

*LESSON PLAN: Big Paper*

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**MATERIALS**

- Chart paper (we use chart-paper-sized post-it notes)
- Pens and markers in multiple colors
- Sticky notes in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors
- Printouts of book excerpts or extra-textual sources, relevant images, etc.
- Tape

**BEFORE**

- Choose 6-10 items for students to respond to. These may include: significant passages from a shared text; historical documents, testimonies, or contemporaneous news items that relate to an issue in a book; literary critical resources, interview excerpts with an author, or news items that connect to the book.
- Print and tape these to chart paper. Print and tape them to the center of chart paper.

**DURING**

- Place participants in groups. We prefer groups of 5 or so: enough students that they can respond to each other in writing, but not so many that they struggle to read or write on a shared page.
- Remind everyone of the importance of silence: We encourage everyone to communicate only through writing. Let students know that there will be time to talk together after the activity.
- Hand out big paper, along with markers and pens (we prefer to use many different colors), and give each group time to write responses to the quote/image/excerpt on their page.
- Circulate and quietly respond to questions or offer encouragement.
- When pages start to fill up or people seem to feel like they have less to say, switch pages. Do this until every group has a chance to respond to each big paper sheet.
- Post the pages around the room. We use giant-sized post-its, which stick and can be moved easily, but chart paper and tape works just as well. Give each group stacks of sticky notes—we recommend many sizes and colors—and invite everyone to walk around the

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room and post responses to pages. We find that it is valuable to participate in this process as well. It gives us a chance to experience the range of students' perspectives and offer our own comments and questions alongside theirs.

### *AFTER*

#### Debrief the activity

- This can look like large group debriefing, but also small groups would work well
- What takeaways do students have after the activity?
- What did they find helpful, frustrating, insightful?
- What did they notice about their own responses as well as their classmates' responses?
- What stood out for them?

### RESOURCES

[Facing History and Ourselves](#)