

Teaching Hard History Professional Learning Cohorts

2023 - 2024 Syllabus

Overview statement: As participants in Teaching Hard History Professional Learning Cohorts, educators engage with the Learning for Justice *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* (THH) framework and learn how to use it to enrich their lessons on American enslavement, build students' civic engagement and critical thinking and deepen their mindsets around inclusion and empathy. THH Cohorts provide educators, free of charge, the chance to deeply engage with THH, collaborate with LFJ staff and 25 other cohort members across the country and gain insights and feedback on implementation. After two semesters of learning in community, including seven synchronous sessions via Zoom, educators will have an opportunity to showcase their work.

There will be five cohorts offered during the 2023-2024 school year:

- Two elementary (K-5) cohorts (one on Tuesdays and one on Thursdays)
- One middle grades cohort (6-8) (on Tuesdays)
- Two secondary (6-12) cohorts (one on Tuesdays and one on Wednesdays)

Overarching objectives:

1. Educators will practice strategies to prepare their students to participate in challenging conversations.
2. Educators will gain the skills to analyze resources and practices in order to prepare their students to engage critically with narratives surrounding the history of American slavery.
3. Educators will learn to navigate and implement the *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* framework and other resources available through the Learning for Justice website.
4. Educators will showcase their learning by creating an implementation project that advocates for teaching honest histories in their contexts.

Eligibility Requirements:

1. In order to be considered for a THH Cohort, applicants must be an educator that will use the THH framework with either K-5 or 6-12 students (for example, through a classroom, higher education, non-profit or museum setting, etc.).
2. Educators across the nation are encouraged to apply, but there will be preference given to those teaching in Southern Poverty Law Center states: Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

Cohort Requirements:

1. **Synchronous sessions:** Educators must commit to participating in 7 synchronous cohort sessions via Zoom from October 2023 - February 2024. All sessions will be held from 5:00 - 7:00 pm Central / 6:00 - 8:00 pm Eastern. Synchronous sessions will be led by LFJ Trainer Fellows, alumni of past THH cohorts who have been selected for their content knowledge and facilitation skills.
2. **Showcase:** Educators will showcase their learnings on Wednesday, March 6th via Zoom.
3. **Asynchronous Work:** Educators must be willing to dedicate time outside of synchronous sessions to exploring and implementing THH resources and working on their showcase project (expect about 1-1.5 hours a week).
4. **Post cohort:** Educators will use what they learned during the THH Cohort in their contexts, such as creating new lesson plans, professional development, or documenting student reflections/learnings within a calendar year.

Showcase Information:

- Prior to the showcase, educators will have an opportunity to collaborate with their Cohort trainers, Learning for Justice staff and other cohort members to help craft their projects.
- The showcase will be held on Wednesday, March 6th from 5:00 - 7:00 pm Central / 6:00 - 8:00 pm Eastern on Zoom.
- This showcase will present educators with a unique opportunity to apply what they learned, such as designing a community project or a learning plan or professional development for other educators, that highlights participants' contributions to the field of teaching hard history about American enslavement.

Certificate of Completion:

- Participants will receive a signed certificate of completion that shows their hours of engagement (approximately 26 hours) *upon completion and presentation of their showcase project.*

Google Classroom:

- Each cohort will use a Google Classroom to communicate and collaborate with one another and their Trainer Fellow.
- Each Google Classroom functions as the centralized location for all logistical and programmatic information, including calendar of Cohort times and office hours, slides and resources from previous sessions, showcase artifacts and upcoming professional development opportunities.

Office Hours: (Optional)

- Trainer Fellows will host virtual office hours every other week from the first cohort meeting through the final showcase.
- During office hours, Trainer Fellows will be there to help with processing, implementation, troubleshooting, creation of project artifacts or resources and answer any questions from cohort participants in a one-on-one setting.

**See next page for an overview of the synchronous sessions, including dates, times and objectives for each.*

Synchronous Session Overview

All sessions are 5:00 - 7:00 PM Central Time / 6:00 - 8:00 PM Eastern Time via Zoom

Dates* (see below)	Session Title	Session Objectives
Semester 1 (October - December 2023)		
<p>Tuesday, October 10 <i>(Elementary Cohort 1; Middle Grades Cohort; Secondary Cohort 1)*</i></p> <p>Wednesday, October 11 <i>(Secondary Cohort 2)*</i></p> <p>Thursday, October 12 <i>(Elementary Cohort 2)*</i></p>	<p>Session 1:</p> <p>Meet and Greet! Cohort Community Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will meet their THH Trainers and their other cohort members. • Educators will begin to build a network of support for engaging in hard history. • Educators will explore how their identities impact their approach to this work.
<p>Tuesday, October 24</p> <p>Wednesday, October 25</p> <p>Thursday, October 26</p>	<p>Session 2:</p> <p>“Let’s Talk!” about Racism and Enslavement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will self-assess their comfortability discussing race and racism with their students. • Educators will explain how racism and capitalism (greed) are the foundation of the institution of slavery. • Educators will practice strategies to prepare their students to participate in challenging conversations.
<p>Tuesday, November 14</p> <p>Wednesday, November 15</p> <p>Thursday, November 16</p>	<p>Session 3:</p> <p>Teaching Hard History 101</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will reflect on language choices that make up THH’s framework and resources. • Educators will gain the skills to critically analyze resources and practices they use in their classrooms. • Educators will learn to navigate the resources available through the Learning for Justice website.
<p>Tuesday, November 28</p> <p>Wednesday, November 29</p> <p>Thursday, November 30</p>	<p>Session 4:</p> <p><i>The Forgotten Slavery of Our Ancestors: Illuminating Native History</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will reflect on how their curriculum can contribute to the humanity of enslaved peoples. • Educators will plan for conversations around the histories of Indigenous peoples with their students.
<p>December 12-14</p>	<p>Individual or Group Check-ins</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will reflect on their learnings from the THH PLC. • Educators will brainstorm ideas for their showcase project.
<i>Winter Break: December 18, 2023 - January 2, 2024</i>		

Dates* (see below)	Session Title	Session Objectives
Semester 2 (January - March 2024)		
Tuesday, January 9 Wednesday, January 10 Thursday, January 11	Session 5: The Cultural Legacies of Enslaved and Free People of African Descent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will describe the ways in which enslaved people resisted enslavement. • Educators will understand the cultural legacies created by African Americans as a foundation of American culture. • Educators will be prepared to help students connect American culture today with the contributions of enslaved and free people of African descent.
Tuesday, January 23 Wednesday, January 24 Thursday, January 25	Session 6: Using the Inquiry Design Model to Teach Hard History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will reflect on the experience of participating in a THH Inquiry Design Model lesson. • Educators will begin to plan their own Inquiry Design Model using the THH framework.
Tuesday, February 13 Wednesday, February 14 Thursday, February 15	Session 7: Giving Light: Disrupting the Continuum of Hard History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will make connections between the legacy of enslavement and current events and climate. • Educators will workshop their showcase presentations with one another. • Educators will reflect on and celebrate their overall experience as a part of the THH cohort.
Wednesday, March 6	SHOWCASE!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators will present their showcase projects.

*Elementary (K-5) Cohort 1 meets on Tuesdays; Elementary Cohort 2 meets on Thursdays

*Middle grades cohort (6-8) meet on Tuesdays

*Secondary (6-12) Cohort 1 meets on Tuesdays; Secondary Cohort 2 meets on Wednesdays