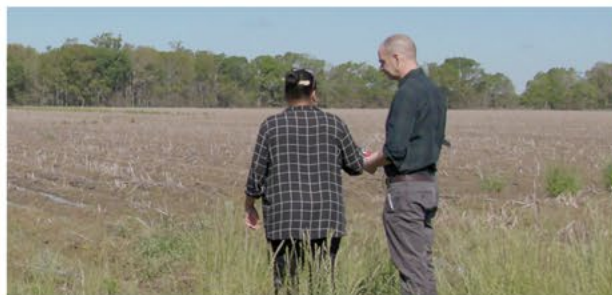
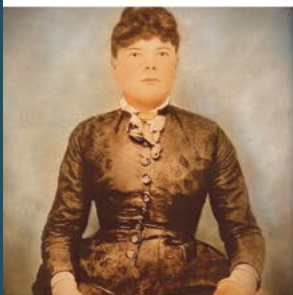




ACTS OF



REPARATION



Small acts can lead to big change

GREENHOUSE PICTURES AND FIRST DATE FILMS IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES PRESENT A FILM BY SELINA LEWIS DAVIDSON AND MACKY ALSTON "ACTS OF REPARATION"
MUSIC BY CAMARA KAMBON EDITED BY NATASHA LIVIA MATTOLA DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY TONY HARDMON ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS ARTEMIS FANNIN ELSPEITH GILMORE JULIA RHODES DAVIS ELLY SCHMIDT-HOPPER
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ABBY SHUMAN CYNTHIA HENEGBRY PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY SELINA LEWIS DAVIDSON AND MACKY ALSTON



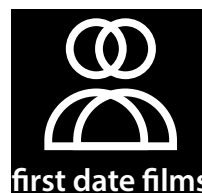
ACTS OF REPARATION



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Note to users: Each section is designed to be used independently and can stand alone for learning and growth in these areas in connection with the film. You can also use the guide in its entirety for a rich, in-depth learning experience.



FACILITATION GUIDELINES



Filmmakers use immersive storytelling to produce intense thoughts and emotions in the viewer. **Journeys in Film** uses this powerful medium as a springboard for meaningful dialogue around humanity's most pressing issues. In this guide, you will find suggestions for leading productive conversations that broaden perspectives, increase global competency, encourage empathy, and build new paradigms for education.

- When watching a film or having a powerful discussion, normalize taking breaks and exercising bodily autonomy. Acknowledge that conversations around complex topics can be vulnerable, complicated, and challenging. Encourage members to voice and do what is right for them without needing to explain or apologize.
- People do their best when they know what to expect. Start and end your meetings on time.
- Share or co-create your intentions for the meeting.
- Create your space. If possible, share snacks or find other ways to create an inviting, comfortable atmosphere.
- Create a trustworthy space. Maintain confidentiality and only speak to your own experience.
- Minimize distractions while you are together. Silence cell phones and devices so you can give your full attention to the conversation.
- Practice whole-body listening. Listen to words, tone, body language, and the feeling in the atmosphere.
- Acknowledge voices that may be absent. Is there a lived experience that isn't represented in your group? Who are the bridge people who might be able to connect you with other people in your community who might bring new perspectives to the table?
- Adopt an attitude of positive intent. If someone says something that bothers you, assume positive intent and ask for more information.
- Ignite your curiosity around other people's views and opinions. Listen to understand, not to respond. You don't need to agree with others in your group or make it known that you are "right" to have a worthwhile conversation.
- Words matter. Be open to learning and practicing new ways to communicate with others.
- Be clear, direct, and kind in your communication. Nobody benefits when you bottle your opinions.
- Everyone has blind spots and biases; cultivate a space of grace as you enter into new territory together.
- If a conversation gets heated, practice acknowledging the tension, pausing as a group, and taking a collective breath together before diving back in or taking a longer break to reset.
- Privilege your relationships with others over the content or agenda of the meeting. Show each other kindness.
- Create a closing ritual that celebrates the time you've spent together and either gives closure or gives members something to think about before your next meeting.



INTRODUCTION TO THE FILM



Acts of Reparation is a powerful documentary highlighting truth-telling, historical inquiry, collective memory, and the community-centered work of restoring dignity to stories that have been fractured by time, oppression, and silence. The film follows the intertwined journeys of Selina, a Black woman reclaiming her family's history in Louisiana, and Macky, a white man confronting the legacy of enslavement in his own ancestry. As they uncover documents, tend ancestral burial grounds, gather relatives for difficult conversations, and share community stories, their individual pursuits of truth eventually converge into a shared journey of understanding, accountability, and repair. At the core of the film is a broader exploration of how history is preserved within families and communities. Through Selina and Macky's friendship, the film shows how trust, patience, empathy, and honest dialogue can create the conditions for healing across historical lines of harm.

Understanding the experiences shown in the film requires grounding in the broader arc of American history. For more than two centuries, from 1619 until 1865, slavery in the United States shaped the nation's economic structures, political systems, cultural practices, and racial hierarchies. The enslavement of over four million Black people generated enormous wealth for white landowners and growing industries in the United States, exceeding the monetary value of all railroads and factories combined. While Black families endured forced labor and the destruction of family connections, the concentration of wealth in the hands of white families created advantages that carried forward through generations.

After emancipation, the Reconstruction era lasted from 1865 to 1877 and represented a brief period of possibility for newly freed African Americans. During this time, they built schools, reunited families, established churches, and held local and state political offices. Yet this progress was violently undermined by white supremacist backlash, discriminatory laws, and organized campaigns to restrict Black freedom. After Reconstruction was overturned, the Jim Crow era took shape, lasting roughly from 1877 through the mid-1960s. Jim Crow laws enforced segregation, voter suppression, and unequal access to education, housing, and employment. These systems prevented Black families from building or passing down wealth and created gaps in public memory, family records, and community history.



The ongoing reparations movement, which has roots in the early twentieth century and gained national momentum in the late 1990s, seeks to address the compounded harms caused by slavery, racial oppression, and systematic exclusion. Though debates about federal policy continue, communities across the country have developed their own forms of reparative justice. Examples include memorials, remembrance ceremonies, land acknowledgments, historical preservation projects, genealogical investigations, and initiatives that center wealth redistribution, land return, and the transfer of resources for long-term equity. *Acts of Reparation* situates itself within the broader movement focusing on the work that families and communities take on when institutions fail to acknowledge or repair historical harm. It highlights small and large acts of restoration, including clearing overgrown graveyards, reclaiming oral histories, reconstructing genealogies, engaging in honest conversations about history and responsibility, and shifting assets such as funding, land access, and institutional support toward under-resourced cultural centers and descendant-led initiatives. These efforts show that repair begins in places where people choose to honor memory and confront the past with honesty and care.

The themes presented in the film help learners understand that reparation can take many forms and that truth lies in everyday places. Learners will see how trust-building efforts between Selina and Macky enable difficult conversations and shared acts of restoration. Their friendship grows through small, repeated decisions to stay present with one another. They ask questions that are emotionally risky. They share discoveries about their families that are painful or complicated and they listen with care and humility. Their relationship illustrates how solidarity and accountability can emerge not through grand statements, but through steady, relational work. Their trust for each other models the kind of emotional and relational labor needed to undertake repair in any community.

Additional Resources

Acts of Reparation Film Website.

<https://www.actsofreparation.com/>

African American History. National Archives.

<https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/african-american-history?>

The African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship.

Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african-american-odyssey/reconstruction.html>

“The Case for Reparations” Ta-Nehisi Coates, *The Atlantic*,

2014. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

Creating Jim Crow. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

<https://www.searchablemuseum.com/creating-jim-crow/>

Jim Crow and Segregation Primary Sources. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/jim-crow-segregation/>

NAACP Reparations.

<https://naacp.org/resources/reparations?utm>

NAARC 10-point Reparations Program. National African American Reparations Commission.

<https://reparationscomm.org/reparations-plan/>

National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC)

<https://reparationscomm.org/>

Reconstruction in America: Racial Violence after the Civil War, 1865-1876. Equal Justice Initiative.

<https://eji.org/report/reconstruction-in-america/>

Slavery & Freedom. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

<https://www.searchablemuseum.com/slavery-and-freedom/>

“Why we need reparations for Black Americans.”

The Brookings Institution.

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-we-need-reparations-for-black-americans/>



A LETTER FROM THE FILMMAKERS



Filmmakers Selina Lewis Davidson and Macky Alston

Dear friends,

We are delighted that you are interested in bringing *Acts of Reparation* to your classroom or group. It is no small thing these days to help people and communities be keepers of their own histories. As Roosevelt Wright says in our film, history starts with your family. That is what has brought history to life for us. We hope it does the same for the people you aim to engage with the film and this guide.

Early in the film, we share the story of Selina’s dream in which she is told by a teacher that she doesn’t have a story. The film reveals what is true for all of us: We all have heartbreaking, sometimes heroic, sometimes problematic pasts that include ancestors who worked hard so future generations like ours could flourish. We hope that those with whom you share *Acts of Reparation* embark on a journey like we did, one that makes their ancestors come to life for them and reveals longings and callings that give their lives meaning.

It meant the world for us to be “lab partners” together as we did our family history and explored what healing and repair might look like for our families, communities, and this country. Consider how similar collaboration might be possible with the group you are engaging. Friendship can provide a meaningful and durable context for difficult explorations and conversations when they are facilitated well.

This is critical work you are doing. If you are able to help members of your community understand the truth of their past and think about what healing from its harm might look like, people are more likely to know who they are, what time it is in this nation’s history, and how to act ethically for a brighter future.

May your own journey be fulfilling as you consider your story, and may the lives of those you engage be enriched by this work.

With gratitude,

Selina and Macky
Filmmakers, *Acts of Reparation*

SUPPORTING LEARNERS WITHOUT ACCESS TO BIOLOGICAL FAMILY HISTORIES



Acts of Reparation centers on genealogical research, family history, and ancestral memory. However, educators should be mindful that not all learners have access to information about their biological families. Some may be adopted, in foster care, estranged from family members, displaced by migration, or lacking records due to war, incarceration, or historical trauma. Others may simply not feel comfortable discussing family matters.

To ensure an inclusive learning environment:

1. Broaden the definition of “family history.”

Instead of focusing solely on biological lineage, invite learners to explore:

- chosen family
- cultural or community traditions
- important adults in their lives
- neighborhood or local histories
- community archives or public records
- collective identities they participate in

2. Provide multiple entry points into genealogical inquiry.

Students may:

- research local historical sites
- interview a mentor or community elder
- analyze a cultural practice meaningful to them
- reflect on stories from their community, school, or neighborhood
- explore a historical event connected to their identity

No learner should be required to disclose personal or sensitive information.

3. Offer alternatives to sharing personal stories.

Include options such as private journaling, fictionalized narratives, archival exploration, or creative projects that do not require personal family details.

4. Avoid assumptions.

Use inclusive language such as “people who influence you,” “stories connected to your community,” or “a tradition that shapes your identity” to prevent placing learners in uncomfortable positions.

5. Build psychologically safe environments.

Genealogical and historical inquiry can evoke strong emotions. Offer opportunities to opt out, step away, or choose a different activity. Normalize diverse family experiences and emphasize that identity is shaped by many forces, not only ancestry.

By creating flexibility, honoring privacy, and recognizing diverse lived experiences, educators can ensure that all learners can engage meaningfully with the film’s themes of memory, identity, justice, and repair.



RACE, PRIVILEGE, AND RECKONING



DRIVING QUESTION

How does systemic racism pass from one generation to the next, and how can you recognize its influence in your own life and community?

Race and privilege in the United States are products of long historical systems that have shaped opportunity, identity, and memory across generations. Understanding these systems requires looking at how racial hierarchies were built, how they became embedded in family lineage, and how they continue to influence daily life even when people are unaware of their origins. In *Acts of Reparation*, the journeys of Macky and Selina highlight these realities by showing how the past lives on through inherited advantages, silenced histories, and emotional legacies that are passed down within families.

The concept of white privilege, which refers to unearned benefits that come from racial identity, originated in the economic and social structures created during slavery. It was later reinforced through Jim Crow laws, discriminatory land policy, limited access to education, and racist housing practices. Macky's discoveries regarding his family history reflect how these structures accumulate over time. His efforts to reckon with his ancestry show what it means to confront the truth that privilege is not simply personal wealth or comfort. Instead, it is a system of advantages that was built on the exploitation of marginalized people. The film highlights that inherited privilege is not a personal moral failure, but a historical reality that can be acknowledged, examined, and used as a starting point for action.

It is also important to note that Macky tries to move toward repair. He chooses not to turn away from the discomfort that comes with learning about his family's past. Instead, he brings difficult truths to his family, begins conversations that others have avoided, and attempts to take personal and collective steps toward repair. These efforts model one way that acknowledging privilege can become a catalyst for meaningful action.

Selina's journey to Louisiana demonstrates how many Black families inherit trauma, displacement, and gaps in historical records because of enslavement and systemic violence. Reclaiming her family's story becomes an act of resistance against erasure. This reflects a broader reality. For many Black families in the United States, history has been distorted or suppressed, which requires intentional work to rebuild narratives and affirm identity. Her experience shows how racial inequity is not only material. It also shapes emotions, identity, community belonging, and intergenerational memory.

Together, the stories of Selina and Macky offer an entry point for understanding how systemic racism functions as an inherited structure rather than a set of individual beliefs. Their journeys reveal how race is socially constructed, how privilege and disadvantage accumulate over time, and how reckoning requires honesty, discomfort, and a willingness to question family narratives.





Personal Reflection

What does it mean to repair harm that you did not personally create?

Discussion Questions

1. Systemic racism often appears in everyday structures, even when no one is explicitly speaking about race. What examples have you noticed in housing, media, land ownership, education, or social expectations? How does the film help you see these systems more clearly?
2. Where do you notice silence, avoidance, or missing information in the families shown in the film? How does silence function as a way that racism is inherited? How does silence protect some people and harm others?
3. When Macky tries to talk with his family about their history, what challenges or resistance does he face? What does this show us about how hard it can be to confront racism inside our own families or social circles? What pressures might he feel to “keep the peace”?
4. Selina’s journey shows how reclaiming lost or distorted narratives is a form of resistance. How does Selina’s work to reclaim her family’s history challenge historical erasure? How does recovering her family’s story empower both her and her community?
5. Thinking about your own community, where do you see signs that past racial injustice still shapes present-day life, such as access to resources?
6. Based on the film, what are some concrete ways that people today can interrupt the cycle of inherited racism, both in their own families and in their wider communities?

Extension Activities

1. Art for Reckoning Exhibit

Create artwork, poems, collages, or digital designs responding to the question “What part of our community’s history needs reckoning?” Display the artworks in a gallery wall or community space, accompanied by artist statements. Host a dialogue where participants reflect on how creative expression can support healing, truth-telling, and understanding across generations.

2. Historical Stories Inquiry Project:

Examine one well-known historical story that is frequently taught or referenced and compare it with a lesser-known or missing narrative connected to the same era or issue. Analyze what perspectives are elevated, what voices are missing, and how institutions or systems shape which histories are preserved. Share findings by creating a “missing chapter” to fill in the gaps through writing, audio, video, or visual media. Conclude with a conversation on historical erasure and the consequences of partial storytelling. (Use **Handout A: Researching Well-Known Historical Narratives Along with Lesser-Known or Missing Narratives** for guidance on helping learners explore both kinds of stories.)

3. Conduct short, non-intrusive interviews with a family member, neighbor, or community member about a local event, community change, or memory. The purpose is not to uncover painful personal histories but to practice respectful listening, curiosity, and awareness of generational patterns. Compile stories into a booklet, timeline, or audio collage. Reflect on how everyday memories help reveal systemic patterns.

4. After discussing race, privilege, and inherited inequality, work in groups to imagine one realistic act of repair that could occur in a family, school, or community. Consider what resources are needed, who should participate, and what outcomes you hope to see. Present group ideas in short pitches, allowing each group to share visuals or examples that illustrate their proposed act of repair.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Historical erasure: The removal, suppression, or distortion of historical records and narratives, especially those that belong to marginalized communities.

Implicit bias: Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that influence understanding and behavior without intentional control.

Intergenerational trauma: Trauma that is passed from one generation to the next as a result of historical oppression, violence, displacement, or family separation.

Racial literacy: The ability to recognize, understand, name, and respond to racism at interpersonal and systemic levels.

Reckoning: The act of confronting and taking responsibility for historical harms, and choosing actions that contribute to acknowledgment, healing, and repair.

Systemic racism: A set of institutional, cultural, and policy-based practices that work together to create and maintain racial inequality across areas such as housing, education, policing, and wealth.

White privilege: Unearned social, economic, and political advantages that white people receive only because of their racial identity, which accumulate across generations through systems of power.

Additional Resources

What is Systemic Racism? Race Forward. Video Series.
<https://www.raceforward.org/resources/video-series/what-systemic-racism>

***White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh. 1989.**
https://www.nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/Knapsack_plus_Notes-Peggy_McIntosh.pdf

***Individual, Collective, and Intergenerational Trauma Recovery: Considering the Restorative Roles of Restitution and Reparations.* American Psychological Association.**
<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/trauma-recovery-restitution-reparations>

Equal Justice Initiative Reports.
<https://eji.org/reports/>

Library of Congress
<https://www.loc.gov/>

National Archives
<https://www.archives.gov/>

Racial Literacy. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz. National Council of Teachers of English.
https://ncte.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Squire-OfficePolicyBrief_RacialLiteracy_April2021.pdf

Smithsonian digital resources
<https://www.si.edu/explore>

***Belinda Sutton and Her Petitions.* The Royall House and Slave Quarters.**
<https://royallhouse.org/slavery/belinda-sutton-and-her-petitions/>



TRUST-BUILDING AS A CATALYST FOR HEALING



DRIVING QUESTION

How does trust-building create the conditions for honest dialogue, shared understanding, and healing across differences?

Trust is a foundational ingredient in any process of truth-telling, repair, or transformation. In *Acts of Reparation*, the friendship between Selina and Macky models what it looks like when two people commit to building trust across racial, cultural, and historical differences. Their ability to ask difficult questions, sit with discomfort, and remain connected through moments of revelation emerged from years of intentional relationship-building. As they revisit family histories shaped by inequity, their mutual trust becomes a catalyst for deeper honesty and shared responsibility.

Trust-building is not a passive experience. It requires active listening, humility, and a willingness to step into uncertainty without defensiveness. Healthy trust also centers on ethical reasoning, which includes understanding the impact of one's actions, respecting boundaries, and recognizing when to challenge or when to support. Selina and Macky demonstrate how trust allows people to explore challenging truths without fragmenting the relationship, and how trust can make room for accountability rather than avoidance.

Healing and repair become possible when trust creates a space where truth can be spoken without fear and received without denial. Both filmmakers show that honest connection can uncover painful histories, but it can also generate mutual support, clarity, and courage. Their friendship demonstrates how trust can become a bridge between people who hold different lived experiences, allowing them to share the emotional weight of complex histories and collaborate in imagining a more just future. In this way, trust-building is not only interpersonal; it becomes a social and civic practice that helps communities heal from inherited harm and move toward collective repair.

Personal Reflection

When have you experienced a situation where trust helped you have a difficult or uncomfortable conversation? What made that trust possible?

Discussion Questions

1. Trust can deepen when people feel heard and respected. What behaviors or attitudes help you feel genuinely listened to? How can these practices support conversations across racial, cultural, or ideological differences?
2. The film suggests that the modeling of trust between two people can ripple outward, influencing families, communities, and public dialogues about truth and history. Think beyond individual relationships to civic and collective repair. How can communities build trust after historical wounds or injustice? What small, realistic actions can communities take to rebuild trust over time?
3. Ethical reasoning involves balancing honesty, care, and responsibility. How do you decide what to share, when to challenge, or when to listen? What values guide your choices in a difficult conversation?
4. Empathy does not require agreement, but it does require attention. What does empathy look like in practice, especially when someone's experience differs from your own? How can empathy help build bridges in divided spaces?
5. Trust-building takes time and intention. Selina and Macky show that trust develops slowly through years of listening, showing up, and staying committed through tension. Their friendship demonstrates how trust creates the safety needed to ask hard questions. What small actions can strengthen trust, and what actions might weaken or erode it?
6. In their conversations, Selina and Macky each hold different perspectives shaped by race, history, and lived experience, which influence how they hear and respond to each other. Their trust helps them acknowledge these dynamics honestly. Discuss how identity, history, and social roles can shape trust. How do power dynamics influence who feels safe to speak? What can people do to redistribute power in a dialogue to make it more equitable?

7. Examine the balance between inquiry and humility. Macky and Selina model generous listening when they make room for one another's emotions, histories, and perspectives without rushing to defend or deny. Throughout their journey, both filmmakers balance asking deep, challenging questions with stepping back to make space for the other person's truth. Their dynamic shows the importance of timing, sensitivity, and humility that approaches listening as an act of care, not agreement. When is it appropriate to ask hard questions, and when is it better to listen instead? What signals can help you decide which path to take in a conversation?

8. Reflect on how vulnerability can feel risky or empowering depending on the level of trust. How does trust change the way people interpret vulnerability? What does healthy vulnerability look like, and how does it support meaningful dialogue?

Extension Activities

1. Listening Skills Workshop:

Engage learners in a guided practice that includes paraphrasing, asking clarifying questions, and demonstrating nonverbal attentiveness. After paired activities, debrief what behaviors help build trust and what could possibly create distance or disconnection. Conclude with a reflection on how these skills could support conversations about complex social issues. (Use **Handout B — Listening Skills Workshop: Starter Prompts and Sample Topics** to help learners warm up for the Listening Skills Workshop. The suggested light topics and starter phrases give students an easy way to begin practicing paraphrasing, clarifying questions, and attentive listening without the pressure of discussing complex or personal issues.)

2. Empathy Mapping:

Learners choose a fictional character or historical figure. (Encourage them to steer away from current figures or complex issues.) Have learners create an empathy map identifying what this person might think, feel, fear, or hope for. This exercise helps learners explore how perspective-taking strengthens communication and reduces assumptions

- a. Give learners a copy of **Handout C — Empathy Mapping**. Have them record the name of the chosen fictional character or historical figure whose perspective they



are considering. Ask learners to record key details about things their subject may have said, including words or phrases that jumped out to them. Also, have them record their subject’s physical actions and what they can infer from them, as well as their potential thoughts and feelings.

- b. **Debrief:** As a large learning group, in small groups, or through reflective writing, explore the following questions:
- Did this activity deepen your empathy for the subject and their lived experience? Do you understand it in a different way?
 - What personal experience or background knowledge did you draw on as you made your inferences about your subject’s thoughts and feelings or interpreted their actions and motivations? Were you reminded of anyone or anything else?
 - How might your personal experience or background knowledge shape the kinds of conclusions you came to about your subject’s thoughts, feelings, and motivations?

3. Collaborative Trust Contract:

Groups will write and design their own “trust contract,” listing behaviors, commitments, and shared principles that support healthy dialogue. They then present their contract to the class and explain why each principle matters. This contract can later guide discussions throughout the unit. Note: This activity is an excellent way to begin the school year or semester because it invites learners to co-create the norms and behaviors that will shape their learning environment and set classroom expectations. By articulating shared commitments, students build ownership of the classroom culture and establish a foundation for respectful, constructive dialogue.

4. Repair Partners Dialogue:

Pair learners for a structured conversation where each person shares a story of a time when trust was broken and a time when trust was repaired. After listening, partners identify common themes and share insights in a larger discussion. The activity emphasizes vulnerability, listening, and relational accountability.

NOTE: It is critical that participants feel safe and are safe to express themselves. This activity works best with individuals who know each other fairly well, have been together in the classroom or group setting for a significant time, and have strong, respectful, and supportive dynamics. In addition, specify to learners that they have the option to choose a “low stakes” experience that they feel more comfortable sharing. These avoid personal or emotionally heavy topics while still illustrating what it feels like to lose and rebuild trust in everyday life.

If needed, low-stakes examples can include:

- **Customer or retail experiences:** A store promising to hold an item that was not there when they arrived; a delivery arriving late and then the company making it right with an apology or refund.
- **School or work situations:** A partner not bringing needed materials for an assignment but fixing it later; someone not showing up for a meeting time but apologizing and adjusting.
- **Friend or peer situations:** A minor disagreement over a game, plan, or shared activity that was resolved quickly; a misread text message that caused a quick misunderstanding but was cleared up after talking.

5. Representations of Trust and Conflict:

As a full group, have learners think and call out scenes or situations from their favorite films, TV shows, podcasts, or documentaries where trust is either built or broken. List those as examples. Then have learners analyze these scenes to examine what communication strategies worked, which failed, and why.

If needed, some here are some examples:

- ***Wicked, 2024*** — At the school dance, Glinda plays a hurtful prank on Elphaba by tricking her into wearing an old, pointed hat as a “gift.” Elphaba walks into the ballroom unaware that she is being mocked, and her humiliation is heightened when other students laugh at her appearance. Their dance together sets the stage for Glinda’s growth, their evolving friendship, and mutual trust later in the story.
- ***Wonder (2017)*** — Auggie feels betrayed when he overhears a friend making fun of him, and later the two reconcile.

- ***Finding Nemo (2003)*** — Marlin refuses to trust Dory’s ability to read the scuba mask and dismisses her when she insists they follow the directions. Hurt and frustrated, Dory pushes ahead alone and ends up in danger when the anglerfish attacks her. This moment shows how Marlin’s mistrust puts them both at risk, and becomes an important turning point in learning to rely on Dory’s strengths.

6. Community Trust Audit

Learners identify one public institution (school, library, faith community, local government office) and evaluate how trust is cultivated or challenged within it. They may conduct brief interviews, observe interactions, or analyze policies. Groups then propose strategies that promote trust-building between institutions and the people they serve.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Active listening: A communication practice involving full attention, reflection, clarifying questions, and withholding judgment to support understanding.

Civic empathy: The ability to understand and respect the experiences of others in ways that strengthen community connection and democratic participation.

Ethical reasoning: The process of evaluating actions and decisions using principles such as fairness, responsibility, honesty, and care.

Psychological safety: A sense of trust that allows individuals to express ideas, concerns, and mistakes without fear of negative consequences.

Additional Resources

Active Listening. Center for Engaged Pedagogy. Barnard College.

<https://cep.barnard.edu/active-listening>

Becoming a Better Listener. University of Washington.

<https://sas.uaa.uw.edu/husky-experience/know-yourself/becoming-a-better-listener/>

Civic Empathy Project. Heinz History Center.

<https://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/about/history-center-affiliates-program/civic-empathy-project/>

Ethical Reasoning. Virginia Commonwealth University.

<https://guide.fcu.edu/skills/ethical-reasoning/>

“Practices That Support Listening.” National Council of Teachers of English.

<https://ncte.org/blog/2022/01/practices-support-listening/>

Psychological Safety. The Decision Lab.

<https://thedecisionlab.com/reference-guide/psychology/psychological-safety?>



HONORING THE TRUTH: PRESERVING COLLECTIVE MEMORY THROUGH HISTORICAL INQUIRY



DRIVING QUESTION

How does the preservation of stories shape our understanding of history, identity, and community? What happens when those stories are lost, erased, or ignored?

Collective memory is sustained through the everyday places where stories live: kitchen tables, front porches, church pews, handwritten letters, photo boxes, and other community spaces. In *Acts of Reparation*, these familiar spaces function as informal archives that preserve histories often missing from official records. The act of remembering together becomes a form of resistance against erasure and a way to protect what might otherwise be lost. When people gather to share memories, they reinforce identity, rebuild lineage, and affirm belonging across generations.

Historical memory is never neutral. Genealogical documents, monuments, museum exhibits, school curricula, media narratives, and oral traditions all shape how communities understand their past. Some histories are passed down widely, while others are silenced, distorted, or forgotten. The film invites viewers to reflect on how both Selina's and Macky's families have inherited stories that reveal, obscure, or complicate the truth. Each generation plays a role in historical inquiry and truth-telling. Elders, adults, and young people all carry pieces of memory that, when shared, form a fuller understanding of the past. Even simple acts such as asking a relative about a childhood experience, recording a neighbor's recollections, tending to a gravesite, or examining a photograph contribute to preserving truth.

Historical inquiry does not require a degree or a formal archive; it can begin in the intimate and accessible spaces people already share. Through primary sources, storytelling, media literacy, and cultural research, we discover that honoring the truth is both a personal responsibility and a communal act of preservation. This has become more and more relevant as technologies such as artificial intelligence, search engines, and algorithms play a significant role in how information is gathered, stored, shared, and interpreted. These tools shape how we understand identity and representation, often amplifying certain narratives while flattening or erasing others. As a result, it is important to become critical investigators who can recognize gaps, question sources, and evaluate how technology frames the past. There is an opportunity to blend these methods of using digital tools to document, preserve, or research history while recognizing that collective memory is ultimately sustained through relationships, shared spaces, and authentic storytelling. This willingness to pair technological literacy with community-based memory practices will influence how future generations understand the past and envision a more truthful, inclusive history.





Personal Reflection

What space in your life has served as a place where stories are shared or remembered? How does that space influence what you understand about the past?

Discussion Questions

1. The film shows that important histories are often preserved in informal spaces rather than official archives. Why do everyday spaces like porches, kitchens, and graveyards matter for historical memory?
2. Selina's journey reveals how oral storytelling fills gaps created by missing documents, displaced ancestors, or lost archives. How do oral stories function as historical records? What strengths and challenges come with relying on oral histories to understand the past?
3. What role do monuments, museums, and public markers play in shaping collective memory? What public narratives do you see in your own community, and what do they reveal or hide about the past?
4. The film demonstrates that when names and stories disappear, entire communities lose parts of their identity. What forms of erasure have you noticed in society, and what are the consequences for future generations?
5. The media shapes narratives that people see about race, ancestry, and belonging. What questions should we ask when evaluating historical claims in documentaries, books, news, or social media?
6. In the film, rediscovered histories lead to clarity, reconnection, and emotional grounding. How might uncovering suppressed history support personal or communal healing?

Extension Activities

1. Community Memory Mapping:

In small groups, have learners explore their communities using tools such as Google Maps, Google Earth, local GIS (Geographic Information System) databases, or official city and state historical maps to identify sites of preservation and shared memory spaces. These may include historical markers, landmarks, renamed streets, memorials, cemeteries, museums, culturally significant neighborhoods, murals, or small local archives. After locating these sites, groups will analyze what stories these places highlight and consider what patterns they see in how public memory is preserved. Have groups propose ways to identify and elevate lesser-known stories and voices within their community. (E.g. site visits to these community spaces for deeper inquiry, conversations with community members and elders, attending community history talks, library workshops, museum programming, cultural festivals, or historical society meetings that might highlight overlooked figures and stories.)

2. Identify a local historical society or other places that house local archives. Have learners visit in person or utilize digital archives to examine primary sources such as census records, photographs, newspaper archives, church bulletins, and oral transcripts. Have each learner choose one artifact and interpret what it reveals about identity, community, or historical context. Share findings in a short presentation or digital exhibit. (If learners have trouble accessing local archives, recommend that they look for local artifacts using national databases such as the Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/>))

3. "Missing Monument" Proposal:

Have learners research a person, event, or community that is not represented in local, state, or national public memory. Have them design a concept for a monument, plaque, or public art piece that would honor this history. Make sure the learners specify why this commemoration is needed and what truth it restores.

4. Archival Detective Challenge:

Have learners compare two sources, such as a textbook passage and a primary document, about the same event and note similarities or omissions. Then analyze how perspective shapes historical writing and discuss how different sources contribute to a fuller understanding of truth.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Collective memory: Shared remembrance passed through communities, shaping identity and cultural continuity.

Genealogical research: The study of ancestry using documents, oral histories, and records to trace lineage.

Historical erasure: The removal, suppression, or distortion of historical records and narratives, especially those that belong to marginalized communities.

Oral history: Recorded or remembered accounts passed down verbally, often preserving voices absent from written archives.

Primary sources: Original documents, artifacts, or records created during the time being studied.

Public memory: The way societies remember the past through monuments, museums, narratives, and shared symbols.

Additional Resources

Collective Memory. American Psychological Association.
<https://dictionary.apa.org/collective-memory>

Collective Memory. EBSCO Knowledge Advantage.
<https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/psychology/collective-memory>

National Genealogical Society
<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

Library of Congress
<https://www.loc.gov/>

National Archives
<https://www.archives.gov/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation
<https://savingplaces.org/>

Oral History Association
<https://oralhistory.org>

Equal Justice Initiative Reports
<https://eji.org/reports/>

Smithsonian digital resources
<https://www.si.edu/explore>

Reparations Program Gives Black Detroiters \$25K Toward Home Ownership And Genealogy Tracing. Black Enterprise.
<https://www.blackenterprise.com/reparations-program-black-detroiters-home-ownership-genealogy-tracing/>

Reparations Bills Establish Foundation to Turn California's Vision Into Reality. KQED News.
<https://www.kqed.org/news/12060403/reparations-bills-establish-foundation-to-turn-californias-vision-into-reality>

Belinda Sutton and Her Petitions. The Royall House and Slave Quarters.
<https://royallhouse.org/slavery/belinda-sutton-and-her-petitions/>



THE RELATIONAL WORK OF AUTHENTIC ALLYSHIP

DRIVING QUESTION

What does authentic allyship require from individuals, and how can we practice solidarity even when it feels uncomfortable or emotionally challenging?



Allyship is not a one-time gesture or a title someone earns; it is a lifelong practice. It requires individuals, especially those with identity-based privilege, to engage in ongoing self-reflection, a willingness to evolve, and the emotional resilience to remain committed even when it becomes uncomfortable. In *Acts of Reparation*, Macky's journey underscores this reality. He continually confronts his inherited privilege, acknowledges the legacy of harm within his lineage, and chooses to stay engaged, even when faced with painful truths and familial resistance. His vulnerability shows that effective allyship requires courage, humility, and steady commitment over time. Authentic allyship is rooted in solidarity that includes standing with, not in front of, historically marginalized communities.

Solidarity means listening before acting, following the leadership of those who have been harmed, and resisting the urge to control the narrative. It also means understanding that support is most powerful when it does not center the ally's comfort or validation. The film illustrates this dynamic through Macky's relationship with Selina. He learns to sit with the emotional weight of his discoveries without shifting that burden onto her. Instead, he cultivates a posture of learning, accountability, and shared purpose.

This work requires significant emotional and relational labor. Allies must develop the ability to hear uncomfortable truths without becoming defensive, to acknowledge harm without collapsing into guilt, and to stay engaged even when the process reveals painful or complicated histories. Relationally, it involves building trust through consistent action, practicing empathy, and honoring the lived experiences of others without diminishing or questioning them. Solidarity is not just about speaking up. It is about showing up, again and again, with integrity and care.

For communities who have been historically marginalized, trust is not given freely or automatically. Generations of harm, broken promises, and superficial gestures have created understandable barriers to trusting those who hold privilege. This makes psychological safety essential. Allies must work to create environments where marginalized individuals feel safe enough to speak truthfully, express frustration, name harm, or share their stories without fear of retaliation, dismissal, or further injury. Psychological safety is built through consistent respect, confidentiality, reliability, and a willingness to repair mistakes.

The **introspective work** of allyship involves examining one's own biases, privileges, inherited narratives, and emotional reactions. It requires asking: How have I benefited from this system? What assumptions do I carry? How do I respond to discomfort? Where do I still need to learn? This inner work is not meant to be performative but to cultivate self-awareness that supports ethical action. The **relational work**, meanwhile, focuses on how one's behavior affects others. It includes practicing deep listening, honoring boundaries, being accountable for harm (even unintended harm), and learning how to navigate conflict with care rather than avoidance. In *Acts of Reparation*, Macky's path reminds viewers that allyship is not about perfection. It is about persistence, honesty, emotional stamina, and a genuine desire to help build a more just and truthful future.





Personal Reflection

Think of a time when you felt supported or defended by someone in a meaningful way. What actions made their support feel genuine or trustworthy?

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways does authentic allyship ask individuals to examine their own beliefs, biases, and inherited histories?
2. Macky does not avoid the painful truth of his ancestors' involvement in slavery. He stays present even when it feels overwhelming. How can discomfort help someone grow as an ally? Why is avoiding discomfort harmful?
3. How do you define *solidarity*? What does it look like in your community, and what does it require from you personally?
4. The film shows Macky experiencing confusion, grief, frustration, and vulnerability as he uncovers family history. How does emotional labor show up in allyship?
5. Allyship in the film unfolds as a long-term commitment shaped by listening, learning, and changing. Why is allyship more than a single action or moment? What does ongoing allyship look like in everyday life, and what makes it sustainable?
6. Macky learns to hold space for Selina's experiences without centering his own discomfort. How can allies support marginalized communities without speaking over them? What does it mean to follow, to support, or to amplify rather than dominate?
7. Fear of making mistakes, worry about saying the wrong thing, and social pressure can prevent people from taking action. What are some other possible barriers to becoming an ally, and how can they be overcome? What encourages people to move past these barriers?

Extension Activities

1. Have learners identify a moment (personal, familial, or public) when someone confronted injustice or acknowledged their own privilege. Then analyze what made the moment courageous and what emotional work was involved.
2. In small groups, have students create a simple plan outlining how they can practice allyship in their school or community. The plan includes behaviors, commitments, boundaries, and accountability partners.
3. Ask learners to research and share healthy strategies for managing discomfort during difficult conversations, such as grounding exercises, reflection questions, or communication techniques.
4. Have learners research a local activist, organization, or community member who practices allyship. Then create a brief profile or presentation showing what characteristics they have that demonstrate sustained commitment or solidarity.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Allyship: A continuous practice of supporting, advocating for, and standing in solidarity with marginalized communities through action, reflection, and accountability.

Emotional labor: The internal emotional effort involved in navigating difficult situations, managing one's feelings, or supporting others through challenging conversations.

Solidarity: A commitment to collective well-being that involves aligning oneself with marginalized groups through shared action and responsibility.

Additional Resources

Drake University. Understanding Allyship.

<https://www.drake.edu/diversity/initiatives/training/ally/>

Race Forward

<https://www.raceforward.org/>

Showing up for Racial Justice

<https://surj.org/>

Smithsonian Learning Lab

<https://learninglab.si.edu/org/nmaahc>

UCSF Multicultural Resource Center. Allyship.

<https://mrc.ucsf.edu/allyship>

***How Racism Costs Everyone.* NPR. Fresh Air Podcast Series.**

[https://www.npr.org/2026/01/19/nx-s1-5680178/
how-racism-costs-everyone](https://www.npr.org/2026/01/19/nx-s1-5680178/how-racism-costs-everyone)



GRASSROOTS ACTS OF REPARATION



DRIVING QUESTION

What responsibilities do individuals and communities have in repairing historical harm when institutions have failed to do so?

Reparation is often framed as a matter for governments or large institutions, but *Acts of Reparation* shows that meaningful repair frequently begins with everyday people who recognize the importance of truth and dignity. The film reveals several moments of communal repair. Selina's relatives and local community members come together to restore burial grounds that had been neglected for decades. Descendants clear debris, uncover headstones, and document names nearly lost to time, transforming the physical act of tending graves into a symbolic and emotional commitment to honoring ancestors. Family gatherings become spaces for sharing stories across generations, including narratives of migration, resilience, dispossession, and identity that reconnect descendants to their history. Meanwhile, members of Macky's family gather to confront their ancestors' role in slavery, grappling with discomfort, accountability, and the emotional consequences of inherited privilege. These collective moments show how reparation begins with people choosing to engage the past together.



The film also demonstrates how grassroots repair can include the meticulous work of recovering historical documents such as land deeds, burial registries, church records, and family papers that help rebuild fragmented narratives. Community members become genealogists, archivists, and caretakers, filling gaps left by institutions that historically erased, excluded, or misrepresented Black families. In some cases, this historical recovery lays the groundwork for material repair, such as supporting efforts to return land, shift assets, or redirect resources to descendants and underfunded cultural institutions responsible for preserving community history. These acts, though localized and intimate, can influence how ownership, wealth, and responsibility are understood across generations.



Reparative justice takes multiple forms, each contributing to healing in different ways:

- **Legal reparation** involves formal policies, restitution, or institutional apologies often lacking in families’ histories, which is why grassroots action becomes so crucial.
- **Symbolic reparation** includes memorials, markers, ceremonies, and restorative gatherings. In the film, restoring burial sites and publicly honoring ancestors are symbolic acts of dignity and truth.
- **Cultural reparation** involves reclaiming and preserving stories, oral histories, traditions, and family narratives. Selina’s family storytelling circles and the reconstruction of genealogical histories are key examples.
- **Material reparation** includes wealth transfer, land return, and the intentional shifting of assets to resource underfunded cultural centers, descendant-led organizations, and community institutions that sustain long-term repair.

Acts of Reparation shows that justice grows from the ground up. Ordinary people such as descendants, neighbors, researchers, and caretakers lead this work because they hold commitment and responsibility for their communities.





Personal Reflection

What does “repair” mean to you, and what is one action, large or small, that you believe could help restore dignity, truth, or memory in a community you are part of?

Discussion Questions

1. The film shows that clearing a burial ground or naming forgotten ancestors is a powerful symbolic reparation. Why are symbolic acts meaningful even when they don’t change policy?
2. Selina’s family shares stories across generations that reclaim identity and truth. How do cultural acts of repair, such as storytelling circles, contribute to healing? How does preserving cultural memory help communities heal from historical harm?
3. Macky’s family conversations confront the truth of their role in slavery. How can acknowledging uncomfortable inherited histories support justice today?
4. Hands-on work becomes both a physical and emotional expression of repair. What does shared labor, such as cleaning a cemetery together, teach us about accountability and belonging?
5. The film centers the experiences of descendants directly connected to the harm. Why is it important that those most affected define the process of repair?
6. Selina’s and Macky’s families step into the work of preservation and accountability. How might future generations continue or expand repair work in shaping the future of their communities’ memory?
7. In the film, restoring burial grounds is considered a justice-oriented act of reparation and not an act of charity. What is the difference between charity and repair? Why is this distinction important for understanding reparation?

Extension Activities

1. In groups, students design a symbolic restoration project that requires no physical tools. Options may include remembrance rituals, public acknowledgment scripts, digital memorials, community zines, or audio tributes. The goal is to demonstrate that repair is not limited to physical labor and can emerge from intentional acts of storytelling, naming, and honoring.
2. Have learners brainstorm and complete a tiny but meaningful act of repair. Possibilities include writing acknowledgement cards to caretakers of historical spaces, creating short educational posters about local histories, cleaning a public learning space, or bringing attention to under-acknowledged changemakers in history. The goal is to show that civic agency is possible at any scale.
3. Have learners identify a tradition, recipe, song, practice, or community ritual that reflects cultural memory. Then research its origins, meaning, and what forces have threatened or preserved it. The final product may be a performance, demonstration, recipe card set, or short written narrative that explores cultural reparation through the survival of tradition.
4. **Grassroots Action Blueprint Project:** Ask learners to identify a community issue or cause that matters to them and create a detailed “action blueprint” that outlines how everyday people could respond through symbolic, cultural, or material acts of repair. The blueprint should map out the problem, why it matters, who is most impacted, and what small-scale steps individuals or groups could take to create change.

Useful Terms / Related Vocabulary

Cultural reparation: Preservation or restoration of stories, traditions, languages, and community memory.

Legal reparation: Government or institutional measures such as compensation, land restitution, or formal apologies.

Reparative justice: Approaches to repairing harm through legal, symbolic, or cultural actions that restore dignity and truth.

Symbolic reparation: Acts that acknowledge harm and honor ancestors, such as markers, memorials, ceremonies, and public acknowledgments.

Additional Resources

African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund
<https://savingplaces.org/african-american-cultural-heritage>

African American Cultural Heritage Sites. Examples of Cultural Restoration Projects.
<https://savingplaces.org/collections/african-american-heritage>

The fight to save America's historic Black cemeteries.
National Geographic.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/historic-black-cemeteries-at-risk-can-they-be-preserved>

African American Family Histories and Genealogies: A Resource Guide. Library of Congress.
<https://guides.loc.gov/african-american-family-histories/subjects>

The HistoryMakers
<https://www.thehistorymakers.org/>

Additional Resources, *continued*

International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) Resources
<https://www.ictj.org/reparations>

Institute for Economic and Racial Equity, Brandeis University
<https://heller.brandeis.edu/iere/>

National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC)
<https://reparationscomm.org/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation
<https://savingplaces.org/>

“Preserving African American Places: Growing Preservation’s Potential as a Path for Equity Report.”
African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund. National Trust for Historic Preservation.
<https://savingplaces.org/equity-report> and
https://cdn.savingplaces.org/2023/08/10/13/57/18/226/AACHAF_EquityStudyReport_lo-res.pdf

United Nations. Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law.
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/basic-principles-and-guidelines-right-remedy-and-reparation>

United Nations. Cultural heritage: 7 successes of UNESCO’s preservation work.
<https://www.unesco.org/en/cultural-heritage-7-successes-unescos-preservation-work>

RESEARCHING WELL-KNOWN HISTORICAL NARRATIVES ALONG WITH LESSER-KNOWN OR MISSING NARRATIVES



The following are a few examples of well-known and lesser-known historical narratives to help guide learners in examining how history is constructed, whose perspectives are elevated, and whose stories are often marginalized or missing. Research can be conducted using widely accessible online archives, including the Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/>), National Archives (<https://www.archives.gov/>), Smithsonian digital resources (<https://www.si.edu/explore>), university digital libraries, and other reputable history organizations.

To support research of both well-known and lesser-known narratives, begin by searching the broader topic or era (e.g., “American Revolution,” “Space Race,” “World War II”). Then, when exploring the archives, use a combination of general search terms, well-known events, and more targeted keywords to uncover some overlooked perspectives. Primary sources may include photographs, letters, oral histories, maps, government documents, videos, and news articles from the period. Secondary sources may include scholarly essays, museum exhibits, documentaries, or encyclopedia entries that provide interpretation and context.

Analyze findings by comparing what appears quickly in mainstream search results with what requires deeper inquiry. This practice helps observe how dominant narratives are preserved and circulated, while lesser-known stories often require more intentional searching. Look for patterns, such as whose voices are represented, whose labor or contributions are highlighted, and whose experiences are minimized or absent.

Examples of Well-Known Narratives along with Lesser-Known or Missing Narratives

Topic	Well-Known Narratives	Lesser-Known Narratives
American Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and other Founding Fathers The signing of the Declaration of Independence The Boston Tea Party as a symbol of American resistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of enslaved African Americans who fought for their own liberation (e.g., Crispus Attucks, the first person killed in the Boston Massacre) The impact of settler colonialism on Indigenous communities, including displacement, disease, warfare, and land theft. The Haitian Revolution’s influence on the resistance movement of enslaved African Americans and fears of rebellion in the U.S.
World War II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The United States as a liberator in World War II, defeating fascism abroad. D-Day as the turning point of the war Pearl Harbor as the catalyst that unified the United States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tuskegee Airmen, whose excellence challenged racist military policies. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Japanese American soldiers fighting while their families were incarcerated in U.S. camps. Wartime racial violence at home, such as the Detroit Race Riot of 1943 and the Port Chicago disaster, where Black sailors were disproportionately punished after an explosion.
The Space Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Glenn, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and American scientific triumph. Cold War competition fueled rapid scientific progress and national pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Black women mathematicians of NASA, including Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, who helped calculate trajectories but were hidden behind segregation and discrimination. Indigenous communities who faced uranium mining on their lands to fuel Cold War nuclear and aerospace programs. The Mercury 13, a group of highly qualified women pilots who passed astronaut fitness tests at equal or higher levels than their male counterparts but were barred from NASA.
Slavery, Freedom, and Early Reparations Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emancipation Proclamation The end of slavery in 1865 (13th Amendment) The Abolitionist Movement Focus on freedom as the “end” of the story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The petitions of Belinda Sutton (1783–1790s), one of the earliest documented reparations claims where she formally requested compensation from her former enslaver’s estate The broken promise of Special Field Orders No. 15 (“40 acres and a mule”) and its reversal by President Andrew Johnson Freedmen’s Bureau (1865–1872): what it promised vs. what was actually delivered



LISTENING SKILLS WORKSHOP: STARTER PROMPTS AND SAMPLE TOPICS

To help practice paraphrasing, clarifying questions, and nonverbal attentiveness, begin with topics that feel light and low-stakes. This keeps the focus on how we listen rather than what we talk about.

Prompts to Begin the Conversation

- Describe something you love doing and why.
- Share a moment from this week that felt memorable in a good way.
- Tell me about something you want to learn or try this year.
- What is something in your daily life that brings you joy or calm?

Starter Phrases and Questions for Learners

To help guide conversations, offer simple sentence stems:

Paraphrasing Starters

- “So what I hear you saying is...”
- “It sounds like...”
- “If I’m understanding correctly...”
- “What I’m taking away from that is...”

Clarifying Questions

- “Can you tell me more about that?”
- “What made that experience meaningful for you?”
- “What do you enjoy most about it?”
- “How did you get interested in that?”
- “What happened next?”

Examples of Easy, Low-Stakes Topics

These topics are light enough to keep the activity safe, but open enough to allow genuine conversation.

- A favorite childhood game or activity
- A hobby or skill they enjoy learning
- A place they like to visit in their community
- A meme, song, show, or trend they find interesting
- A food they love (or dislike) and why
- A goal they are working toward this year
- A recent moment that made them laugh
- Something they wish more people knew about them
- A favorite class, teacher, or school experience
- A tradition or routine they enjoy

Debrief Suggestions

After listening activities, spark discussion using prompts such as:

- What behaviors or phrases helped you feel heard?
- What made listening difficult?
- What nonverbal cues helped build trust?
- What cues created possible distance or disconnection?
- How might these skills support conversations about difficult topics in the future?



EMPATHY MAP

Says

What important words or quotes has this person said? Which phrases help define how they see the world?

What actions or behaviors have you observed from this person? What can you infer from these?

Does

Write the name of the fictional character or historical figure whose perspective you are exploring.



Thinks

What might this person be thinking? What beliefs, assumptions, or concerns might be shaping those thoughts?

What emotions might this person be experiencing? What clues or cues point to these feelings?

Feels



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IMAGE CREDITS

COVER & PAGE 2: **ACTS OF REPARATION** Film Poster

PAGE 4: Photo from production; Edu photos

PAGE 6: Photo of Directors Macky Alston and Selina Lewis Davidson at Mercer university Macon, GA. Credit: AOR crew

PAGE 8: Ford Ross Family. Monroe LA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 9: Alston and Sanders family. Penfield house. Penfield GA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 12: Jumoke Ifetayo and Macky Alston. Atlanta GA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 16: Selina and Bobbie Ford Slacks. Ouachita Parish Library. Monroe, LA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 17: Macky Alston and mother Alice Sanders Alston. Penfield, GA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 20: Penfield cemetery clean up. Penfield GA. Credit: AOR crew

PAGE 21: Macky Alston and Selina Lewis Davidson. Penfield cemetery GA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 24, photo 1: Alston and Sanders Family Penfield cemetery clean up. Penfield GA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 24, photo 2: Macky Alston. Penfield cemetery GA. Credit: AOR crew

PAGE 25, photo 1: Mamie Hillman and Macky Alston. Green County African American museum. Greensboro, GA. Credit: AOR film

PAGE 25, photo 2: Mamie Hillman and daughter Lea Smith; Credit: Kayla Renie

PAGE 31: JS Clark cemetery, Monroe LA. Credit: AOR crew



Educating for Global Understanding

JOURNEYS IN FILM RESOURCES AND SERVICES

We create educational resources that spark community discussions and/or promote proactive learning for youth, parents, educators in K-12 and higher education, home-schoolers, and other learning communities. We also **create impact materials for libraries and community organizations.**

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