NARRATIVE AREA OF OPPORTUNITY: BLACK HISTORY IN YOUR FACE!

A framing that offers an unapologetic centering of Black visions and visionaries of Black radical thought that stretch beyond the confines of our current sanitized history.

Best used against:
- Racial Progress Narrative
- Reverse Racism Narrative
- Too Complicated/Too Long Ago Narrative

Articulate:
- What are some of the most common stories we tell about Black history in the United States today? Why do you think these stories are the most popular?
- What era of Black history would you like to see more of within popular culture? Why?
- Name three Black people you want to see more stories of throughout society. Why did you choose these people?
- What stories exist that bring this frame to life? What data exists?
- Where are there gaps in public perception and understanding about Black history?

Align:
- What role does storytelling about Black history currently play in your advocacy?
Are there specific stories or people that are prominent in your advocacy? If so, why do you focus on these people?

How does Black history intersect with other marginalized communities’ histories in the United States?

Amplify

How can you effectively utilize the “Black History in Your Face!” frame in response to challenges to the teaching of critical race theory and Black history in classrooms? What audiences might resonate most with this frame and why?

Where does this frame already show up within society? Where are there opportunities for this frame to grow in parts of society, and why?

Activity

Read this transcript from a 1936 interview with Georgia Telfair, who was born into slavery and interviewed as part of the Federal Writers Project.

Based on what you know from the interview, who was Georgia Telfair? Why is her life important?

What imagery is apparent in this interview? If you were to retell her story through the lens of one image, which would it be, and why?

Where does love exist in this story? If you were to tell Georgia’s story today, how would you center love in your storytelling?

Reflect on the opening quote of the interview—“Yes chile, I’ll be glad to tell you de story of my life, I can’t tell you much bout slav’ry cause I wuz jus six months old when freedom come, but I has heard quite a lot, and I will tell you all I kin member bout everythin.”

What feelings arise when reading this quote?

Reflect on what you were told about your earliest years—what are some of the earliest stories you were told about your childhood? How do you carry and retell them today?

What creative ways can the stories captured in the Slave Narrative Project be amplified today?