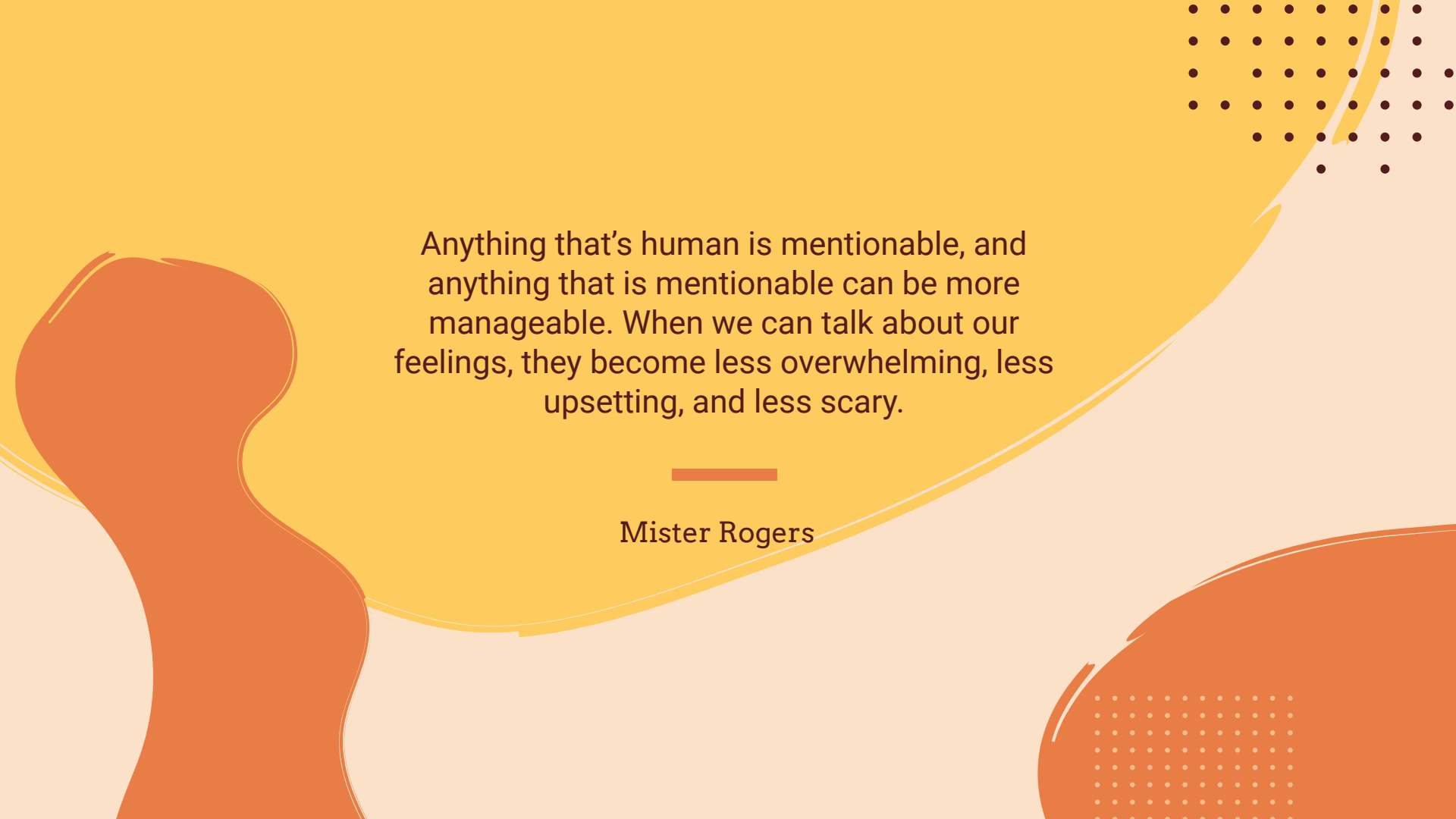
The Skin I'm In

Students will discuss topics like racial bias and colorism in order to write affirmations and create a magazine cover embracing who they are.

04

The Plan-demic

Students will examine past situations of a pandemic and of civil rights in order to reflect and write about their own feelings and thoughts.



Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary.

Mister Rogers



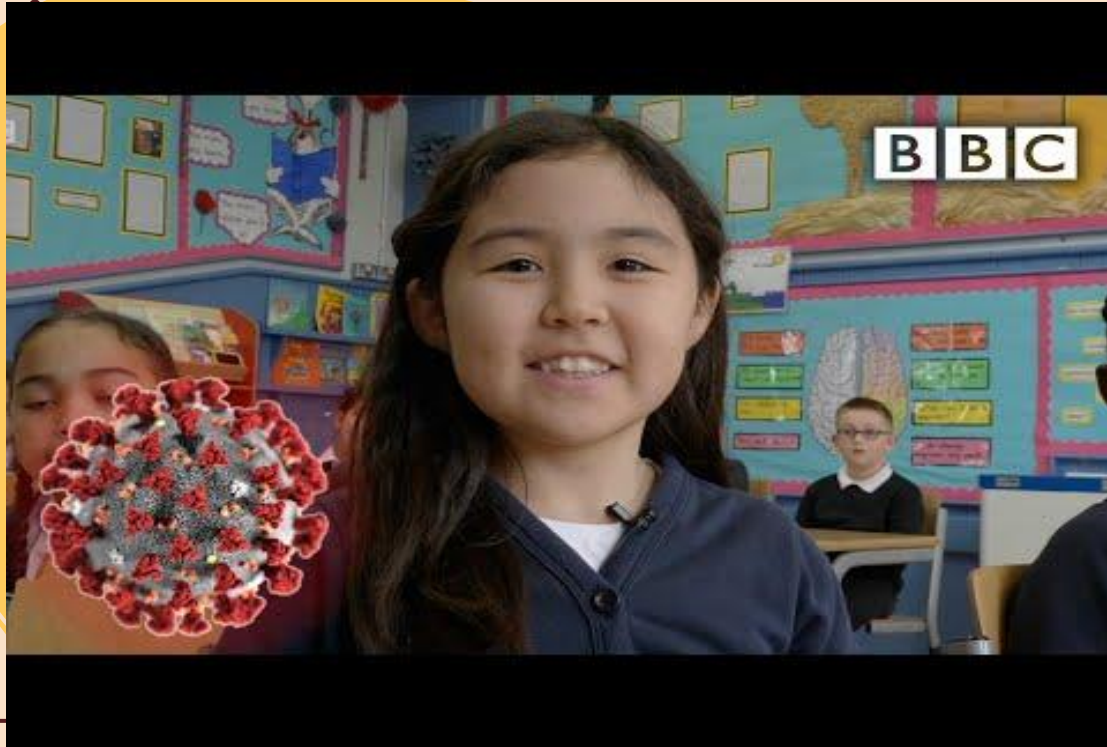
01

—
Do You Know What
I've Been Through?



Kids Are Talking!

**Kids want to know about coronavirus.
What do you want to know?**



You can stop
the video
after 2
minutes and
45 seconds.

Listen to what kids are saying about coronavirus.

WHAT I KNOW, WHAT I HEARD

I know...

List 3 things you know about coronavirus.

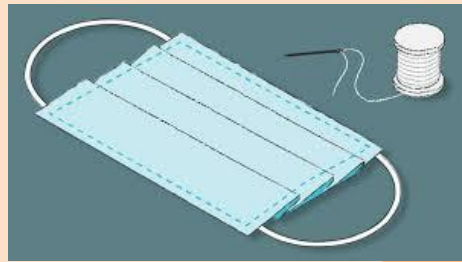
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I heard...

Write 3 things you heard people saying about wearing a mask.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I was wondering if scientists would find a cure before 2021. What are you wondering about?



I was wondering if wearing the mask really protects me. What are you wondering about?

WONDERINGS

1

2

3

I was wondering

I was wondering

I was wondering

KIDS TALK ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

Who do you know
who has or had
coronavirus?

How did it make you
feel when someone had
coronavirus?

Did anyone have to
go to the hospital
because of
coronavirus?

How has your life changed since the coronavirus
started?

How can you stay safe from
coronavirus?



Kids Write About Coronavirus

Write your feelings. Write a letter. Write a poem. Write a story. Write a note. Write your thoughts. Write your concerns. Write your questions. Write your wonderings. Write your wishes. Write what's on your mind. Write! Write! Write!

A large, empty rectangular area outlined with a dashed blue border, intended for children to write their responses.



02

Who's Behind the Mask?

**We Wear
The Mask**

**By Paul
Laurence
Dunbar**



We Wear The Mask

By: Paul Laurence Dunbar



We Wear the Mask

Dunbar refers to the African American experience in his poem but his words capture the universal experience of all people who have used their facial features to hide their true feelings. What words used in this poem resonate with you? How do they make you feel and why?

A large rectangular area with a dashed blue border, intended for a student's response to the text.



**These masks are worn to protect yourself and others.
Describe how you feel when wearing your mask.**

Type your answer here



**Some people wear face masks to improve their looks.
What do you do to impress others? Or yourself?**

Type your answer here



Theater Masks allow actors to take on the role of a character.

-What is your role in your family? How different is it from who you really are?

Type your answer here

Which mask do you wear with your...?



FRIENDS

FAMILY

SCHOOLMATES

NEIGHBORS

**SUPERHERO
INSTRUCTION
MANUAL**



**STORYTIME
WITH
MS.EMMA**

You can
start this
video at 1:15!



1). Choose a super name
(Combine your favorite color
and your favorite animal)!
Choose what makes you feel
good in times of trouble.

2). Pick a partner/sidekick!
(Who makes you feel safe?)

3). Craft a super disguise
(mask, cape, special outfit)!
Add more direction as needed
or necessary).

4). Secure a super hideout!
(Where do you go to find
peace? To think?)

5). Choose your superpower!
(What makes you special?
Think of all of your qualities.)

6). Store up your energy.
(How can you stay healthy?)

7). SAVE THE WORLD!! Show the
world, show the community, show your
family who you are and what you are
made of!!!

SUPERHERO Instruction Manual

Follow these 7 steps to become a superhero.



Write your superhero story here.

A large, empty rectangular area defined by a dashed black border, intended for writing a superhero story.



If you illustrated your superhero, you can upload your drawing here.

A large, empty rectangular area defined by a dashed black border, intended for uploading a drawing of a superhero.



03

The Skin I'm In

Discrimination

(The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age or sex)

01

What are some forms of discrimination?



02

Share when you discriminated against someone because of their skin color.



03

Describe a time you felt discriminated against.



04

Have you treated someone differently because of their gender?



Discrimination

(The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age or sex)

05

Describe a time when a male student was treated differently than a female student.

06

How do you feel when you see someone being discriminated against?

07

What would you do if you saw a gay student being discriminated against?

08

How would you feel if your parent didn't get a job because he or she is over 40 years old?

Discrimination

(The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age or sex)

09

Who do you know who fought for equal rights in the past? present?

10

How would you stand up for equal rights?

11

Why do you think it's not okay to make fun of another person's race?

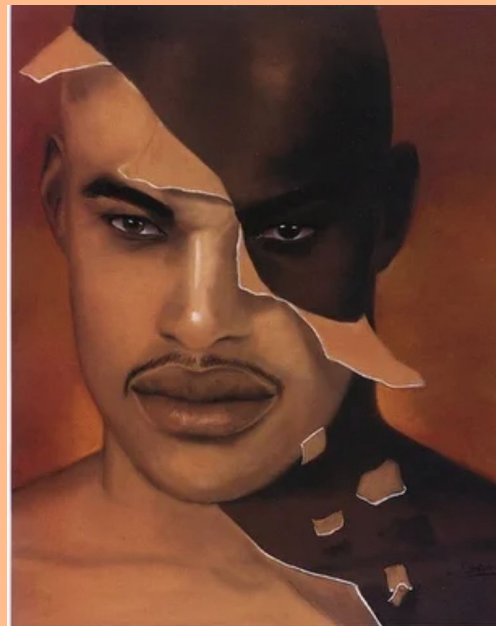
12

Oftentimes people are bullied because of their differences. How can you stop this behavior?

Look at these two pieces of artwork created by Laurie Cooper. Jot down your initial noticings and what connections can be made. How do you feel while looking at these pictures? Why do you think the artist created these?

"The Skin I'm In"

Laurie Cooper



CNN Video on Racial Bias

Directions: Watch this video about a study done with children on racial bias and stereotypes. Then respond to the questions below.



In your own words,
what is racial bias?
What are stereotypes?

Type response here.

What information did
this research reveal?

Type response here.

What are your thoughts about
this study? How can we break
racial stereotypes?

Type response here.

Before we begin, what do you think the word "affirmation" means?

What is an *affirmation*?

Video #1: Spoken Word Poetry
Dark Girls - Sarah Ogutu



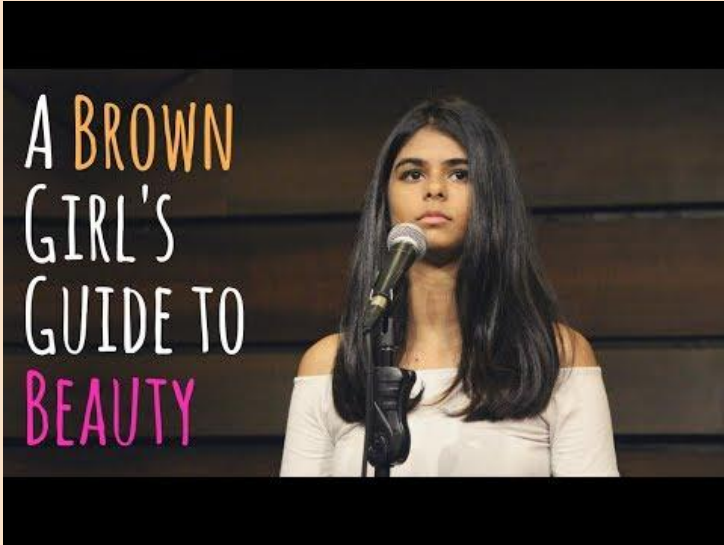
What are Sarah's affirmations in this poem? Are they positive or negative? What is Sarah's message in this poem?

Video #2: Youtuber "Belief in
Fatherhood"
My Son Doesn't Like the Color of His Skin



How does this father help his children embrace who they are and to love their skin? What affirmations are the children saying by the end of the video?

Spoken Word Poetry



**“A Brown Girl’s Guide to Beauty”
by: Aranya Johar**

Based on this poem, what are society's expectations for both men and women to be accepted? Do you agree or disagree?

After watching the video, type response here.

Do you ever feel you are pressured to be someone you are not? Have you ever changed something about yourself in order to fit in?

After watching the video, type response here.

Daily Affirmations Activity

Today we are going to create a list of self-affirmations. Hang it up in your room or on your mirror to remind yourself how amazing and unique you are!

Step 1: On a piece of paper write down your insecurities, stereotypes, or negative comments people have made about you or you have made about yourself.

Step 2: Now, rip up that paper! (Make sure you don't make the pieces too small!)

Step 3: Focus on what makes you who you are, and all of the beautiful and wonderful things about yourself. On the back side of the paper, write positive words or phrases to describe you.

Step 4: Now take all of those pieces and put them back together like a puzzle. Tape them together.

Step 5: Read out loud your new positive affirmations and share at least one with the class on our classroom **PADLET**.



Analyzing Lyrics

India.Arie - "I am Not My Hair"

Read the full lyrics [here!](#)



Click here to watch the music video.

Good hair means curls and waves (no)

With nothin' to lose, postin' with the wave cap

Bad hair means you look like a slave (no)

And the cops wanna harass 'cause I got waves

At the turn of the century

Ain't see nothin' like that in all my days

It's time for us to redefine who we be

Man, you gotta change all these feelings

You can shave it off like a South African beauty

Steady judging one another by their appearance

Or get in on lock like Bob Marley

Yes, India, I feel ya, girl

You can rock it straight like Oprah Winfrey

Now go ahead, talk to the rest of the world 'cause

If it's not what's on your head, it's what's underneath, and say

Does the way I wear my hair make me a better person?

Hey (hey)

Does the way I wear my hair make me a better friend?

I am not my hair

Does the way I wear my hair determine my integrity?

I am not this skin

I am expressing my creativity

I am not your expectations, no (hey)

Highlight your favorite lines. Why do those lines stand out to you?

I am not my hair

I am not this skin

I am the soul that lives within

The Skin I'm In by: Sharon G. Flake

"John-John says his face tells the world he doesn't take no stuff. That people better respect him, or else. I never see nothing like that in John-John's face though. He looks more scared than mean. I guess there ain't no accounting for what folks see in their own mirrors." (Page 18)

What do you think your face says to the world?

Type here.

Is the face you show the world consistent with how you feel about yourself?

Type here.

How do our own self-perceptions often differ from what others see in us?

Type here.

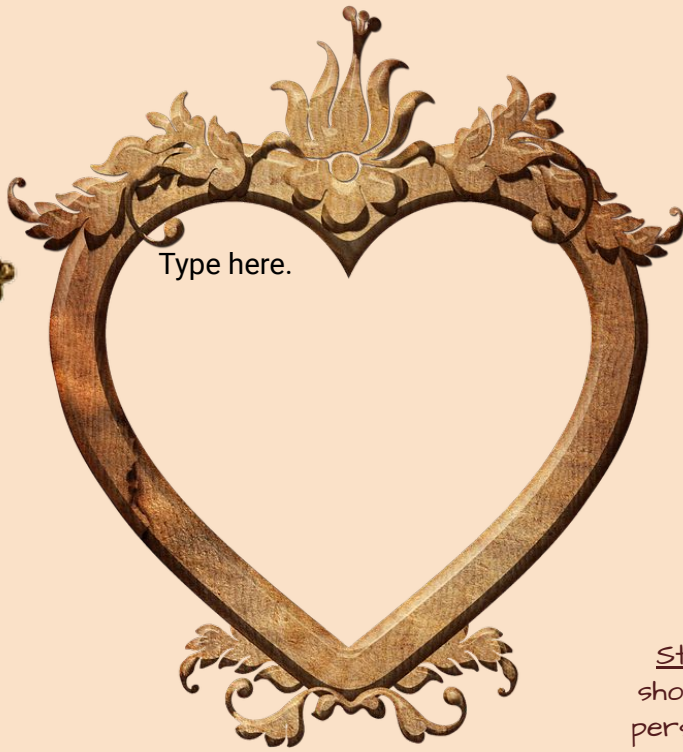
"Mirror, Mirror on the Wall..."

NOTE: This activity requires you to sit in front of a mirror or your phone camera So you can See your reflection!



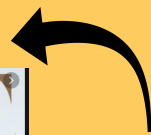
Step 1: Write about what you physically see when you look in the mirror.

Step 2: Pick out your favorite feature. Why is it your favorite? What makes it special?



Step 3: Write about what the mirror does not show. Who are you on the inside? What are your personality traits, your talents, your passions, etc.

Use **CANVA** to create your magazine cover.



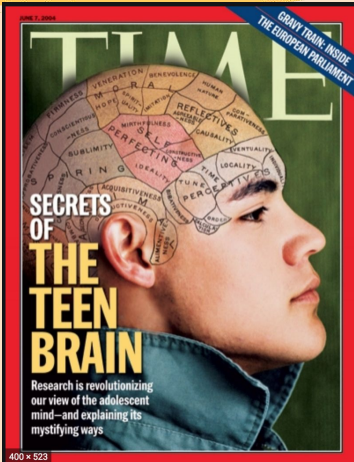
Magazine Cover

Today you will be creating a personal magazine cover to showcase who you are and what is important to you!

{Use your mirror writing to inspire you!}

Your magazine must include:

- A creative title that represents you
- At least 5 adjectives or headlines describing who you are or what is important to you
- A self portrait. This can be artwork or a photo. You can also include multiple pictures on the cover of the magazine.
- An “Exclusive” story title that shares a quality about you that the mirror does not show.



04

The PLAN-DEMIC

Where do we go
from here?





That was then, this is now

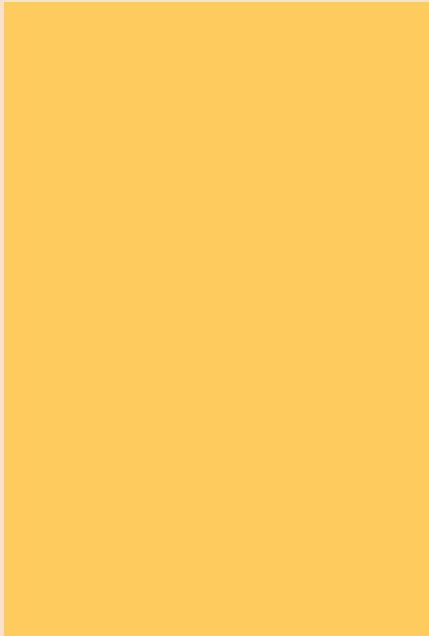
In 1918, there was a major pandemic that happened in our world. We can look back in history for some advice on how people made it through a difficult time.



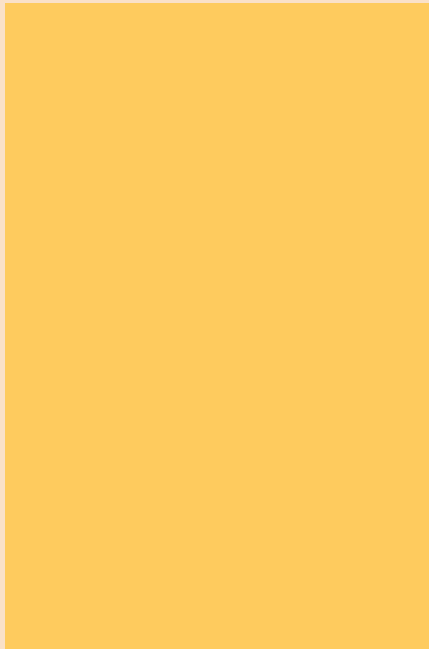
Watch the video and look for similarities and differences between the Spanish Flu and COVID-19. Put your notes in the chart on the next slide.

Spanish Flu vs COVID-19

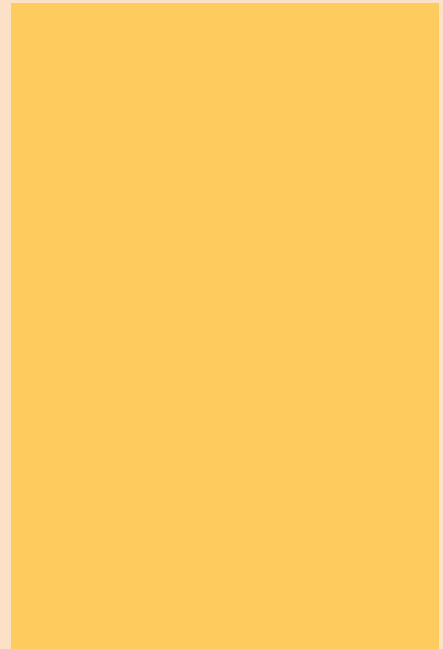
Spanish Flu



Similarities



COVID-19





Kids Write About Coronavirus

Write a letter from a person in 1918 who is experiencing the Spanish Flu in his or her community to someone in 2020 who is experiencing COVID-19. Be sure to include details about what was going on then and how you felt. Give the 2020 person some advice on how to cope.

Dear 2020 Friend,

Masks

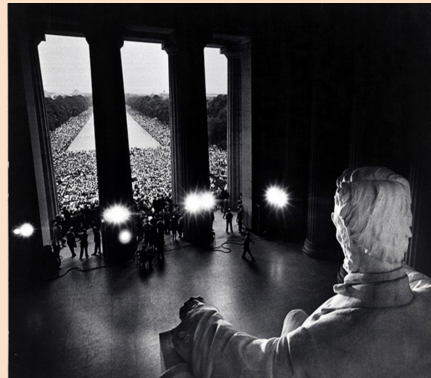
In this time of quarantine, we have been seeing people wearing masks to protect themselves and others. However, in our history and in our present time, we have seen people's rights and voices being masked so they cannot be heard or acknowledged.



That was then, this is now

Recently our country witnessed some terribly disturbing acts of violence against our black and brown citizens. However, as in the past, people want to make sure their voices are unmasked and our civil rights secured through protests and marches.

Civil Rights in the 1950s and 1960s



Looking at the photos of past protest marches, take some notes of what you notice and what you wonder.

I notice:

I wonder:

Black Lives Matter 2020



Looking at the photos of recent marches, take some notes of what you notice and what you wonder.

I notice:

I wonder:



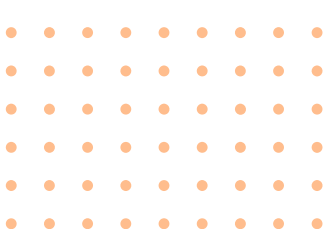
Watch this video and listen to the song. How have things changed? How have things stayed the same? What changes would you like to see in the world?



Kids write about Civil Rights

Using your notes, write a letter to someone from the past telling them about things that have changed since they were protesting and things that have stayed the same.

Dear 1960's Friend,



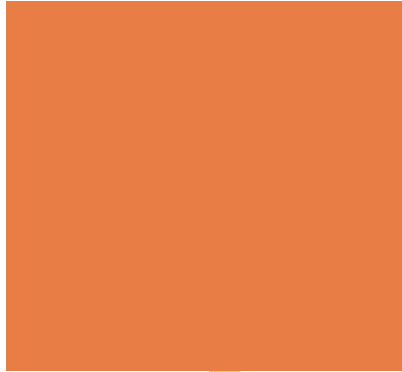
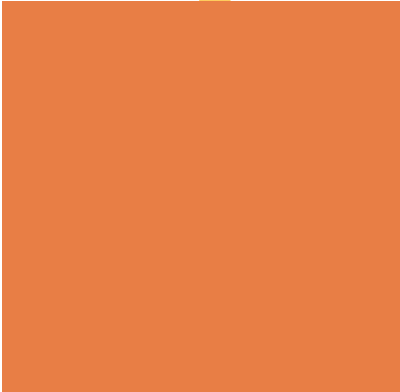
What steps will you take to stay strong and hopeful?

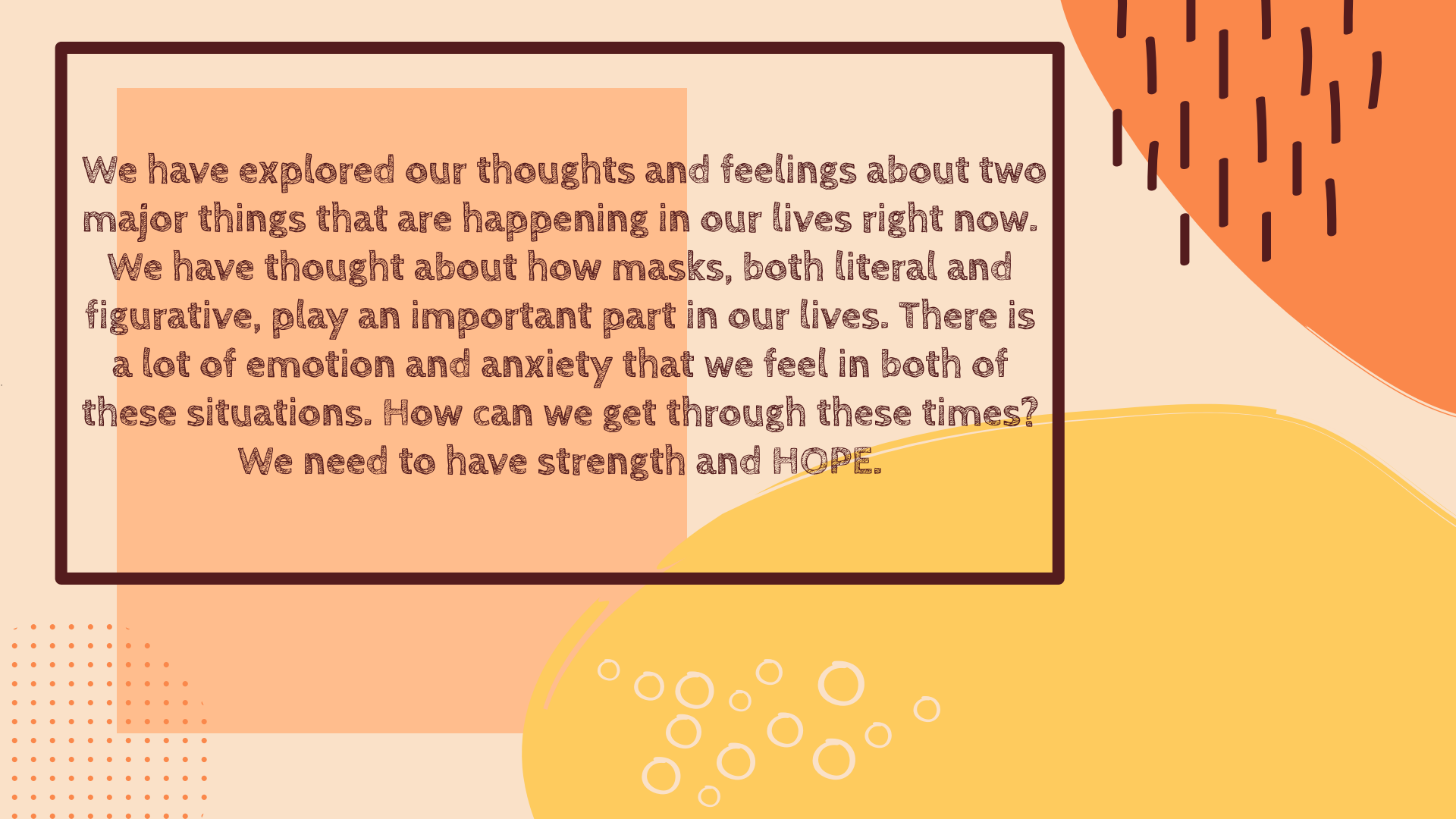
2. What are some of the ways masks have become important for us? What kind of masks do we wear?

1. List some things you know or have heard about the coronavirus.

3. Describe how you feel in your skin? Why?

4. What have you learned about the history of pandemics and civil rights?





We have explored our thoughts and feelings about two major things that are happening in our lives right now.

We have thought about how masks, both literal and figurative, play an important part in our lives. There is a lot of emotion and anxiety that we feel in both of these situations. How can we get through these times?

We need to have strength and HOPE.



Final Writing Piece

Using your notes from this unit and the graphic organizer, write a poem about either the pandemic we are experiencing or the civil rights movement that we are witnessing or BOTH.

A large, empty rectangular area defined by a dashed black border, intended for writing the final piece.

Additional Coronavirus Resources

[How to Talk to Your Child](#)

[How to Explain the Coronavirus to Kids and Answer Their Questions](#)

[Talking with Children About Coronavirus Disease](#)

[Coronavirus Questions](#)

Additional Resources

YELLOW FEVER

In our own city of Philadelphia, in colonial times, there was a terrible outbreak of yellow fever. A novel called *Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson recounts the tale of a young woman's survival of a city consumed with disease. This book could be a read aloud or students could be assigned to read on their own. Discussion of how people in the past survived this epidemic and comparison to how we are trying to survive the coronavirus could be interesting. Also, because it takes place in Philadelphia, there are more resources available here in the city. There are even tours for school groups that show places mentioned in the book.

Additional Resources (Racial Justice)

As we plan to go back to school, again either in person or remotely, we will want to have a vehicle for discussing the issues that are so important in our lives and our students lives right now. These books can be done as read alouds or assigned to students to read. Discussion of the topics can help students to learn and process what is going on in our world.

1. *Ghost Boys* by: Jewell Parker Rhodes

In this novel, a young African American boy is shot to death by a white police officer. The book is told from the point of view of the boy as a ghost and shows the reader different sides of the story. It also includes historical context about other young people who have been victims of violence.

2. Books by Sharon Flake

The Skin I'm In, *Money Hungry*, and *Begging for Change*

Sharon Flake has characters in her books who are diverse and speak openly and honestly about race. Students can easily relate to the characters and begin talking about the issues of race and equality.

3. *The Hate U Give* by: Angie Thomas

This is a novel for older students. The main character witnesses her friend killed by a police officer. The book takes us on the journey through the aftermath of this tragic event and its impact on individuals and the communities involved. There are many discussion points for students while working through the issues in the book.

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