**Grace Lesson Plan**

Author: Tamekia Jackson  
Grade Level: 8,9,10  
Length: Three 60-minute classes

**Introduction:**
Grace is a musical that examines the struggle of the Minton family, who gather to mourn the loss of the family matriarch and contend with keeping their family-owned restaurant afloat in a gentrified Philadelphia.

In this lesson, students will explore the show, the causes of gentrification, and the role students can play in shaping or preserving the history of communities experiencing change. They will consider if gentrification is always negative, or are there positive aspects to it? Who decides what parts of a neighborhood should be or need to be preserved? How do we respect and honor the long-time residents of a neighborhood as the neighborhood changes? The lesson will culminate with students creating and presenting their own plan for neighborhood preservation.

**Learning Objectives:**
- Students will understand that history is complex and can be told from different perspectives.
- Students will be able to explain gentrification and the causes of it.
- Students will analyze the benefits and consequences of gentrification.
- Students will apply their knowledge of gentrification to their neighborhoods or nearby neighborhoods and determine how to improve them.
- Students will evaluate their learning and create a new understanding of historical figures or understanding history.

**Guiding Questions:**
- What creates the culture or identity of a community?
- What are some positive and negative aspects of gentrification?
- How do financial incentives influence what happens in a community?
- Can gentrification be used to preserve what is good about a community?
- What role do current residents play in making those things happen?

**C3 Standards:**
D1.2.9-12. Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

D2.Civ.7.6-8. Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school and community settings.
D2.Civ.10.6-8. Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in government and civil society.

D2.Eco.2.6-8. Evaluate alternative approaches or solutions to current economic issues in terms of benefits and costs for different groups and society as a whole.

D2.Eco.3.9-12. Analyze the ways in which incentives influence what is produced and distributed in a market system.

**Classroom Activities:**

**Lesson One: Pictures of Gentrification**
- Students analyze pictures of neighborhoods pre and post gentrification and make observations to start thinking about change and gentrification.

**Lesson Two: Gentrification Is...**
- Students watch a video on gentrification and learn to identify the causes of it.

**Lesson Three: My Community**
- Students create a depiction of their ideal version of their community.

**Lesson One**

**Pictures of Gentrification (30 minutes)**

Working in small groups or as a whole class, students will use the [Library of Congress primary source analysis tool](https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/expressions/) to look at before and after photos of New York and Washington, D.C. Additionally, if you can find before and after pictures of a gentrified area in your city, use those too. At this stage, avoid sharing specific vocabulary about gentrification with students to allow for their observations.

If working in small groups, print the photos for students to analyze in their small groups. Small groups should notate differences or any other observations on the printed photos.

If working as a whole class, project photos onto a smartboard or screen. Write student observations onto the projected image, white board, or a piece of flip chart paper.

After students have analyzed the photos once, go through an analysis process again, using the [See, Think, Wonder](https://www.mindtools.com/see-think-wonder.html) visible thinking routine. Students should do this as an individual exercise. Students should write down what they see think or wonder. If possible, consider using a Jamboard, Padlet, or Post-its for students to share their individual responses. If students record their thoughts on notebook paper, have them share in pairs before the large group discussion.

Once students have documented their observations and had the opportunity to look over others, have them share their observations in a large group discussion. Record any large themes that are becoming clear or ideas that continue to surface.

Grace Lesson Plan: Gentrification
Standing up for your community (25 minutes)

Students will use the Values, Identities, Actions Thinking Routine to understand how people can use their voices to stand up for their community.

Students will watch this seven and half minute video about Alondra Bobadilla, Boston’s first Youth Poet Laureate. She discusses becoming Boston’s Youth Poet Laureate and using her poetry to stand up for her people and neighborhood.

After students watch the video, use the Values, Identities and Actions Thinking Routine to analyze it.

Values:

- What values does this work invite us to think about? Are they your values? Other’s values? Whose values does the work affirm or challenge? Does the work provoke questions or challenges to these values?

Identities:

- Who is the work speaking about? Who is the audience for this work? Is anyone left out of the story that should be in it? Do you fit in this story, or do you not fit in this story? Why?

Actions:

- What actions might this work encourage? [Actions could include doing something concrete, refraining from doing something, learning more, etc.] Who takes the action? You or other people? If others, who are the others? Why?

In small groups, students share their thoughts and continue their conversations. Ask “What creates the culture or identity of a community?”

Closing (5 minutes)

Exit Ticket - Students create a journal entry or exit ticket that answers the question
What creates the culture or identity of your community?
What would be lost if your community was completely changed?
Lesson Two

This part of the lesson is taken from KQED’s The Lowdown lesson plan on gentrification.

Gentrification Is... (60 minutes)

Individually or in small groups, students read The Lowdown blog post.

While reading, students should create a T-chart of the pros and cons of gentrification. Students should also pay attention to what happens to residents in established communities when newcomers move in. They should consider the following as they make their T-charts:

- How does gentrification happen?
- How do financial incentives influence what happens in a community?
- What do you think is the most positive aspect of gentrification? What is the most negative?
- What happens to established residents in communities that are gentrified?
- What role does race and class or social status play in gentrification?
- Is gentrification primarily a positive or negative force?
- What is one thing you would change, if anything, about gentrification to make it a more a positive force in communities?

Next, as a class watch this video:

Middle School – PBS seven minute 11 second video on gentrification

High School – Urban Displacement Project video on gentrification

After watching the video, lead a discussion with the class using these questions:

- What did you see?
- Consider the pictures we examined on the first day. What connections do you see between the ideas in this video and our observations from those pictures?
- Can gentrification be used to preserve what is good about a community?
- Did you have any questions or wonderings that were answered by this video?
- Are there any new questions or wonderings?

Exit Ticket

How would you define gentrification in your own words?

If your community changed dramatically through gentrification or resident led improvements, what would be important to save or ensure was preserved?


**Homework**

**If students live in an under-resourced or gentrifying area**

Students should take or find photos of a street or area in their neighborhood and bring them for the next class. They should consider what areas or buildings should change and what buildings or areas should be preserved or restored.

**If students DO NOT live in an under-resourced or gentrifying area**

Research a gentrifying or under resourced area in your city or state. Find pictures and information about that area to help identify what the culture of the region is like. Who lives there and what are some of the challenges they face? How would you interact with the current community to support rather than replace it? Identify at least one site to be preserved and one to be replaced. (Please note that a site can be a building, landmark, or area)

**Lesson Three**

**Create a Neighborhood Improvement or Preservation Plan (30 minutes)**

In pairs or groups, students should use the photographs they took or found of their current neighborhood and pictures of new buildings to create their ideal neighborhood map. This can be done digitally or as an analog project.

NOTE: Teachers should provide magazines for students to use if they aren’t able to take photographs. Photographs/images of buildings in magazines can be used to represent buildings that are to be replaced or restored.

Students should create a Neighborhood Improvement or Preservation Plan to improve or protect their neighborhood. They should identify at least three buildings or locations to preserve, restore or replace.

Students should include in their plan:

- Who has historically lived in the area?
- Description of the culture of the area.
- What elements of gentrification are present in this area?
- Identify the places to be preserved, restored, or replaced.
- Why should they be preserved, restored, or replaced?
- How can they reserve, restore, or replace them?
- What would be the impact of reserving, restoring, or replacing those locations?
- What role do current residents play in making those things happen?

**Small group sharing (30 minutes)**

Students will share their new neighborhood and plan with the class.
Assessment:
- Discussion Participation
- Creation of the Gentrification T-Chart
- Rubric for Neighborhood Preservation Plan

What You Need

Materials and handouts you will need to complete the below activities.

- Library of Congress primary source analysis tool
- Photos of Gentrified Communities
  - Washington, District of Columbia
  - New York City
- See, Think, Wonder Thinking Routine
- Values, Identities and Actions Thinking Routine
- The Lowdown’s Gentrification Post
- Urban Displacement Project - Video on Gentrification
- PBS video on gentrification – Video on Gentrification
- Pictures of the student’s Neighborhoods
- Magazines or online pictures
- Poster board or chart paper
# Gentrification

**Where and description of history and culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Identified a neighborhood to preserve, restore or protect. Described the history and culture using at least three significant historical markers/events and three aspects of culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identified a neighborhood to preserve, restore or protect. Described the history and culture using two historical markers/events and two aspects of culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Identified a neighborhood to preserve, restore or protect. Described the history and culture generally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identified a neighborhood to preserve, restore or protect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What is happening?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Describes what elements of gentrification are happening in this neighborhood and includes detailed, specific explanation as to why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Describes elements of gentrification in the neighborhood and includes brief explanation as to why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Describes gentrification in the neighborhood and offers a general, non-specific reason why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Describes gentrification generally, not really specific to this neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What can be done? The plan!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Identifies three specific steps to preserve, improve or combat gentrification, but not really specific to this neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identifies two steps to preserve, improve or combat gentrification, but not really specific to this neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Identifies three specific steps to preserve, improve or combat gentrification, but not really specific to this neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Offers general ideas about how to combat gentrification, but not really specific to this neighborhood.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of the resident</td>
<td>Improve or restore the neighborhood history and culture and what impact this will have.</td>
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| Gave Presentation | Student gave presentation. | | | |

**Total Points:** /24

**Comments, Suggestions, and Questions:**