

Power and Change

A Timeline of the Power of Change, The Power of Words and Non-Violence in our World

The Driving Questions of Room 19

Room 19 has been looking at two big ideas all year...

What makes change?

What is power?

We have looked at these big ideas of Power and Change in all of our curricular areas. In Science, we noticed what made states of matter change and the power of weather. In Literacy, we kept track of how characters changed over time, studied the power of words in poetry and determined what were important, key facts in our stories. In Math, we found new powerful strategies to solve problems and changed our strategies to be more efficient and organized.

In Social Studies, we have considered these ideas of Power and Change by looking at our role as students and as community members. We launched our unit by beginning to study “People Who Make a Difference.” We researched Wilbur and Orville Wright and their dream of flight, through the eyes of historians.

We began to study other people the students were interested in like Martin Luther King Jr., Pablo Picasso, Claude Monet and Jackie Robinson.

It was in presenting the students with images and primary sources that led up to Jackie Robinson’s 1947 crossing of the color line in Major League Baseball that our timeline began to form. The students created this to help them understand what happened before, during and after the time of Jackie Robinson. It led them down many paths of inquiry and through many meaningful conversations on topics such as segregation, fairness, change, slavery, world history and how these topics have affected their own lives.

Using Primary Sources

Using primary sources (letters, photographs, maps, documents, drawings, artifacts) from the Library of Congress, we studied the Habits of Historians to think deeply and critically about what the sources taught us about these people who made a difference in our world. We used contextualized our primary sources, situating the documents in its time and place. We read closely, making detailed observations. We used our background knowledge to read and understand the documents. We sourced the information, noticing who made it and why it was created. We corroborated, asking questions about multiple sources to find agreement and disagreement. And we read the silences in the photographs, noticing who was not represented and who was left out or excluded.

Jackie Robinson

The students worked in small groups looking at two to three different images from the Library of Congress representing the history of baseball in the United States. The students started to see how the teams were segregated until Jackie Robinson and Branch Rickey changed the history and look of Major League Baseball. From the initial group discussion the students started lining up the images on the rug, putting them in chronological order, making sense of the primary sources. They would debate where something should go or why they thought it came before or after something else. They were doing exactly what historians or archeologists do when putting together relics they have discovered.

Mentor Texts

To build background knowledge about segregation, prior to studying Jackie Robinson, we read the picture book ***The Other Side*** by Jacqueline Woodson. The book talks about a friendship that develops between two young girls in the segregated south.

We used different social justice lenses to look at the deeper meanings of this book through “Stop and Jot” reflections.

Shared Reading

As a class, we read together the lyrics of songs sung Sam Cooke and Michael Jackson to introduce themes of change and making a difference. We visualized what the lyrics said and sketched the pictures it created in our mind.

Read Alouds

Students were inspired to bring in books from home that connected to our timeline. Toussaint read his book ***Sit In; How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*** by Andrea Davis Pinkey, about the Greensboro lunch counter peaceful demonstrations, teaching our whole class about another part of the civil rights movement.

Art and Technology

Students sketched and painted portraits of people you would find on our timeline. They did these portraits in the style of various artists we have been studying throughout the year. They also identified important words and phrases about people you find on our timeline and used the computer to create a Wordle art piece.