



I Am Queen Charlotte

Curriculum and Study Guide

Supported by LendingTree and Blumenthal Performing Arts
Created by Facilitate Movement | 2022



Introduction

I Am QUEEN CHARLOTTE is a citywide, multi-platform experience that centers and celebrates the lives, stories, and contributions of Black Women in Charlotte. The program is built around a gathered history of narratives from women in our community by poet and master storyteller Hannah Hasan. These stories are the foundation of a whole week of activities honoring Black Women, which kicks off March 6th, 2022, with a storytelling extravaganza in the Belk Theater.

- Topics identified, but not limited to, include the history of Charlotte, North Carolina, Black history, identity, family, community building, understanding and creating shared purpose, collaborative design, community trust, intercultural understanding, sharing stories, and increased comprehension of lived experience.
- Skills/Competency focus: historical analysis, visual thinking strategies, oral history skills, community building, dialogic communication, and collaboration.

Goals

1. To help those who are often unheard, especially BIPOC* women gain a voice, enabling them to record, respond, and reflect on their experiences and their communities' conditions, both positive and negative.
2. To encourage critical consciousness. Through choosing, discussing, and reflecting on documentary photographs and the use of creative photography, the student can come to a clearer understanding of their circumstances and the economic, social, psychological, and political forces that shape them and influence the community.
3. To examine storytelling as a change-making process that will improve conditions and enhance lives by reaching and influencing community members, advocates, and policymakers.

**Black, Indigenous, People of Color.*

Shared Expectations with Students

Your students should see themselves reflected in the stories and seek to build connections with the women featured in the photographs. Each lesson is designed to share various perspectives that shape their world and influence their community. Their stories/images/experiences also shape our community and are valuable in creating our future together.



Overview for Lessons

Photographs can represent life in a community. When we look at documentary images and photographs, we can learn more about the subject of the image and about our own ways of interpreting media.

We ask:

- 1) What kinds of impressions do we get from looking at the I Am Queen Charlotte book?
- 2) What kinds of challenges might these women face?
- 3) Do you think the photographic interpretation might be different if the photographer lived, or did not live, in the community?

For this initiative, we encourage students to explore a variety of perspectives in their community.

Start with the following activity:

Divide students into groups of 3 or 4 and have them brainstorm about issues that affect their school or community. Encourage them to think of problems that they would like to see addressed. Periodically, while using the following lessons, ask students to connect the issues they have raised to the stories and pictures they see in the book and the lessons.

Guiding Questions

1. How do stories and pictures help us to connect to our communities?
2. Why is it important for students to tell stories from their perspective?
3. What do you expect to be your biggest challenge in celebrating identity for your students?
4. How could community collaboration help with your experience of the I am Queen Charlotte project?



Where does
your story fit
in the
timeline?

"I AM QUEEN CHARLOTTE"

MAKING A CITY HOME



MAY 19TH, 1744

QUEEN CHARLOTTE WAS BORN

Queen Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was born May 19th, 1744 to Duke Charles Louis Frederick of Mecklenburg, Prince of Mirow (1708-1752), and his wife Princess Elisabeth Albertine of Saxe-Hildburghausen (1713-1761) in northern Germany.

1768

CHARLOTTE, NC WAS INCORPORATED

Settled about 1750, Charlotte, NC, was incorporated in 1768 and named for Princess Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, George III's queen.



1920s

MARY JACKSON MCCROREY AND THE YWCA

Mary Jackson McCrorey was a prominent educator and civic leader in Charlotte, North Carolina. She worked in various capacities at Johnson C. Smith University, Missions for Colored People, ran for public office, and helped create the first YWCAs for black women in the South in the 1920s.

In 1951, the YMCA in the heart of the Brooklyn neighborhood was renamed the McCrorey Family YMCA.

1950-1984

ALLEGRA WESTBROOKS AND THE BEATTIES FORD ROAD LIBRARY

Allegra Westbrook was the first Black public library supervisor in North Carolina. She served as head of acquisition for all Charlotte Mecklenburg public library branches from 1950 to her retirement in 1984. In 1947, she moved to Charlotte to head Acquisition of Negro Library Services and the Brevard Street Library, one of two locations open to Black residents in North Carolina.

In April 2020, the Beatties Ford Regional Library branch was renamed the Allegra Westbrook Regional Library.



1970s

SARAH STEVENSON AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Sarah Stevenson was the first Black president of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools integrated Parent Teacher Association in 1970 and the first Black woman elected to the local school board. She also notably led the push to desegregate the district's classrooms.

She also helped create the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum, a civic event that is now an Institution in Charlotte. In Jan 2022, the forum was renamed the Sarah Stevenson Tuesday Forum.

2017

VI LYLES AND THE MAYORSHIP

In 2017, Viola Lyles was elected mayor of Charlotte. She is the first Black woman mayor of the city, and also its first former city administrator to serve as mayor.





Terms

Storytelling: the social and cultural activity of sharing stories, sometimes with improvisation, theatrics, or embellishment. Every culture has its own stories or narratives shared as entertainment, education, cultural preservation, or instilling moral values.

Oral History: the collection and study of historical information about individuals, families, important events, or everyday life using audiotapes, videotapes, or transcriptions of planned interviews.

Power: the capacity of an individual to influence the actions, beliefs, or conduct of others. The term authority is often used for power perceived as legitimate or socially approved by the social structure.

Identity: a collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a person is definitively recognized or known. The set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a group member.

Representation: ethnic-racial presentation in media, stories, and educational experiences which create influential messages about cultural views and shape their understanding of ethnic-racial groups.

Objectives

Students will identify, document (photographically), and discuss issues important to their community.

National Core Art Standards

Creating: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- Refine and complete artistic work.

Responding: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.

- Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Connecting: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

North Carolina Social Studies Standards

Standard: 8.H.1 Understand the role of conflict and cooperation in the development of North Carolina and the nation.

- 8.H.1.1 Explain the causes and effects of conflict in North Carolina and the nation.
- 8.H.1.2 Summarize how debate, negotiation, compromise, and cooperation have been used in the history of North Carolina and the nation.
- 8.H.1.3 Explain how slavery, segregation, voter suppression, reconcentration, and other discriminatory practices have been used to suppress and exploit certain groups within North Carolina and the nation over time.
- 8.H.1.4 Explain how recovery, resistance, and resilience to inequities, injustices, discrimination, prejudice, and bias have shaped the history of North Carolina and the nation.

Standard: 8.H.2 Understand how innovation and change have impacted the development of North Carolina and the nation.

- 8.H.2.3 Explain how the experiences and achievements of women, minorities, indigenous, and marginalized groups have contributed to the development of North Carolina and the nation over time.

Grades: 8-12

Time Required: Suggest using 4-5 class periods plus time outside of class to locate supporting materials, artifacts, and community stories.

Materials

- A selection of photographs for discussion (included)
- Cameras, one per group of 4 students, or encourage older students to use their camera phones
- Project notepads (one per group)
- Foam board or cardstock for presentation or exhibition
- Paper (printer paper, butcher paper, post- its)
- Markers and writing utensils



Lesson 1 | Allegra Westbrooks: Books are for Everyone

Materials Needed: Construction or printing paper, writing materials, markers

Estimated Time: 45-60 minutes

Modeling:

“I could go to the main library and pick up books that the black patrons needed. They could not go, but I could go, and there was a back entrance that I could go in so I would not disturb the apple cart. [...] And I would – well, the janitor would bring down the collection of books that the patrons desired.



And then, when I went up, I could bring others that were desired so that all who had requested materials could have access to them. But they had to get them at the branch library, and I remember once the distinguished Harry Golden, who wrote *Only in America*, came into the library one day, the Brevard Street Branch where I was, in the headquarters of my so-called branch. He said, ‘This is a damn shame that the black man cannot use the public library all over our system.’”

Independent Practice:

Writing your story:

Page 1: Your signature quote related to your family, community, or school.

Page 2: Three- five sentences related to who has had a significant impact on your life

Page 3: A notable figure from Black history

Page 4; A piece of advice you would share with future students to help create the community in which they want to live.

Ujima/Collective Group Work:

Ask small groups of students (4-6 members) to share their “books” with each other. (2 minutes per student).

Ask each group to report out:

- 1) Did you notice any similarities or differences in the stories?
- 2) Is there a theme related to living in/ working in Charlotte?
- 3) How can we make our stories more compelling and connected to making Charlotte a better place?

Extended Learning: [Make sure the title is compelling!](#)



Lesson 2 | Ursula Douglas: Making Stone Soup

Materials Needed: Butcher paper, writing materials, markers

Estimated Time: 45-60 minutes

Modeling:

“It doesn't matter how much money you have, what title you have, or what career path you're on; you know there's love across the board. My village there was vast. We became a village because we would reach across the aisle and take care of one another. It was never based on what organization a person was a part of, which college they went to, or what side of town they came from. Community was community for us. I felt that in my community growing up, and I've always known that I would take that same spirit with me wherever life led me.”

Independent Practice:

- Creating your own celebrations and joys. Using post-it notes, share something positive about who you are, your school, or your friend. This message should be kind and thoughtful. The goal is to be uplifting.

Ujima/Collective Group Work:

- 1) **Group-effort story writing.** This activity is easy to manage if you start by having your students sit in a circle. Next, each student begins with a piece of paper. They should write one sentence to create a story. Then, all of the students pass their papers to the right.
- 2) Now that they have a new paper, they must add one sentence to the new story. Keep passing the papers and adding sentences until everyone in the group has added to everyone else's story. If you have a small group, you can pass the stories around more than one time. After the stories are written, you can read them aloud to the group.

Note: You can also begin with an image at the top of a blank document (perhaps a picture of a historical figure associated with your school or Queen Charlotte) and create an “Add and Pass” activity in a shared Google Drive folder. And have students add some text, then pass it on! Give them a number of minutes or sentences to write.

Extended Learning:

[5 Excellent Writing Activities for Group Classes | The Teacher's Handbook | Listen & Learn](#)
[Add and pass: A fun activity to get them moving AND creating - Ditch That Textbook](#)



Ursula Douglas | *Making Stone Soup*



Lesson 3 | Shakelia McCain: Native Love

Materials Needed: Construction or printing paper, writing materials, markers

Estimated Time: 45-60 minutes

Modeling:

“I know this city like I know the truths of my own existence. I know the restaurants, shops and stores. I know the neighborhoods and communities. I know the history of the different sides of the city. I knew North Charlotte before it was NoDa. I knew the West Side before there was ever a Freemore West. I know the love that my city carries. I know the hurt and pain that she carries. To know Charlotte is to know a complicated relationship with what was and what will be. It’s to hold onto the past while hoping for the future.”

Independent Practice:

- Mapping Practice: Have students compare maps from the [Quality of Life Dashboard](#). In small groups, have them examine demographic changes, educational outcomes, water consumption, and rental prices.
- Encourage students to make connections to local history and changes in development.
Ask: What do these maps tell us about people who live in Charlotte?
Ask: What do you notice about different areas in Charlotte?
Ask: If you were developing a community to reflect love and history for the city, what would be important to include?

Ujima/Collective Group Work:

- Consider “growing pains” that happen when a community grows and changes.
- Ask students to notice/reflect on images that are presented in their communities, ESPECIALLY murals.
- Use sidewalk chalk or butcher paper to create a group mural for the classroom. Each student’s contribution should relate to something they love about their community and the people they meet.

Extended Learning: [Inspiration Board](#)

**You can also have the class make a shared Pinterest page with images related to their personal learning, school history, and the history of Charlotte.*



Shakelia McCain | Native Love



Lesson 4 | Kurma Murrain: In My Skin

Materials Needed: Writing materials, [music clips from the African diaspora](#), map

Estimated Time: 45-60 minutes

Modeling:

“I brought my culture here. It is beautiful and important because people get to know that there are other Black people coming from my country and that we have the same origin. We are almost ten percent of the population in Columbia, but we all come from Africa. Greater than telling people about my culture, I show them my culture by showing up as my most authentic self and by the art that I create. I show it in my poetry and my storytelling, and I show it in my dance. I’ve been featured at many museums, spoken and read poetry throughout the city, and danced and moved my way through many different spaces. I bring my culture with me everywhere I go.

I am home here. I bring all of the parts of me with me when I enter any room. My experiences have been different than some, but we are connected through our desires to live our most full and authentic lives.”

Independent Practice:

- Free Association: Write the word Identity on the board. Give students 90 seconds to consider what comes to mind when they see that word. Now write the word Immigrant.
- Ask students to think about how they view living in and/or moving to Charlotte?
 - How does your identity shape how you experience cities and systems?
 - Where do you see spaces of inclusion in your city? Where do you see spaces of exclusion?
- How do new people influence a community? Where have their cultural exchanges (ideas, experiences, food, dance) happened?

Ujima/Collective Group Work:

Creating a Museum of Us | Define cultural artifact: an object or image that tells a story related to your life.

Ask: What is an artifact that represents you?

Bring an artifact (it can be anything and will be different for each person). Some examples: a trophy, pictures, family heirlooms, a favorite book, a favorite toy, jewelry, clothing, or sports equipment. Give time in class for each student to share why that artifact represents them, their family, or community and why it is important.

Extended Learning: [What Objects Tell the Story of Your Life? - The New York Times](#)
[Music of the African Diaspora](#)



Kurma Murrain | *In My Skin*



Lesson 5 | Hattie McMullen: Generational Wealth

Materials Needed: Construction or printing paper, writing materials, markers

Estimated Time: 45-60 minutes

Modeling:

“We keep this house. We stay in this neighborhood. We do our best to hold onto our memories because we want that history to live long after we are gone. But some days, holding on to all of that in a city that is changing so fast, is more difficult than it should be because everything is changing.

Urban redevelopment has sought to take away all of our childhood memories. Our church, our schools, and our friends...gone. I watched them take our elementary school and burn it down to the ground as a practice for the fire department. My mother attended that school. I went to that school. All of us started the first grade at that school. That was a memory that was burned down. I watched them destroy the Brooklyn neighborhood. All of us attended Second Ward High School. My mother went there as well. She was in the second class to graduate. That memory is gone. So when I see all the gentrification and all the buildings coming down, I hear a message loud and clear that says, ‘Let’s wipe out these people that were once here. They don’t matter.’

It is our goal, as a family, to continue to hold onto all that we have built, and all that our parents and ancestors have built. We want our children and their children to always have a home to come back to.”

Independent Practice:

- Oral histories, collecting memories
- Understanding connections to local history and changes in development.

Ujima/Collective Group Work:

Charlotte is considered a relatively “new” city and is often complimented for being very clean. Many historians note that the experiences of newcomers in Charlotte are without soul. How do you see the “soul” of Charlotte? What stories are important to share and document? What places help create community connectivity?

Extended Learning: [The History of Charlotte, NC](#) by Dr. Tom Hanchett



Hattie McMullen | *Generational Wealth*



Lesson 6 | Jillian Ingram: That's My Coach

Materials Needed: Construction or printing paper, writing materials, markers, printer

Estimated Time: 45-60 minutes

Modeling:

“Once I figured out that I enjoyed teaching math, I decided that I wanted to come back to the high school that I graduated from and teach there. I knew I would be one of the few Black educators at the school.

That meant a great deal to me. It meant that I gave a face to the notion of a Black, woman, mathematics teacher. In addition to showing all of my students the importance of people from diverse backgrounds in spaces that aren't usually diverse, it gave me a chance to show my Black students the representation that they need to see. It gave me the opportunity to build every student up. It feels like a transformative thing, where if I build positive relationships with each and every one of my students, then maybe I'm doing one small thing to make this world better.”

Independent Practice:

Photovoice Facilitation

- Each student is encouraged to use a camera phone to capture one “essential” image. This image should encapsulate a story/experience related to their experience in Charlotte – these ideas will guide the selection of subjects to be photographed. They should also keep their notepad ready to jot down thoughts, quotes, etc.
- NOTE: Be sure to ask permission before taking pictures of people.
- Bring the image to school or email it to the teacher.

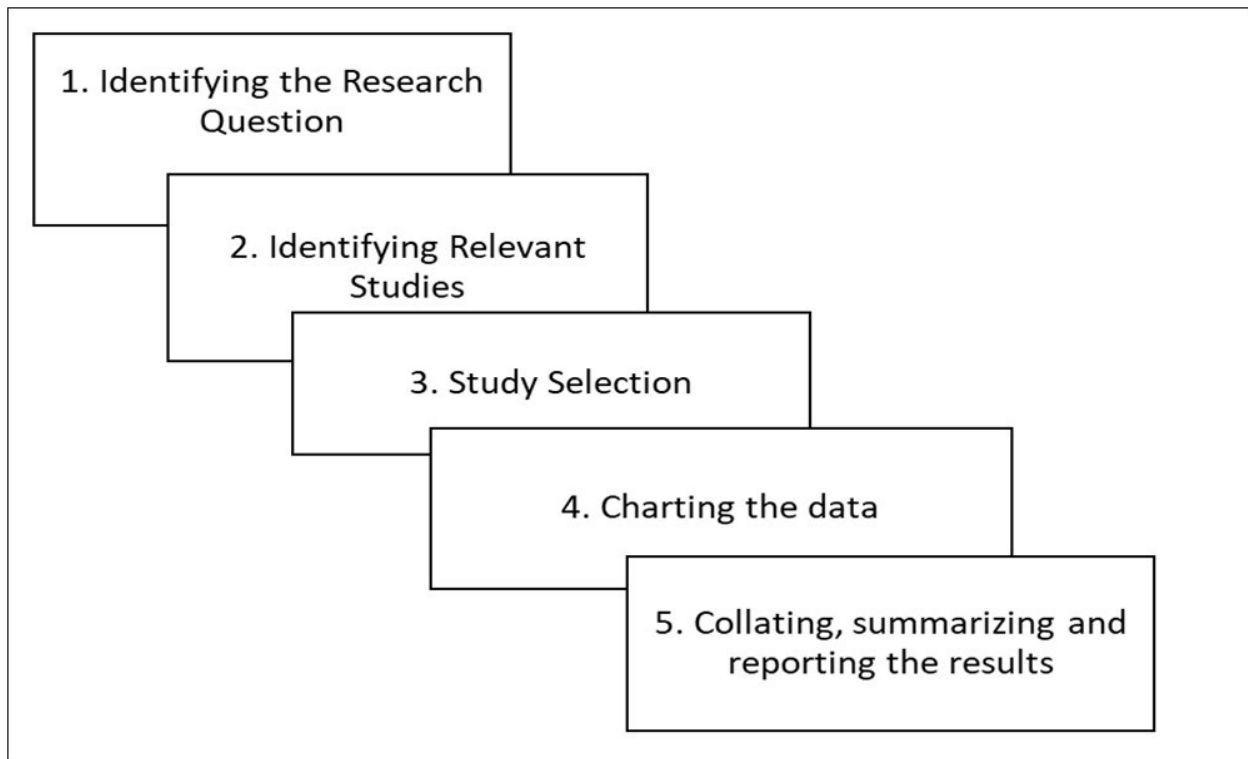
Ujima/Collective Group Work:

1. Review the photographs that represent life in a community. What kinds of impressions do we get? What kinds of challenges might these people face?
2. Using the earlier group notes, check to see if these selected images relate to the concepts and issues students find most pressing in their lives.
3. Remind them that it is okay for several groups to come up with the same subject and to look for themes.
4. Print photographs.
5. Each group will create a display for their photographs after editing and selecting the most successful images. Photos can be mounted on mat board or poster board in thematic groups. Discuss the use of captions and/or titles.
6. After all groups have completed their displays, a presentation and debriefing session can occur. The groups will share their issues and concerns with the class and compare/contrast all of the different approaches. If a problem occurs more than once, it



may be especially significant. Photographs of similar subject matter can also be discussed and compared in terms of visual similarities and differences. A discussion of how composition, color, and lighting affect the interpretation of the photographs can follow.

Extended Learning: Photovoice is an easily accessible research method that students can use to document stories and experiences for qualitative analysis. Share this chart so that they understand the research process.





Jillian Ingram | *That's My Coach*