



GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM

GRADES 11-12

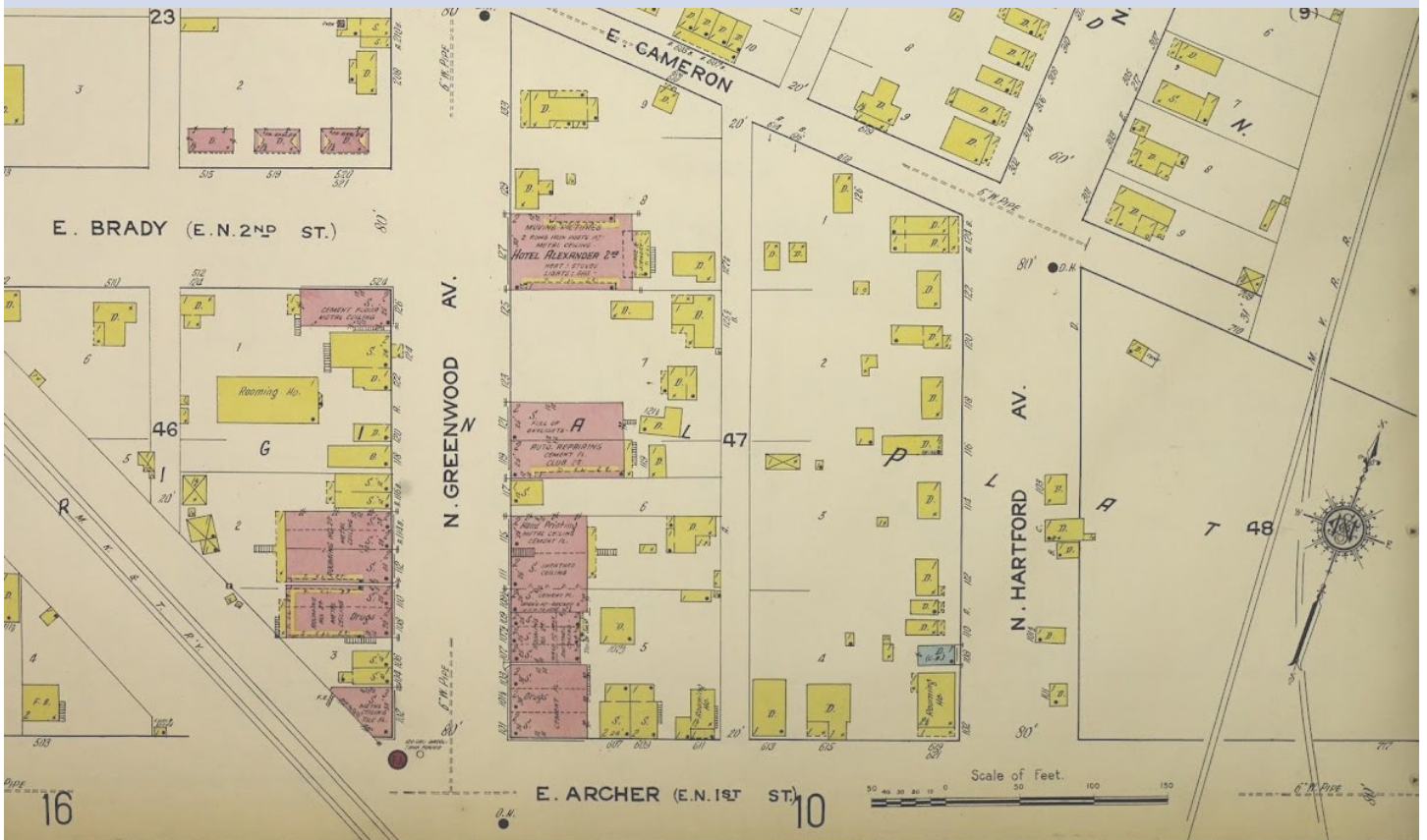


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements..... iii

Trauma-Informed Companion Guide..... v

Intro to Archaeology..... xiii

A Dream Deferred..... 1

 Stories of Survival..... 3

 Blackout Black Wall Street..... 15

 History through Photography..... 28

 Scientific Investigation..... 40

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This curriculum was created as part of a research and education project entitled Mapping Historical Trauma in Tulsa (MHTT), co-directed by Alicia Odewale and Parker VanValkenburgh. Funding for curricular development was sponsored by an Azimuth grant from the National Geographic Society, reference number NGS-94600R-22 "Archaeology of Greenwood: Bearing Witness to a Century of Resilience" as well as a supplementary award from endowment funds within National Geographic Education reserved for projects that support educators and students in Oklahoma.

Special thanks to the curriculum writers at [Archaeology in the Community](#)—Sydney Pickens, Dr. Alexandra Jones, and Dr. Beth Pruitt—and to MHTT Team Members who contributed directly to the curriculum: Dr. Nkem Ike, Tiffany Bruner, Reagan Ballard, Billie Burden, Dr. Jasmine Carter, Kristin Coon, Oscar Diaz-Elizalde, Gary Ervin, Heidi Hampton, Victoria Harris, Johnny Hung Irons-LaGrone, Orion Long, Christina Miles, Sean Shumaker, Amber Vinson, D. Louise Walker, and Patty Williams.

Thank you to the survivors and descendants in Historic Greenwood who lent their pre-recorded voices and likeness to this project and to interviewees who shared their stories with us on film for the next generation of students to learn this history in a new way—Dr. Tiffany Crutcher, Peggy Hutcherson Latimer, Alicia Latimer, Nash McQuarters, Robert McQuarters, Linda Oulds, Pamela Rosa Scott Vickers, Kristi Williams and, Dr. La Verne Ford Wimberly. We also want to acknowledge and thank our family members who made space for our dreams as young archaeologists from Tulsa and led us to this moment as well as our university sponsors—Brown University (VanValkenburgh) and the University of Houston (Odewale) for their ongoing support of our work in the Historic Greenwood District.

Special thanks to Black History Saturdays (BHS) founder, Kristi Williams, for allowing us to pilot the curriculum with BHS students, ensuring that the first people to use this curriculum would be located in Greenwood.

Thank you to the National Geographic Society grants department and program officer, Dr. Debora Trein, for helping us every step of the way to see this project to the end. Thank you to the NGS Education Team, Edulab, Explorer Classroom, and the National Geographic Oklahoma Advisory Council. And a special thank you to Carley Lovorn and Fay Gore for their unwavering support for this project in all of its many phases along with our growing MHTT student alumni network.

Thank you to the Convoy Web development team for their commitment to seeing this curriculum project come to life on our new webpage.

Thank you to Drs. Amanda Reigneir and Scott Hammerstedt of the Oklahoma Archaeological Survey and Dr. Cheter Walker of Archaeo-Geophysical Associates for providing geophysical research support and remote sensing techniques that laid the foundation for new archaeological data to enter the classroom for the first time and be

infused into the history of Greenwood for the first time.

Thank you to the Tulsa Historical Society and Museum, and especially archivist and curator, Luke Williams, for granting us permission to use archival imagery from the THSM collection throughout the curriculum.

Thank you to Titus Jackson of Cinemuze and JW Photography for providing professional images and videography for use within the curriculum lesson plans.

Thank you to educators, descendants, students, parents, and anyone else brave enough to explore a new side of Greenwood's history.



TRAUMA-INFORMED COMPANION GUIDE

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



INTRODUCTION

The following curriculum was designed for junior and senior high school students for use in American social studies and history classrooms. The lessons included in this work contain primary documents and historical references to trauma, violence, racism, racialized harm, sexual assault, and some harsh language that may not be suitable for students under the age of 16. This trauma-informed companion guide provides a layer of comfort to ensure that all students and educators using this curriculum have some awareness of trauma-informed learning standards before introducing this topic or using this curriculum with their students.

Drawing from the latest works of trauma and justice-informed scholars in **social education** (Brown 2021; Carello and Butler 2014; Chikkatur 2013; Dubois 2014; Frederick and Shockley 2023; Gibbs 2020; Love 2019; McAdoo 2023), **culturally responsive teaching** (Muhammad 2023), **law and social justice** (Dumas 2018; Jones 2020); **psychology** (Kinouani 2022; Lewis-Giggetts 2022), **children's literature** (Patterson and Shuttleworth 2020), **spirituality and healing** (Davidson 2021; Lewis-Giggetts 2022), **history** (Sheppard 2010), **Black studies** (hooks 1994), **and Black liberatory praxis** (Wilson and Jackson 2023), this curriculum is structured around nine different lesson plans that are each designed to empower students and educators to move through even the darkest moments in Black history with a focus on hope, healing, and connection to reduce harm. All of the archival texts, photographs, archaeological evidence, and spoken histories included in this body of work were chosen with care to allow everyone who uses this curriculum to experience the history of Greenwood and Oklahoma's All-Black Towns as a story of survival, hope, love and community resilience.

In each lesson, you will find an entry point historical lesson and background context, a list of keywords with definitions, hands-on activities that support experiential learning, imagination, and student empowerment, opportunities to interact with real primary documents pulled from the archives, inspiring stories and interviews curated by Black archaeologists and living descendants, videos and imagery that allow for greater connection with visual learners, creative outlets for guided discussion and emotional expression through the arts, and the estimated time to complete each lesson.

GUIDANCE

Please read the following 8 tips before engaging with this curriculum:

1. Importance of Context

It is strongly encouraged that all students **read the historical background of each lesson before engaging with any associated imagery, written text, archival records or oral histories** that may be included in each lesson. It is essential to provide context and proper historical framing for all curriculum content to avoid the confusion, disorientation, and shock that can result when archival images of destruction, violence, or any form of injustice are removed from their original time, place, historical context, or connection to lived human experience and then shared with students.

2. Beware of Violence in the Archives

The majority of images, newspapers, and legal documents collected in Greenwood's scattered archives depict Greenwood's history as one characterized by gun violence, lynching-related deaths, and structures engulfed in smoke and flames. We have curated this curriculum to **avoid showing images of death, human beings laying in the street, or any structures on fire**. The only images of destruction are only shown within the context of discussing how these structures were originally built and then rebuilt in the aftermath to maintain focus on healing and reducing-harm.

3. Protect Children and Survivors

Please keep in mind the **goal of protecting children in the present day while you work to uncover stories of children in the past**. We acknowledge that most of the survivors of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre that recorded their testimonies decades later for our students to hear were sharing their experiences living through this history as children. They encountered violence, death, loss of their homes and family businesses, and crippling fear alongside the adults in their lives. As children, their experiences went overlooked as many were asked to keep quiet about the ordeal.

We acknowledge that many children, past and present, have survived immense trauma before they even arrive in school and are then exposed to potentially more harmful trauma-centered instruction. Many historical texts related to Greenwood and the Tulsa Race Massacre also include references to sexual violence, calling into question the believability of survivors and the reverberating impacts that such violence can wreak on one's personhood and within entire communities. Our commitment is to reduce harm but to also acknowledge that students and educators are coming into the classroom with varying levels of pre-existing trauma. Therefore, we have chosen not to include archival newspapers, writings, or images that reference possible sexual assault in this curriculum to avoid asking learners and educators to wade through accounts of sexual violence that could pose greater harm to those who have already survived assault themselves. Throughout this curriculum, we ask that you take into consideration the many children and teenagers that have already been exposed to adversities and constantly carry their own hidden trauma in their "invisible backpacks."

4. Leading with Descendants and Multiple Ways of Knowing

This curriculum **draws on multiple ways of knowing about the past to share the living history of Greenwood** through oral histories produced by survivors and descendants themselves; Black-owned newspapers that call attention to both patterns of anti-Blackness as well as the power of Black collective organizing in the past; photographs showing the continuity of Greenwood as it was constructed, attacked, rebuilt, and challenged again; historic and modern day maps and aerial imagery showing how the footprint of this historic district has continued to shrink through time; archaeology and place-based stories of what was found underground as a witness to history; genealogical studies and public histories that have brought lost families and neighborhoods back to life; the practice of storytelling passed down through generations; as well as the practice of expression and lifting spirits through art, poetry, quilting, and other creative outlets as a tool for survival.

The inclusion of all these different ways of knowing about the world provides learners and educators with an array of tools to bear witness to and more fully understand the past beyond one textbook or one historical reference or a single timeline of events. This is critical for students and educators to have multiple entry points to learning this material to meet the needs of multiple learning styles but also to understand that the **history of Greenwood is more than a single-story narrative and can never be understood from a single person's perspective.** With this curriculum model, students learn from descendants and survivors first and learn how to value other ways of knowing before they are introduced to secondary texts from academic scholars. And as such, they learn to understand this as a living history that is unfinished, unresolved, and still unfolding today instead of a static history long past that has no connection to their lives today.

5. Focus on Hope and Restoration

This curriculum is designed with a focus on healing, restoration, and Black community resilience. **It is strongly encouraged for educators to use this collection with balance in mind, avoiding spending too much time on trauma-centered instruction but maintaining a balance of positivity and a throughline of hope throughout the entire curriculum.** While we acknowledge that time to incorporate new lessons in the classroom is always hard to find, **we ask that you avoid starting the curriculum in the middle or only using part of the lessons that would leave students with an unresolved narrative of trauma.**

It is intended for students to begin their journey in the “Living the Dream” unit, sharing stories of Black migration, Black freedom, town building, and the rise of Black prosperity in Oklahoma. Then students move through the “A Dream Deferred” unit that asks them to engage with more challenging concepts of racial violence but with attention paid to survival throughout each lesson. They end with the “Restoring the Dream” unit to discover how they can learn to think like archaeologists and follow the clues to dive deeper into Greenwood’s history to reclaim and uncover what was once hidden underground. If for the sake of time you are unable to use this curriculum in its

entirety, **we strongly encourage you not to use the “A Dream Deferred” unit alone** unless you have extensive experience guiding yourself and your students safely through trauma-inducing content and have your own plan to help them decompress and reflect after the lesson.

6. Importance of Imagination and Multivocal Storytelling

As students move through each lesson and each unit, it is essential that they be given opportunities to exercise their imagination and safe spaces to dream. Each of the three units in this curriculum are named to centralize the dreams of men, women, and children in Greenwood. Activities and thought exercises that ask students to design their own town, write their own advertisements to bring in new families, and even re-write history through blackout poems, are all tools to increase imagination, that also **work to empower students who do not have to accept history as it was written for them but can learn to re-imagine it, reframe it, and build these stories differently in their minds.** This imaginative visualization process is crucial for students moving through trauma-inducing histories to read through these lessons as learners who can recognize their own power in the story and become storytellers themselves, not helpless observers to an already completed narrative that they can do nothing about.

Students are more successful and engaged when they are allowed to use innovative thinking to make sense of the world around them. Building in opportunities for emotional expression, artistic creation, imagination, storytelling, and innovative thinking can help students and educators stay calm and regulated, reduce stress, avoid burnout, get more enjoyment from their lessons, develop new tools to cope with trauma, and enhance positive emotions overall. When students see themselves as storytellers, producers of knowledge, and contributors to history in the making, they are better able to visualize themselves as successful and to visualize a positive future for the living community of Greenwood as well.

7. Shifting from Trauma to Healing-Centered Pedagogy to Avoid Secondary Trauma

Our goal is to **empower educators and students to carry forward these difficult histories without being haunted by the past and experiencing secondary trauma in the process.** Secondary trauma is often experienced by descendants, students, and researchers who read or have been told stories about traumatic events from people in the past and begin to adopt the same emotions, mentality, and stress of those who survived the event themselves. To disrupt this secondary trauma as well as historical or generational trauma that gets passed down through generations, we focus on healing, learning new ways of being, increasing one's sense of self and disrupting cycles of damaging thinking as part of a healing-centered pedagogy already built into this curriculum. While there are lessons that address more difficult histories, they are intentionally placed in the center of the curriculum so that students are not asked to either start or finish their lesson in a space of trauma. Rather, students are introduced to positive stories at the beginning and ending of every unit that centralize growth,

healing, and the importance of building Black spaces of safety and love as a tool for survival. We strongly recommend that you avoid starting and ending with topics rooted in trauma as you move through each lesson but make use of the built-in lessons that centralize healing-centered pedagogy. While we cannot fully remove the trauma-inducing history from these lessons, you have the power to control how and when it is introduced to students and for how long students need to be in that head space as well as how you bring them out of a potential trauma storm. By design, the “A Dream Deferred” unit is placed in the center of the curriculum, contains the shortest lessons, and has the most opportunities for hands-on activities that centralize healing and restoration as well as creative outlets of emotional expression.

8. Building Communities of Care in the Classroom

To build what bell hooks and other culturally-relevant teaching scholars describe as a “community of care,” educators must work alongside their students to build spaces of safety where trauma-informed, culturally-relevant, and developmentally-appropriate instruction is offered within a curated space designed to support increased connection, belonging, understanding, and care for everyone in the room. **It is essential for educators to build a community of care with students before engaging with this curriculum**, to ensure that even when students encounter something new or different, or something that challenges their previously held beliefs about the past, they approach the subject with a desire to connect and understand rather than with criticism, guilt, anger, or fear. And as a result, the class is primed to engage with and celebrate portrayals of Black American culture in the past and engage more intentionally with one another, seeing connection and belonging as an act of self-love.

Allowing students to feel a sense of safety and belonging before they are asked to dive into difficult histories is critical for students to become more than consumers of historical knowledge but to collectively feel empowered to become producers of new knowledge. This relieves the burden on educators to be authoritative experts in the room, who now take on the role of guides or facilitators that support student-led explorations into the past. In this way, students and educators join a commitment to sharing what they have learned from this curriculum and decide for themselves what parts they will carry with them and what parts they will leave behind. In the process of building a community of care, students gain a deeper knowledge of history and about themselves as well, reflecting on what language, methods of instruction, and ways of knowing they connect with most, what helps them learn best, and what should be preserved for future generations to explore.

REFERENCES

Agbe-Davies, Anna. “Race Women’ in the ‘White City’: Race, Space, Gender, and Chicago's Red Summer of 1919.” *Springer Link*, 2024, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41636-024-00511-w>.

Brown, Keffrelyn D. “The Limits of Justice-Informed Research and Teaching in the

Presence of Anti-Blackness and Black Suffering: Surplus of Transformation or (Un)Just Traumatic Returns?" *Qualitative Inquiry*, vol. 27, no. 10, 2021, pp. 1169-1181, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004211026903>.

Carello, Janice, and Lisa D. Butler. "Potentially Perilous Pedagogies: Teaching Trauma Is Not the Same as Trauma-Informed Teaching." *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2014, pp. 153-168.

Chikkatur, Anita. "Teaching and Learning African American History in a Multiracial Classroom." *Theory & Research in Social Education*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2013, pp. 514-534.

Cheruiyot, Karrah. "Facing History: A Systematic Literature Review of the Intersection of Trauma-Informed Education, Critical Race Theory, and Ubuntu in K-12 History Classrooms." *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global*, 2024, <https://doi.org/3044406386>.

Davidson, Jennifer. "Beyond Trigger Warnings: Toward a Trauma-Informed Andragogy for the Graduate Theological Classroom." *Teaching Theology & Religion*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2021, pp. 4-16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/teth.12574>.

Dubois, Page. "Teaching the Uncomfortable Subject of Slavery." *From Abortion to Pederasty: Addressing Difficult Topics in the Classics Classroom*, 2014, pp. 187-198.

Dumas, Michael J. "Beginning and Ending with Black Suffering: A Meditation on and Against Racial Justice in Education." *Toward What Justice?*, edited by David J. Flinders and Stephen J. Thornton, Routledge, 2018, pp. 29-45.

Epstein, Terrie, and Carla L. Peck. *Teaching and Learning Difficult Histories in International Contexts*. Taylor & Francis, 2017.

Frederick, Rona, and Kmt Shockley, editors. *A Soul-Centered Approach to Educating Teachers: A Black Education Network (ABEN)*. Myers Education Press, 2023.

Gibbs, Brian, and Kristin Papoi. "Threading the Needle: On Balancing Trauma and Critical Teaching." *Occasional Paper Series*, vol. 2020, no. 43, 2020, p. 10.

Hanford, Connesia, and Ariel Marrero. *Racial Trauma in the School System: Naming the Pain*. Routledge, 2022.

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge, 1994.

"How to Talk to Your Child About Uncomfortable History." *The Little Known Heroes*, <https://thelittleknownheroes.com/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-uncomfortable-history/>.

"Jim Crow and Segregation." *Library of Congress*, <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/jim-crow-segregation/>.

Jones, Stephanie P. "Ending Curriculum Violence." *Teaching Tolerance*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2020, pp. 47-50.

Kinouani, Guilaine. *Living While Black: Using Joy, Beauty, and Connection to Heal Racial Trauma*. Beacon Press, 2022.

Lewis-Giggetts, Tracey Michael. *Black Joy: Stories of Resistance, Resilience, and Restoration*. Gallery Books, 2022.

Liasidou, Anastasia. "Decolonizing Inclusive Education Through Trauma-Informed Theories." *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2022, pp. 277-288.

Love, Bettina. *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*. Beacon Press, 2019.

McAdoo, G., et al. "Racially Just, Trauma-Informed Care for Black Students." *Urban Education*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420859231175668>.

McCarthy, Cameron, and Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz. "Teaching Difficult History: Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* and the Challenge of Critical Pedagogy in the Contemporary Classroom." *Power and Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2010, pp. 75-84.

Methot, Suzanne. "A Trauma-Informed Approach to Teaching the Colonization of the Americas." *Edutopia*, 2024, <https://www.edutopia.org/article/trauma-informed-approach-teaching-colonization-americas/>.

Muhammad, Ghoddy. *Unearthing Joy: A Guide to Culturally and Historically Responsive Teaching and Learning*. Scholastic Inc., 2023.

Patterson, Timothy J., and Jay M. Shuttlesworth. "Teaching Hard History Through Children's Literature About Enslavement." *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, vol. 32, no. 3, 2020, pp. 14-19.

Petrone, Robert, and Christine Rogers Stanton. "From Producing to Reducing Trauma: A Call for 'Trauma-Informed' Research(ers) to Interrogate How Schools Harm Students." *Educational Researcher*, vol. 50, no. 8, 2021, pp. 537-545.

Sheppard, Maia G. "Creating a Caring Classroom in Which to Teach Difficult Histories." *The History Teacher*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2010, pp. 411-426.

Stoddard, Jeremy. "Difficult Knowledge and History Education." *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, vol. 30, no. 3, 2022, pp. 383-400.

Swallow, Peter. "Teaching Difficult Stories: Trauma-Informed Teaching in the Classics Classroom." *Journal of Classics Teaching*, vol. 24, no. 48, 2023, pp. 162-164.

"Teaching Hard History: Grades K-5 Introduction." *Learning for Justice*, <https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery/k-5-framework/introduction>.

"Teaching Hard History" Podcast. *Learning for Justice*, <https://www.learningforjustice.org/podcasts/teaching-hard-history>.

"Teaching Materials on Nazism and Jim Crow: Lesson Plans and Other Resources." *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, <https://www.ushmm.org/teach/teaching-materials/nazism-and-jim-crow>.

"The Historical is Personal: Learning and Teaching Traumatic Histories." *ActiveHistory*, 19 Jan. 2017, <https://activehistory.ca/blog/2017/01/19/the-historical-is-personal-learning-and-teaching-traumatic-histories/>.

Walsh, Ben, David Hicks, and Stephanie van Hover. "Difficult History Means Difficult Questions: Using Film to Reveal the Perspective of 'the Other' in Difficult History Topics." *Teaching Difficult History Through Film*, edited by Ben Walsh, Routledge, 2017, pp. 17-36.

Wilson, Asif, and Iesha Jackson. "Doing The Work to Do the Work: Black Teacher Educators Learning to Heal and Healing to Teach." *Equity & Excellence in Education*, vol. 56, no. 4, 2023, pp. 648-660.

INTRO TO ARCHAEOLOGY

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



In 2019, two archaeologists named Drs. Alicia Odewale and Parker VanValkenburgh began their research in Tulsa, Oklahoma's Greenwood community. Their goal was to uncover the history of Black Wall Street and ensure that it is not forgotten. They have been collaborating with members of the community to assist them in their research. In this unit, you will have the opportunity to step into the shoes of an archaeologist, mirroring the work they've been doing in Greenwood.

WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

Archaeology is a way to learn about the history and culture of people in the past. It involves studying **material culture**—the objects, resources, and places that were left behind by those people. Archaeologists go to **archaeological sites** to find evidence of what happened in the past. These sites are made up of artifacts and features. **Artifacts** are things that humans made or used, like pottery, tools, weapons, and jewelry. **Features** are structures or areas that can't be moved without changing them, like foundations of buildings, wells, fireplaces, and walls. Both artifacts and features help archaeologists figure out how people used the site they lived on.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROCESS

The **archaeological process** is not just about digging. In Greenwood, the archaeologists started by working with the local community. They **conducted research** to find places to explore, looking at old records and listening to oral histories passed down through generations. Oral histories are spoken stories and memories that are the oldest type of historical record, even older than written words. The archaeologists also searched through libraries, museums, and other places for primary sources, such as old newspapers, documents, maps, and pictures from the time. They looked at secondary sources too, which are accounts of events retold in books and articles. The archaeologists' records about the artifacts and features they found become their own kind of primary source.

Archaeologists also study how the land and the people who lived there are connected. They need permission from the government and landowners to work on the land. They conduct **archaeological surveys** to find new places to study. They collect information about where they found evidence from the past and make maps of their findings. There are different methods for conducting surveys, including archaeologists walking the land to record the presence of artifacts and features on the ground. Other methods use instruments like GPS (Global Positioning Systems) or LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) to map the land's elevation to identify structures. Technologies such as GPR

(Ground-Penetrating Radar) and magnetic gradiometry help to analyze the soil and locate buried features, called **anomalies**. Each method provides specialized data about an area, indicating the potential presence of archaeological discoveries beneath the surface. When combined with other research, areas that show underground anomalies or concentrations of surface artifacts may be promising sites for **excavation**, or digging.

If archaeologists and their community partners decide that excavation is needed, they may set up individual **excavation units**. Archaeologists may carefully map out the units, areas they plan to dig, using high resolution GPS and dividing the site into a grid. They understand that it's not just about finding artifacts, but also about understanding where and how they are found. They document any layered changes they see in the dirt, such as color, texture, and smell, a study called **stratigraphy**. By studying the different strata (layers), archaeologists can learn how the site changed over time and determine the age of the artifacts. Just like reading a book and using clues from the story, archaeologists use the **context** around an artifact to understand its origin and purpose. However, excavation is a destructive process that should only be done if necessary or if the site is at risk of destruction. During excavation, archaeologists must be careful not to damage the artifacts or important information. Once an artifact is documented **in situ** (in its original spot), it can be taken out for cleaning and further study.

After the artifacts are excavated, they undergo a process called **conservation**. This step is crucial because buried and underwater artifacts decay over time due to environmental factors. Additionally, when artifacts are exposed to air after being removed, they can become damaged. The artifacts are taken to a lab where they are stabilized, cleaned, and evaluated for more treatment. Each type of artifact goes through a different analysis process, which involves sorting them by material and type, counting them, measuring them, and taking pictures or drawings.

In the final part of the archaeological process, **interpretation and communication**, archaeologists use their findings to piece together what happened at the site and who lived there. They do this by answering their research questions and then sharing their discoveries with other experts and the public. They want everyone to know about history because it is something that belongs to everyone. Through talks, articles, museum exhibits, websites, and interviews, archaeologists communicate their findings to as many people as possible. By doing so, they ensure that the knowledge gained from their work is accessible and shared with the world. Because history belongs to everyone.

Now, let's dig in.

Teachers and students are encouraged to watch the [Greenwood Past, Present, Future documentary video](#) (about 83 minutes) before beginning the lessons in this curriculum. The cardinal image that appears throughout the lessons connects to a story from an interviewee in the documentary with a flock of red birds representing the ancestors.

A DREAM DEFERRED

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, a horrific event in American history, did not occur in isolation. It was fueled by a confluence of factors, including the aftermath of World War I, the widespread racial violence of the "Red Summer" in 1919 and beyond, the rise of an emboldened Ku Klux Klan, and simmering racial tensions in Tulsa itself. Black Americans, who had fought bravely in the war, returned home to a nation that still denied them full citizenship and equality. The Red Summer, marked by a series of violent race riots across the country, further heightened racial anxieties and prompted calls for self-defense within the Black community. In Tulsa, a series of violent incidents eroded trust in law enforcement and fueled fears of mob violence.

The spark that ignited the massacre was an accusation against a young Black man, D. Rowland. Sensationalized news reports in *the Tulsa Tribune* fueled racial tensions, and a mob gathered outside the courthouse, anticipating a lynching. Despite the lack of evidence of D. Rowland's guilt, the city's white community was consumed by anger and prejudice.

In response to the escalating threat of lynching, a group of armed Black men, many of whom were veterans of World War I, marched to the courthouse to protect Rowland. The police chief, however, dismissed their concerns and urged them to return home. As the mob grew, Black Tulsans returned to the courthouse, only to be met with further rejection and hostility. A confrontation ensued, and shots were fired, marking the beginning of the attack.

White rioters, armed with stolen weapons, descended upon the Greenwood District, a thriving Black community known as "Black Wall Street." They set fire to homes and businesses, and the district was engulfed in flames. The massacre lasted for two days, during which Black residents were subjected to brutal violence, looting, and murder. The rioters, including children, were emboldened by a sense of racial superiority and a belief in vigilante justice.

The aftermath of the Tulsa Race Massacre was devastating. The Greenwood District was reduced to ashes, and thousands of Black residents were left homeless. The city's response was one of indifference and even complicity, as Black people were rounded up and confined while white perpetrators were allowed to go free. The massacre left a lasting legacy of trauma and injustice, and its story serves as a stark reminder of the enduring struggle for racial equality in America.

In the following lessons, students will use a variety of primary and secondary sources to explore the documentation of the event. This historical research is one step in the process of an archaeological investigation.

Reminder that the subjects of these lessons are potentially traumatic. We strongly encourage classes to work through the “Living the Dream” unit before this one and follow with the “Restoring the Dream” unit after unless you have your own plan to prepare beforehand and help students decompress and reflect after. Please refer to the Trauma-Informed Companion Guide included at the beginning of this curriculum for more information.

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



Time Suggestion: 45 min.(finishing reading and listening at home as needed)

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The Tulsa Race Massacre was a horrific event that unfolded in the Greenwood district of Tulsa, Oklahoma from May 31 to June 1, 1921. In situations where historical records are incomplete, collective memory becomes an invaluable tool. This lesson will engage students in exploring the attack through the lens of personal experiences. They will listen to and read transcribed oral history interviews from firsthand witnesses of the tragedy. By analyzing these accounts, students will identify key sites of memory and events that hold significant historical and emotional weight. Bringing together individual narratives can shed light on these events and their lasting impacts for the community.

MATERIALS

- *From the Survivors' Mouths* excerpt packet
- [Otis Clark interview](#) (Oklahoma Historical Society)
- [William Danforth Williams interview](#) (Tulsa Historical Society)
- [Wess and Cathryn Young interview](#) (Oklahoma Historical Society)
- Survivors' stories organizer worksheet

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What collective memories about place have been preserved and passed on about the attack on Greenwood in 1921?

C3 FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 9-12

- **D2.His.6.9-12. Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.**
- D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.
- D2.His.8.9-12. Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.
- D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	<p>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.</p> <p>3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>
Craft and Structure	<p>5. Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.</p> <p>6. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.</p>
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	<p>9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</p>

ELA 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	<p>1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p>3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</p>
Craft and Structure	<p>6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.</p>

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	<p>2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.</p>
---	---

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

TEACHER PREP

1. Read and listen to testimonies in preparation
2. Print or provide digital copies of the *From the Survivors' Mouths* excerpts packet (1 per student)
3. Print the survivors' stories organizer worksheet (1 per student)
4. Provide students with links to audio interviews

ICEBREAKER

Ask students how do emotions impact our own experiences and our memories of an event? How can we use recorded memories to help us preserve history? Whose memories do we record?

ACTIVITY

1. Provide students with *From the Survivors' Mouths* excerpts packet.
2. Instruct students to read and annotate each account, highlighting sites and areas for potential archaeological sites. If available, students can use different color highlighters to group their annotations into themes.
3. Instruct students to complete the Survivors' Stories organizer chart for each interview excerpt.
4. Either in class or at home, students will listen to one of the provided audio interviews.
5. Instruct students to continue their Survivors' Stories organizer chart while listening. Students should record locations reported to have historical importance and relevance.

DEBRIEF AND DISCUSS

1. What locations appeared most frequently in these survivor accounts?
2. What were important places of refuge and safety? Why were those places significant?
3. What were major sites of violence and conflict? Why were those places significant?
4. How might the experiences of the Black Tulsans who survived this attack change their relationships with the places they mentioned?
5. How did the Tulsa Race Massacre alter the Greenwood District's landscape?

FROM THE SURVIVORS' MOUTHS



Oral histories are collections of stories, memories, voices, and personal commentaries on events of historical significance that have been shared over time, by word of mouth. Oral history is both the oldest type of historical record, predating the written word, and one of the most modern, preserved with recorded interviews. Oral histories become particularly important when other types of evidence of the past are lost or erased. Written testimonies and recorded interviews from the survivors of the attack on Greenwood in 1921 preserve their memories.

Reporting at the time by the *Tulsa Tribune* is credited and criticized for inciting the mob violence that ransacked the All-Black Greenwood District during the Greenwood Massacre from Tuesday, May 31 to Wednesday, June 1, 1921. Multiple oral history interviews mention a *Tulsa Tribune* article with the headline "To Lynch Negro Tonight" as a primary catalyst for the violence against the Black residents. No known copy of the text of the article exists in the historical record. In the archived, microfilmed copy of the May 31st *Tulsa Tribune* issue, it appears that a front page editorial was removed. In instances like this where the historical record has gaps, recorded memories can help us better understand what people witnessed and experienced at the time.

Read the testimonies below, then choose one audio interview to listen to from the links provided. While reading and listening to the stories of the survivors of the Greenwood Massacre, think about the places and objects they reference. Take note of locations, what they experienced there, and what archaeological materials might be left behind at these sites. These stories include descriptions of violence and terror. It is important to reflect on the emotions the interviewees experienced at the time, the emotions they may have felt in recalling those events for the interview, and the emotions you feel when reading and listening to them.

MARY E. JONES PARISH

"The Frisco tracks and station form a dividing line between the business section of White Tulsa and Black Tulsa. It was here that the first battle was staged. Like mad bulls after a red flag or blood thirsty wolves after a carcass, so did these human wolves called men rave to destroy their fellow citizens. But these brave boys of ours fought gamely and held back the enemy for hours. Owing to the shortage of ammunition they were forced to retreat from Cincinnati, and immediately the advancing force began to pillage and burn that section. About 1 :30 o'clock the firing had somewhat subsided and it was hoped that the crisis had passed over. Someone on the street cried out, "Look, they are burning Cincinnati!" On looking we beheld columns of smoke and fire and by this we knew that the enemy was surging quickly upon Greenwood."

"Looking south out of the window of what then was the Woods Building, we saw car loads of men with rifles unloading up near the granary, which was located on the railroad tracks near First Street. Then the truth dawned upon us that our men were fighting in vain to hold their dear Greenwood..."

After watching the men unload on First Street where we could see them from our windows, we heard such a buzzing noise that on running to the door to get a better view of what was going on, the sights our eyes beheld made our poor hearts stand still for a moment. There was a great shadow in the sky and upon a second look we discerned that this cloud was caused by fast approaching aeroplanes. It then dawned upon us that the enemy had organized in the night and was invading our district the same as the Germans invaded France and Belgium. The firing of guns was renewed in quick succession. People were seen to flee from their burning homes, some with babes in their arms and leading crying and excited children by the hand; others, old and feeble, all fleeing to safety...By this time a machine gun had been installed in the granary and was raining bullets down on our section."

"...so we placed our trust in God, our Heavenly Father, who seeth and knoweth all things, and ran on out Greenwood in the hope of reaching a friend's home who lived over the Standpipe Hill in the Greenwood Addition. As I neared the hill I could see homes on Eastern and Detroit burning, and also discovered that the enemy had located on the hill and that our district was entirely surrounded. We thought that we were leaving the firing behind, but found that our danger was increasing for a machine gun was located on the hillside. As we neared the addition we caught up with other people fleeing in the same direction. We finally reached my friend's home, but to our disappointment we found that she and her family had fled after watching for me all through the night. I then decided to follow the crowd in the hope of reaching safety. On and on we went toward the section line, the crowd growing larger and larger. The question on every lip when a newcomer from town would arrive was, "How far had they burned when you left town?"

Excerpts from "Events of the Tulsa Disaster" in *The Nation Must Wake*.

A. J. NEWMAN

"I was living on Williams Street and was at home on the night of the 31st. I went on the street and met about seven women running for refuge from Archer and Greenwood Streets and that section of town. I watched over them at my house throughout the night. When morning came and the firing started they again ran for safety, leaving my wife, three children—a baby and two elder children—and myself. I continued to watch over my family until about 8 o'clock A.M., when the two elder children, a girl and a boy, fled northward for safety, leaving my wife, baby, and me. My wife not being well, I remained at home amid the shower of bullets from the hill. We opened the house, raised the curtain and shades and stayed in sight as near as possible amid the bullets—we would appear on the porch. To the best of my ability I kept all males from the

house. Then a bunch of Whites came down from the hill. My wife and I ventured out amidst the valley of fire, met them about a block from home and told them that my wife was sick and I did not want to leave her. They had me raise my hands and searched me. I was bareheaded—one did not want me to even get my hat, but my wife threw it to me. The Lieutenant who is leading them, assured me that my wife and baby would be safe and that my home would not be molested. Then I was marched to the top of the brick yard hill and there I was called all kinds of names by boys from 10 years to men of 60. Then I was loaded on the truck and carried to the corner of Boulder and Brady Streets and here I was taken off the truck and searched again, cursed, and called all kinds of names in the language of "Take your hat off," "Throw up your hands," "Be submissive and obey to the letter." Even boys of 10. I obeyed."

Excerpts from "Events of the Tulsa Disaster" in *The Nation Must Wake*.

J. C. LATIMER, ARCHITECT AND CONTRACTOR

"On Tuesday evening, May 31st. 1921, I was called and told of some mail that was at 500 N. Detroit Ave. When I reached this point I was told of the differences between the two races. Then it was beginning to get warm, which made it dangerous for me to return to my home in the Addition, so I remained on Detroit Ave. all night. I saw people of all descriptions going up and down the street, and most of them were armed. Early in the morning, between 5 and 6 A.M. a "Riot Call" was given; that is, the City whistle gave one long blow and then looking through the windows I could see the Whites, armed with high-powered rifles, coming from the hill and surrounding the Colored district."

"Viewing the rear of the house I could see men and boys swarming around the Colored people's homes, while others looted and burned the homes of my people. Watching with my two companions at how my people were treated, it occurred to me to remain there as long as possible, which I did. After seeing most of the property that was near me burned, I surrendered with my companions, knowing that all [the] windows and doors had been shot out and it fell to our lot to come out."

Excerpts from "Events of the Tulsa Disaster" in *The Nation Must Wake*.

DR. S. P. THOMPSON

Dr. S. P. Thompson, one of the prominent druggists of Tulsa, and who before the fire of last Wednesday morning, owned one of the finest drug stores in the southwest, employing six clerks, tells an awful story of what happened to him. His place was located at 23 Cincinnatti. "I stid up all night," said the doctor." "Smither- man, Rev. Johnson and many others. were calling me every few minutes. I was right up near where the first trouble started and they were calling me to find out if any new disturbance had or was developing. Nothing special happened around my place until about seven o'clock in the morn-ing. in broad daylight, the home guards in uniform came to my place and ordered me out. I asked them what they were going to do but all

the response that I could get was SHUT UP. As they led me out of the front door and made me get in the car, the mob of men who had already been upstairs and pillaged it, came down and broke in the back door of my place, in plain view they broke open my cash register, then leaped for my safe. They had crow bars and such things as seemingly would easily permit them to prize open any thing. Before they took me away from my own door AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE MEN WHO HAD ME IN CHARGE WHO WERE IN UNIFORM, they took over \$400,00 out of my safe, part of which belonged to the American Express Company. The HOME GUARDS STARTED SETTING FIRE AT BOSTON AND GREENWOOD, INCLUDING MY PLACE. They shouldered their rifles and marched in military formation up Boston, going north. Of course, I know that they say they did not use the machine guns on the Negroes but you will find upon investigation that they did sweep that whole valley with a deadly fire from two Browning machine guns. I was told that they got the machine guns from the police department. They had about thirty looters in jail before I left. One of them was a white woman. Why those cowardly murderous thieves carried some of Harry Abbot's furniture all the way over into West Tulsa. I went with him to help recover some of it. A large portion of Harry's stuff was found in the houses across the street on Detroit. Many would refuse to give up what they had taken but most of the folk, when they began to realize that all of the homes were going to be searched, made believe that they had the stuff for safe keeping for the folk whose homes had been burned."

Dr. Thompson went on to tell about the killing of Dr. Jackson. He said that Dr. Jackson was running up out of the cellar of his home with his hands up in the air, two loads of buck shot was poured into his body by a white lad about sixteen years old, He was carted to Convention hall and dumped out without any attention. He bled to death from loss of blood. By far the most sickening and brutal phase of the whole riotous morning developed when the men in the airplanes discovered that there were hundreds of Negroes out in the country, fleeing for their lives. These hell-batchers, according to Dr. Thompson. would swoop down on defenseless black men, women and children and rain a hail of deadly lead into their midst. Dr. R. R. Robertson and his wife, who was one of the best trained nurses in the city had fled to the country. They were pursued by the men in airplanes and in automobiles. They missed being killed by leaping into a creek and laying in the water all day with nothing out but their nose and mouth. This story is vouched for by Dr. Thompson. Dr. D. A. Wayne another prominent physician, was also pursued in the same way. He and wife had to hide in the bushes for many long, long hours.

The Black Dispatch, June 10, 1921, page 8. Courtesy of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

MRS. IRENE SCOFIELD

"No. I don't remember anything," said Mrs. Irene Scofield, who used to reside at 401 East Archer, Tulsa. "Early in the evening when there was first talk of trouble, I and about forty others started out of the town. and walked to a little town about fifteen miles away. Most of them staid down there on the railroad that night, but I began to

worry about my hus-band who had not returned from work before I left, so I started back on the long walk towards home. When I reached Tulsa it was quiet but trou-ble started soon after. I met a girl I knew on the way back and persuad-ed her to return into that awful trou-ble. I heard the people say as we fled that they were dropping things from airplanes. I know that they did come to my house and sprinkle some-thing around and then lighted the fires with torches. When they march-ed us up to the Frisco tracks the wall next to the Katy tracks of the Wil-liams Confectionery was still stand-ing. It seemed as though it was all a dream, it was so horrible. I could not bring myself to believe that I was alive and that white people were act-ing as they were. Men were prodding me in the side with guns and as we stepped up on the Frisco tracks, on our way to Convention hall, I saw two black men lying on the tracks, their intrails were scattered all over the rails and cross ties. White wo-men were clapping their hands. It was a most awful experience that I shall never forget to my dying day."

The Black Dispatch, June 10, 1921, page 8. Courtesy of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

AUDIO INTERVIEWS

Choose one of the following to listen to:

- Otis Clark: Chapters 1-4 (18 minutes)
- William Danforth Williams (21 minutes)
- Wess and Cathryn Young: Chapters 1-7 (36 minutes)

SURVIVORS' STORIES ORGANIZER

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

Survivor	Sites of Memory
Mary E. Jones Parish	
A.J. Newman	
J.C. Latimer	
Dr. S.P. Thompson	
Mrs. Irene Scofield	
Otis Clark	
William Danforth Williams	
Wess and Cathryn Young	

SURVIVORS' STORIES EXAMPLE

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

Survivor	Sites of Memory
Mary E. Jones Parish	Frisco Tracks and Station Cincinnati Ave Woods Building Granary on railroad tracks near First St Standpipe Hill Greenwood Addition Eastern and Detroit Section line
A.J. Newman	Williams Street Archer & Greenwood Streets safety northward the hill brickyard hill Boulder & Brady Street
J.C. Latimer	500 N. Detroit Ave. [Greenwood] Addition City Whistle the hill Detroit Ave.
Dr. S.P. Thompson	23 Cincinnati Ave home guards set fire at Boston and Greenwood Detroit Convention Hall
Mrs. Irene Scofield	401 E Archer Frisco Tracks Katy Tracks Williams Confectionery Convention Hall
Otis Clark	Hartford School (block or so off Archer) Booker T. Washington School Greenwood Ave lived on 802 Archer St. Drexel Building, 319 S M Frisco Train
William Danforth Williams	County Office/Sheriff Building Standpipe Hill Convention Hall / Municipal Theater Pine St Greenwood [Drexel] Building 3rd and Main (downtown) Dreamland Theater Greenwood & Easton Greenwood & Archer Frisco Tracks to Main Street alleys Frankfort Elgin
Wess and Cathryn Young	Greenwood go North on Greenwood Berry's Park, far north, almost to Apache. 3-4 blacks from Apache Oaklawn Cemetery, 11th and Peoria Convention Hall Fairgrounds (15th & Hill), now on 21st Monica's Catholic School Carver School Booker T Washington High School

BLACKOUT BLACK WALL STREET

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



Time Suggestion: 45-90 min.

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The events of the attack on Greenwood received local and nationwide press coverage. Reflections on and reactions to the massacre range from outrage to pride. In the Blackout Black Wall Street activity, students will use blackout poetry to analyze primary accounts of the massacre from opposing perspectives. With this exercise, students will zero in on language to understand the perspectives, racial attitudes, and cultural climate of Tulsa during and immediately following the massacre and examine how perspective shapes the presentation and understanding of historical events.

MATERIALS

- Black permanent markers
- *Blackout Black Wall Street* reading (1 per student)
- Printed copies of newspaper articles (1 per small group)

FOCUS QUESTIONS

How does the perspective of the media shape the presentation and understanding of historical events like the Tulsa Race Massacre?

C3 FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

BLACKOUT BLACK WALL STREET

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 9-12

- **D2.His.6.9-12. Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.**
- D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- D2.His.8.9-12. Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.
- D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT

BLACKOUT BLACK WALL STREET

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	<p>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.</p> <p>3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>
Craft and Structure	<p>5. Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.</p> <p>6. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.</p>
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	<p>9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</p>

ELA 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	<p>1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p>3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</p>
Craft and Structure	<p>6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.</p>

Comprehension and Collaboration

2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

BLACKOUT BLACK WALL STREET

TEACHER PREP

1. Provide markers for each student.
2. Print *Blackout Black Wall Street* readings and articles.

ACTIVITY

1. Read the *Blackout Black Wall Street* reading handout as a class.
2. Group students into 5 groups. Assign each group 2 articles of the same theme per group.
3. Instruct students to individually read their articles then complete the black out poetry activity.
4. Instruct student groups to share their work and discuss their black out choices with their small group members.
5. Small Group Questions:
 - Whose/what perspective does each article take? Whose/what perspectives are missing?
 - What was the author's intent?
 - What racial attitudes are present in each article?
 - Would you consider these to be reliable sources for learning about the events which took place at and around Greenwood? Why or why not?
6. After small groups, have students move around the room to read the blackout poetry articles from the other groups.

DEBRIEF AND DISCUSS

1. What themes and perspectives became apparent with the blackout activity?
2. What would you say of the cultural climate and racial attitudes in Tulsa at the time of the events?
3. What do you make of the perspectives of the media reports?
4. How does perspective shape the presentation and understanding of historical events?
5. What did you learn about yourself from this activity?

VOCABULARY

BLACKOUT BLACK WALL STREET

TERM	DEFINITION
Blackout Poetry	Poetry derived from existing texts by 'blacking out' unwanted words, leaving specific letters, words, and phrases uncovered. What's left enhances or creates new meaning
Annotation	Comments, responses, or explanatory notes readers add to texts to support their reading comprehension
Key Themes	Recurring, core ideas or observations developed throughout that unify a text
Supporting Ideas	Arguments used to support, explain, illustrate, or provide evidence for the central theme expressed in a text
Perspective	Explores how an author views and experiences a particular event and/or the world
Tone	The author's attitude toward a topic, generally expressed through language choice and attention to detail
Imagery	The use of descriptive, vivid, and exact language that appeals to the senses
Figurative Language	Non-literal use of words to add creative meaning or explain a complicated idea. Ex. simile, metaphor, hyperbole, idiom, personification, etc.

BLACKOUT BLACK WALL STREET



The Tulsa Tribune, a local newspaper in Tulsa Oklahoma, played a controversial role in the horrific events of the attack on Greenwood in 1921. The paper's inflammatory reporting is widely considered to have fueled the mob violence that engulfed the Greenwood district, a thriving Black community also known as Black Wall Street.

Two particularly incendiary headlines, "To Lynch Negro Tonight" and "Nab Negro For Attacking Girl in Elevator," served as a rallying cry for the mob, drawing them to the courthouse in anticipation of a lynching. *The Tribune's* role didn't end with inciting the riot; it continued to publish sensationalized accounts of the massacre in the immediate aftermath. This deliberate attempt to control the narrative was further evidenced by the destruction of *the Tulsa Star*, a Black-owned newspaper known for its advocacy of Black progress and self-defense.

Despite the efforts to silence Black voices, the Greenwood Massacre was documented in detail by both local and national newspapers. These accounts provide a chilling window into the racial tensions and violence that gripped the community during this time.

In this activity, you will use **blackout poetry** to analyze primary sources from the Greenwood Massacre. Blackout poetry is a unique form of **annotation** where readers "black out" unwanted words from a text, leaving behind a poem composed of the remaining words. What is left can reveal **key themes** and **perspectives**. This process is similar to archaeology, where researchers excavate a site to uncover hidden artifacts and stories.

As you create your blackout poems, consider the following:

- Perspectives: what perspectives are being presented in the text? Whose voices are being heard? Whose voices are being silenced?
- Racial Attitudes: what racial attitudes are reflected in the text? How do these attitudes contribute to the events of the massacre?
- Cultural Climate: what was the overall cultural climate in Tulsa during and after the massacre? How did this climate contribute to the violence?

By carefully selecting the words you leave uncovered, you can create a powerful and unique poem.

READ the article.

ANNOTATE the article:

BOX key themes and **supporting ideas**.

QUOTE words that communicate the author's **tone** and perspective.

BRACKET imagery or **figurative language** that reveals deeper layers of meaning.
BLACK OUT words you don't need. For an extra challenge, play with the blacked-out space around your chosen words/phrases to create a visual that enhances the meaning of your poem.

READ your poem. Is the message clear? Does your chosen language enhance the intent of the original? Black out any additional words and phrases that you see fit.

SHARE your blackout poem with students across the nation, upload to TikTok and use #TEXTCAVATION.

Girl Attacked By Negro Not At Home Today

Mrs. Sarah Paige, elevator operator at the Drexel building, who was attacked by Dick Rowland, negro, could not be located this morning. She had not reported for work at 10 o'clock and was not at her rooms on North Boston avenue. The story of the attack on Mrs. Paige, however, was corroborated by Mrs. Anna Green, 421 N. Main st., who saw and talked with Mrs. Paige about an hour afterward. Mrs. Green says that Mrs. Paige showed her the bruises on her arm where the negro had grabbed her and also the purse which she broke when she struck her assailant. Mrs. Paige said that when she struck him and screamed for help Rowland released her and ran.

The Tulsa Tribune, June 1, 1921, page 6. Courtesy of newspapers.com.

STORY OF ATTACK ON WOMAN DENIED

Detective Says Negro Boy
Did Nothing More Than
Seize Her Arm

FLEES AFTER SCREAM

Girl Admitted to Police That
One Published Story Was
Not True in Details

Dick Rowland, negro lad held in the county jail for safekeeping upon complaint of Mrs. Sarah Page, an elevator girl in the Drexel building, was spirited away in an automobile by officers at 8 o'clock Wednesday morning, according to a statement made by Sheriff William McCullough last night.

The only assault made by Rowland upon the girl occurred when he grabbed her arm, so James Patton, chief of detectives, says she told him Tuesday afternoon when he questioned her regarding the affair.

"When he grabbed my arm, I screamed and he fled," the girl told Patton. This is substantially the story told the police by the negro himself.

Patton, in a statement to The World Wednesday night, attributed the race riot of Tuesday night to what he termed yellow journalism.

"The police were quietly conducting an investigation of the alleged assault before taking any decided action," Patton said. "We intended in case the affair warranted it to have the negro prosecuted upon a state charge.

"But when an afternoon paper came out with a colored and untrue account, so far as we had been able to ascertain, of the entire affair, we concluded that it would be best for the safety of the negro to place him behind the bars of the county jail. The story incited such a racial spirit upon the part of the whites and under the impression that there would be a lynching the armed blacks invaded the business district. If the facts in the story as told the police had only been printed I do not think there would have been an riot whatever."

The police did not attach sufficient importance to the affair to file the name of the girl which has never been published. County Attorney W. F. Seavers stated Wednesday night that she has not yet filed any information against the negro.

The Morning Tulsa Daily World, June 2, 1921, page 14. Courtesy of newspapers.com.

WHITES ADVANCING INTO 'LITTLE AFRICA;'

With the coming of dawn this morning, following a night of race rioting and death, hundreds of armed white men in motor cars formed a circle of steel about "Little Africa," and a continuous rattle of rifle and revolver fire could be heard.

Sixty or seventy automobiles filled with armed men were in the line drawn about the black belt and there were many reports to the effect that they planned to range through the negro settlement and "clean it out."

At 5:30 the death list was estimated as high as fifteen. Though no whites were known to be killed save two unidentified men listed in The World, reports to police headquarters from members of the white bands who had been at "the front" between the line of armed whites and "Little Africa" said they had counted the bodies of more than a dozen negroes stretched in the streets.

While the bands of armed white men in motor cars were surrounding the negro district six airplanes were circling over the section. Scattered along the Frisco tracks and in streets immediately south were between 500 and 1,000 more armed white men. Talk of driving into "Little Africa" could be heard on all sides.

At 5:45 the white forces were pushing into "Little Africa" from the south, bands of white riflemen being reported at Elgin and Archer. They were reported to be shooting into houses and at all negroes in sight. There was no report of the extent of casualties. The negroes were not returning the fire very spiritedly, it was reported, but negro snipers were shooting from housetops and windows.

Shortly after 2 o'clock this morning, the row of frame buildings on the east side of Boston avenue north of the Frisco tracks was fired, but because there was no wind, the flames burned themselves out and did not spread to the Cincinnati avenue block which sheltered several hundred negroes.

At 3 o'clock the fire had gained sufficient headway to destroy all the buildings except the residence on the north end of the block. When this building was burned, six negroes who had been firing from the house at the whites were driven from cover and five of the six who ran from the house were killed. White men who took up their station at Archer and Boston before 3 o'clock, succeeded in pushing their line almost to Cincinnati avenue in the face of fire from the negroes. The negroes, however, made no dashes from their places of hiding and except for the firing of a few shots at intervals, did not attempt to dislodge whites in the negro section of the city.

Members of the crowd of 500 whites around the Frisco depot about 5 o'clock this morning engaged in a spirited battle with several negroes perched on housetops. However, the aim of the blacks was bad and no whites were injured, but three negroes were killed within a short space of time.

One of the blacks was perched on a two-story brick building on Archer. He raised up to fire but one of the whites with an army rifle beat him to it and the black toppled, apparently dead. The other two blacks were hiding on Archer and were dropped by the white sharpshooters.

Three other black bodies were lying near the depot at daylight this morning. Two bodies had been removed.

Tate Brady, proprietor of the Brady hotel, who was a member of white men on guard duty along North Main street all night, said he counted the bodies of five negroes.

One negro was dragged behind an automobile, with a rope about his neck, through the business district.

Reports that three Frisco switchmen and a fireman, members of a switching crew, had been shot to death by negroes because they refused to haul the blacks out of town, could not be verified.

A report from the Oklahoma hospital at 5:30 said three new wounded white men had been brought there, but that none were seriously injured. The names were not secured.

At 5:45 a negro house at Elgin and Archer was reported burning.

The Tulsa Tribune, June 1, 1921, page 7. Courtesy of newspapers.com.

\$2,500,000 Of Negro Property Is Destroyed

Tulsa, Okla., June 1, 1921 (Special)—Hundreds of black men, women and children are scattered through the bottoms of Verdi Gras River and the Arkansas, naked, barefooted, women with children in their arms and giving birth to children, are scattered everywhere as they hurry farther from their burning homes and the holocaust of bullets of the white assassins who rushed upon their defenseless homes in the wee hours of this morning, spreading fire and bullets everywhere.

Back in the charred, smoking ruins of what was once the finest business district that progressive Negroes had in the United States, two and one-half million dollars worth of homes and property, arson reigns supreme, punctured here and there by the still smoking carcasses of men, women and children.

Nothing remains. The Stratford Hotel, Red Wing Hotel, Dreamland Theatre, Dixie Theatre, Gdrley's Hotel, Tulsa Star, Oklahoma Sun, A. M. E. Church, the new \$485,000 Second Baptist Church, Welcome Grocery Store, Elliott and Hookers Clothing, everything on North Greenwood, together with the whole residential section, a mile square, all lie in ruins.

Fires were started simultaneously in at least 50 places this morning, beginning at Boston and Archer. The whole of the Negro district, including Boston, Eaxter, Easton, Greenwood and Hartford and the North Addition, was laid waste.

The Tulsa Tribune, June 1, 1921, page 7. Courtesy of newspapers.com.

Tulsa Yanks Land Away From Blacks With Fire Ordinance

Tulsa, Okla., June 5. (Special)—The Negro district of Tulsa was confined to a section of land, about a mile square, in the northeastern portion of the city. It, more directly speaking, laid between the forks of the Midland Valley, Frisco and M. K. & T. Railroads. The business and industrial section of Tulsa has in recent years built up to the Negro belt, which when it was first located was an isolated spot in the lowlands. With the coming of the oil boom and the rapid expansion of the business district of Tulsa, it was soon discovered that the only available trackage property left in the city was completely covered by the Negroes in this black belt.

Some time ago the Railroads attempted to purchase a large tract of

land, beginning at Archer and running north and east for depot and terminal purposes. The attempt failed. Individual Negroes had been offered large sums of money to release their holdings along the railway right-a-way, but to no avail. In fact, the inhabitants of this most prosperous black community each year proceeded to get a firmer hold upon this much coveted section, by the erection of permanent brick structures and the increase in land holdings. To show that the natural trend of the business district was in this direction is but for one to go one block east past the Negroes and observe that the industrial section had been continued from that point.

Greenwood, the principal street in the Negro district, was paved and was at night a seething mass of black folks, equal to Chicago's State street or Beale Street in Memphis. The

The Tulsa Tribune, June 1, 1921, page 7. Courtesy of newspapers.com.

HISTORY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



Time Suggestion: 45-60 min.(finishing at home as needed)

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Photographs document the Greenwood community before, during, and after the attack in 1921. Historians and archaeologists analyze and interpret historic photos as primary sources. In this lesson, students will analyze historic photos taken prior to the tragedy and after the rebuilding to understand the historical, social, and cultural contexts in which they were taken. They will practice evaluating how photography serves as a tool of documentation, persuasion, and storytelling within social and political movements. They will compare and contrast these images to understand the socioeconomic and cultural impacts on Greenwood before and after the event. In this lesson, it is important to consider not just what the images show, but also the intentions of the photographers and the effects on the viewer looking at the photos today.

MATERIALS

- Photographs of Greenwood before the attack
- Photographs of Greenwood after rebuilding efforts
- Observation organizer worksheet, blank sheets of paper, or whiteboard

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What experiences of the community are captured in photographs before and after the 1921 attack on Greenwood?

Why did the photographers choose to document these images?

C3 FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

HISTORY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 9-12

- D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
- D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT

HISTORY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

ELA 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
------------------------------	--

WRITING 11-12

Research to Build and Present Knowledge	9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
--	--

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

HISTORY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

TEACHER PREP

1. Print and pass out the observation organizer worksheet (optional), blank pieces of paper (1 per student), or prepare to take notes on a whiteboard.
2. Print or project Greenwood Before/After historic photos for the students to see.

ICEBREAKER

Ask students how do images influence our understanding of historical events? Ask them to think about an image that impacted their view of an event or person and briefly share.

ACTIVITY

1. Introduce the concept of photographs as historical documents and powerful tools for conveying perspectives, often revealing as much about the photographer's viewpoint as the event itself.
2. Discuss the events that took place in Greenwood in 1921. Discuss the importance rebuilding Greenwood. How might this rebuilding effort have symbolized resilience?
3. Review photographs of Historic Greenwood before 1921 as a class. Have students observe the images, focusing on specific details such as the types of businesses, the architecture, and the presence of community and cultural life. As you ask each of the guiding questions, have the students write down their observations. Guided questions:
 - What stands out about the images?
 - What do the photographs suggest about the economy and culture of Historic Greenwood?
 - How do these images challenge stereotypes about Black communities in the early 20th century?
4. Show images of Greenwood during the rebuilding phase in the 1940s and beyond. Guide students in observing and interpreting these images, noting architectural differences, types of businesses, and any visual evidence of the community's social and economic status. As you ask each of the guiding questions, have the students write down their observations. Guided questions:
 - How do these post-rebuilding photos compare to the earlier photos?
 - What differences do you notice in the buildings, businesses, and people?
 - What do these differences tell us about the community's recovery?

DEBRIEF AND DISCUSS

1. What does the comparison between the two periods of Greenwood reveal about the community's resilience?
2. How might these images shape our understanding of historical and contemporary racial dynamics in the United States?
3. What do these photographs communicate about the social and economic challenges faced by Black communities in rebuilding after acts of racial violence?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

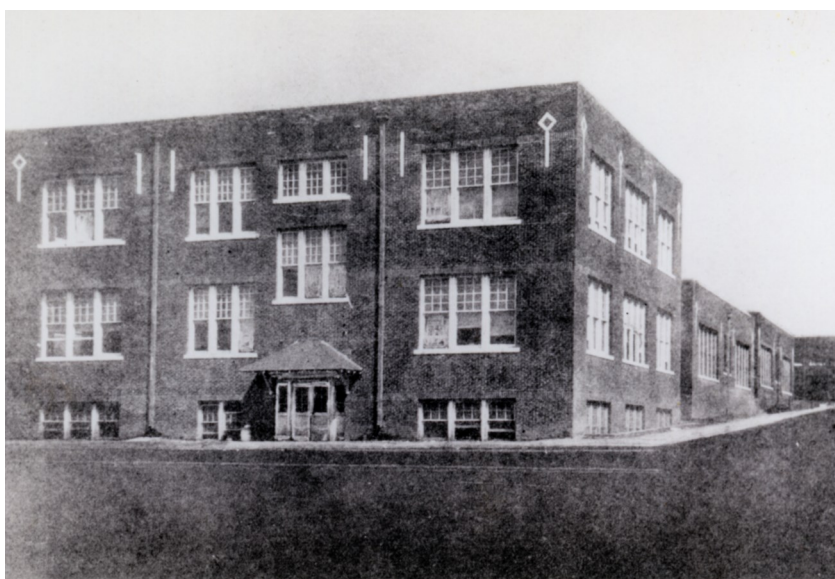
Ask students to compose a short reflective essay on the role of photographs in documenting and shaping public memory of historic events. They should incorporate their observations from the images of Greenwood and discuss the value of visual primary sources in understanding history.

GREENWOOD BEFORE/AFTER

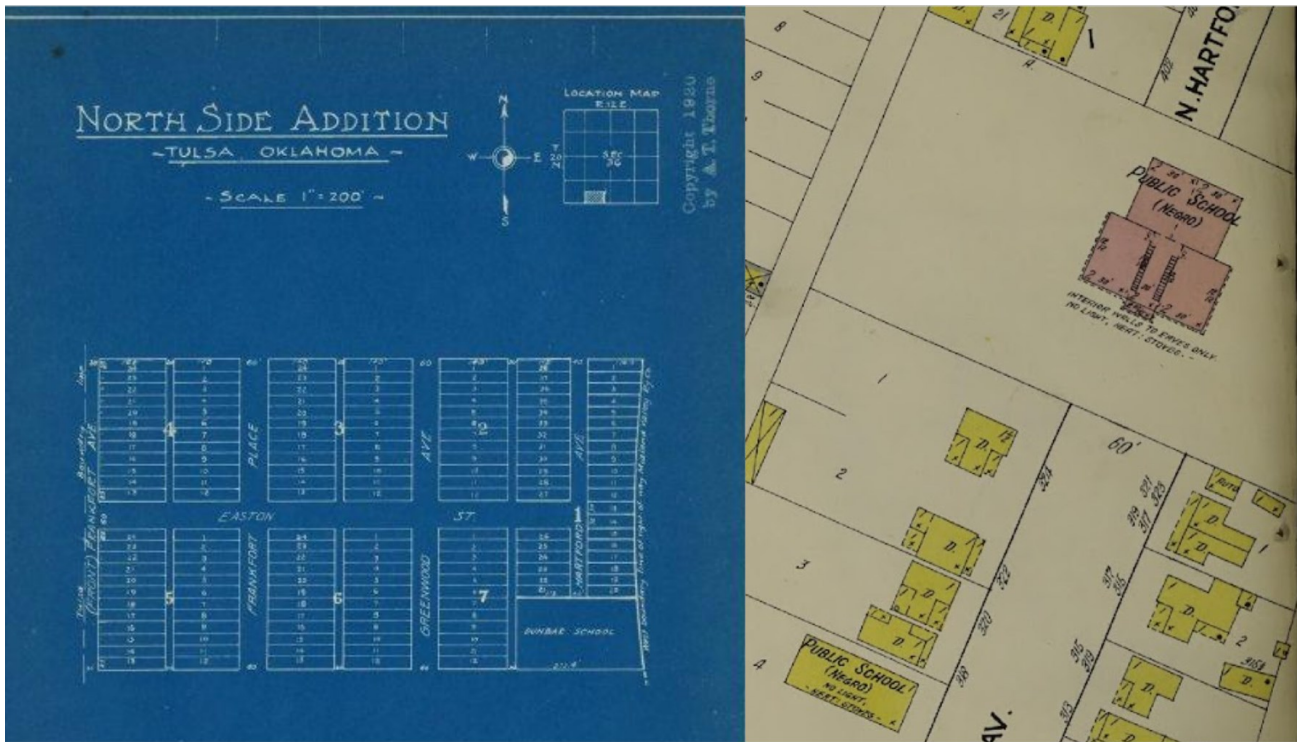
HISTORY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY



Aerial view of Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1918. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.



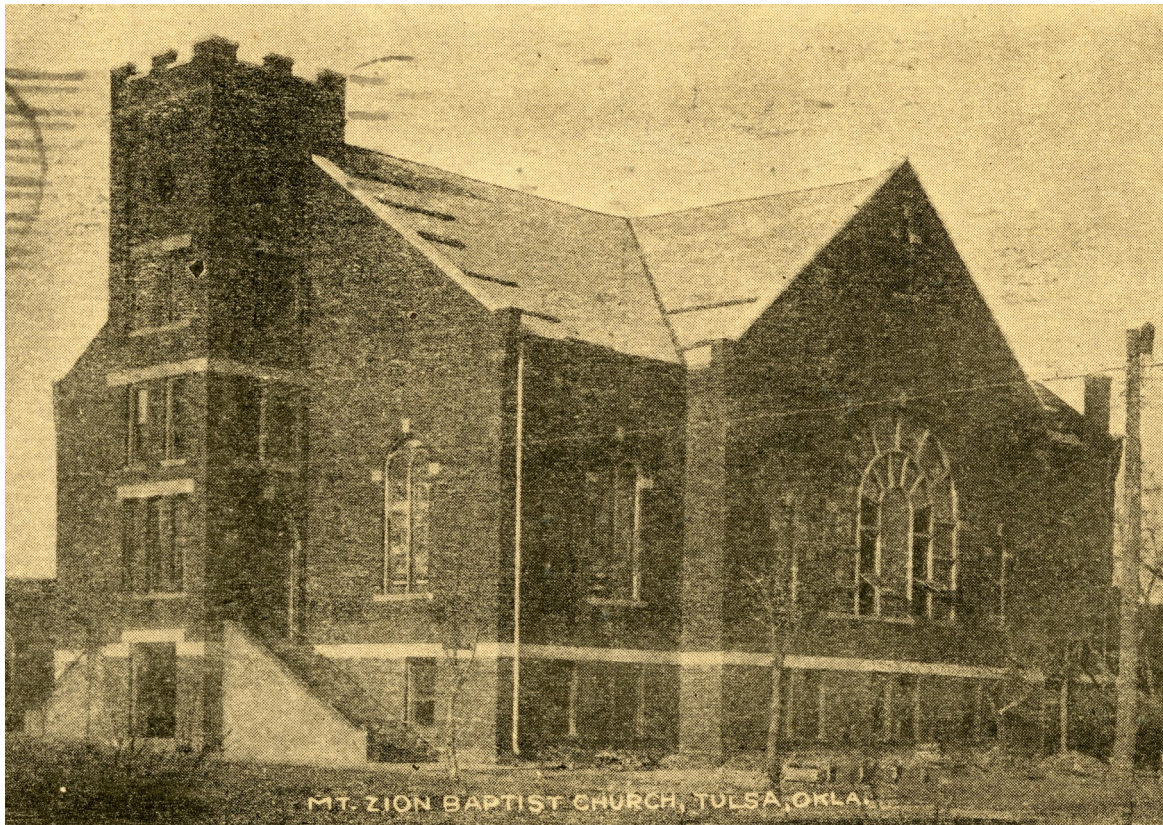
(Above): Booker T. Washington High School in 1918. Courtesy of the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum. (Right) Booker T. Washington High School in 2019. Photo by Tmsloan/[CC BY-SA 4.0](#).



Dunbar Elementary School plat map, courtesy of the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum (Left) and Sanborn insurance map (Right).



Dunbar Elementary School location after 1921. The building became the Moton Memorial Hospital. Courtesy of the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum.



Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 1921. Courtesy of Tulsa Historical Society & Museum.



Mt. Zion Baptist Church after being rebuilt in 1952.



Main Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma, c. 1910. Courtesy of the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum.



Main Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1962. Courtesy of the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum.



(Above): OSU Gateway Tower at Standpipe Hill during archaeological survey, 2021. (Right) Mrs. E. G. Fike and Miss Mattie Lou Discher sitting on Standpipe Hill, 1910. Courtesy of the Beryl Ford Collection, Rotary Club of Tulsa, Tulsa City-County Library, and Tulsa Historical Society & Museum.



OBSERVATION ORGANIZER

HISTORY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

PRE-1921 GREENWOOD

What stands out about the images?

What do the photographs suggest about the economy and culture of Historic Greenwood?

How do these images challenge stereotypes about Black communities in the early 20th century?

POST-1921 GREENWOOD

How do these post-rebuilding photos compare to the earlier photos?

What differences do you notice in the buildings, businesses, and people?

What do these differences tell us about the community's recovery?

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

GREENWOOD ARCHAEOLOGY CURRICULUM



Time Suggestion: 45 min. (taking project home as needed)

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Archaeologists are scientists and follow the scientific method. Thinking like an archaeologist means forming a claim, piecing together multiple lines of evidence, and deriving well-supported conclusions from that evidence. There are many forms of information that archaeologists use to discover new possible archaeological sites: site surveys, oral histories, historic documents, maps, photographs, etc. In this lesson, students will synthesize the skills developed and information learned about the Greenwood Massacre by bringing together textual, photographic, and testimonial evidence from previous Greenwood Archaeology Curriculum lessons to identify a potential archaeological site. They will organize and examine their claims to form evidence-based conclusions.

MATERIALS

- Sticky notes
- Evidence organizer sheet for each student

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

- *From the Survivors' Mouths* excerpt packet (see Stories of Survival lesson)
- [Otis Clark interview](#) (Oklahoma Historical Society)
- [William Danforth Williams interview](#) (Tulsa Historical Society)
- [Wess and Cathryn Young interview](#) (Oklahoma Historical Society)
- [Mozilla Franklin Jones interview](#) (Tulsa Historical Society)
- [Tulsa Colored Business Directory](#) from *The Tulsa Star*, April 3, 1920
- Photographs of Greenwood (see History through Photography lesson)

FOCUS QUESTIONS

How do you think archaeologists begin their research to find evidence of historic structures and archaeological sites?

C3 FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 9-12

- **D2.His.6.9-12. Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.**
- D1.5.9-12. Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.
- D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.
- D2.His.8.9-12. Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.
- D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
- D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENT

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	<p>1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.</p> <p>3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	<p>9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</p>

ELA 11-12

Key Ideas and Details	<p>1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p>3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.</p>
Comprehension and Collaboration	<p>2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems.</p>

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

TEACHER PREP

1. Print *Scientific Investigation* reading (1 per student)
2. Print Evidence Organizer sheet (1 per student)
3. Provide students access to primary and secondary resources from previous Greenwood Archaeology Curriculum lessons
4. Provide students with sticky notes

ACTIVITY

1. Read the *Scientific Investigation* reading as a class.
2. Instruct students to re-examine evidence from previous lessons and decide on two locations they claim will be good potential archaeological sites for continuing to tell the story of Greenwood.

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION



Archaeology can be similar to the work of detectives or forensic scientists. Like detectives, archaeologists piece together multiple lines of evidence to locate archaeological sites. Archaeologists Drs. Alicia Odewale and Parker VanValkenburgh are doing just that, mining the historical record for information about Black Wall Street at its peak. Their research aims to highlight memories of Black life in the historic Greenwood District, and to debunk the myth that its profound history and heritage was completely destroyed in the 1921 attack.

As scientists, archaeologists form their conclusions based on a process of observations, forming hypotheses, gathering evidence, and developing conclusions supported by that evidence. Now it's your turn to think like an archaeologist. Based on the oral, visual, and textual evidence about the Greenwood Massacre you've explored so far, where do you think archaeologists might find new evidence of historic structures in Greenwood?

Which sites will most likely reveal new evidence of historic structures in Greenwood? Form at least two **CLAIMS** based on what you have learned so far in previous lessons. Write each claim on a sticky note. Stick the sticky note on the Evidence Organizer sheet. You'll use this as a visual way to organize your thoughts.

Gather **EVIDENCE** that supports each of your claims—concrete, observable information such as personal testimony; written documents; visual records; and physical objects. What lines of evidence most effectively support your argument? Name them each on a sticky note. Group them together (they can go on top of each other) and stick them on the Evidence Organizer sheet next to the claim. If you have trouble finding evidence that supports your claim, revise your claim by writing a new sticky note. Changing your mind based on new information is part of the scientific process.

JUSTIFY each line of evidence. What makes that evidence credible? Is the narrator/witness reliable? Explain how your lines of evidence validate your claim. Write each justification on a sticky note and place it on the Evidence Organizer sheet next to the evidence.

CHOOSE one hypothesis to write a short paragraph on your sheet. Use what you've written on your sticky notes to fill in the blanks: "I think [site] would reveal new evidence of historic structures in Greenwood. This is supported by [listed evidence]. This is strong evidence, because [your justifications]."

EVIDENCE ORGANIZER

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

Claims	Evidence	Justifications

Hypothesis: