

Tulsa Burning: Flash Points of Change

Tulsa Race Massacre

Nicole Watkins, Shayna Pond
Published by *K20 Center*

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License

Grade Level	4th – 6th Grade
Subject	English/Language Arts, Science, Social Studies
Course	Oklahoma History

Essential Question

What roles do people, places, and power play in historical events? How do we keep history from repeating itself?

Summary

Beginning just before students read "Tulsa Burning" by Anna Myers, this companion lesson provides a contextual understanding of people, places, and power in the Tulsa Race Massacre. In the first of the series of lessons, students will be introduced to the concept of a flash point in science and compare it to social contexts as an anticipatory set for the book. Using this lens, students will make predictions based on the book's cover, then use those predictions to understand the circumstances surrounding sudden eruptions of violence.

Snapshot

Engage

Students examine the cover of the book *Tulsa Burning* by Anna Myers. Using the I Notice, I Wonder strategy, students draw on their prior knowledge to provide context as well as spark interest in the material.

Explore

Students explore the concept of a “flash point” in a fire and how that relates to igniting change. Students explore the two definitions of a flash point and the role of people, places, and power in creating them.

Explain

Students explain the role of people, places, and power in historical events (or current events). Then, they explore why it is important to study flash points in historical events and how history can repeat itself if people don’t make changes.

Extend

Students identify flash points in historical events.

Evaluate

Students reflect on their “I Notice, I Wonder” exercise from the Engage and the roles of people, places, and power in creating historical flash points. Students use their reflections to make a prediction about

why the publisher chose the cover image they did for “Tulsa Burning.”

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Grade 5)

5.C.6.2: Summarize the rights and liberties protected by the Bill of Rights.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 5)

5.1.R.2: Students will ask and answer questions to seek help, get information, or clarify about information presented orally through text or other media to confirm understanding.
5.1.R.3: Students will engage in collaborative discussions about appropriate topics and texts, expressing their own ideas clearly while building on the ideas of others in pairs, diverse groups, and whole class settings.
5.6.R.2: Students will record and organize information from various print and/or digital sources.

Attachments

- 3-2-1-People-Places-Power-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1 - Spanish.docx
- 3-2-1-People-Places-Power-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1 - Spanish.pdf
- 3-2-1-People-Places-Power-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.docx
- 3-2-1-People-Places-Power-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.pdf
- 3Ps-Event-Table-Student-Copy-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1 - Spanish.docx
- 3Ps-Event-Table-Student-Copy-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1 - Spanish.pdf
- 3Ps-Event-Table-Student-Copy-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.docx
- 3Ps-Event-Table-Student-Copy-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.pdf
- 3Ps-Event-Table-Teacher-Key-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.docx
- 3Ps-Event-Table-Teacher-Key-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.pdf
- Grade-Level-Adaptions-and-Cross-Curricular-Notes-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.docx
- Grade-Level-Adaptions-and-Cross-Curricular-Notes-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.pdf
- I-Notice-I-Wonder-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1 - Spanish.docx
- I-Notice-I-Wonder-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1 - Spanish.pdf
- I-Notice-I-Wonder-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.docx
- I-Notice-I-Wonder-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.pdf
- Lesson-Slides-Tulsa-Burning-Flash-Points-of-Change-Part-1.pptx

Materials

- *Tulsa Burning* by Anna Myers
- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Grade Level Adaptions and Cross-Curricular Notes (attached and linked; optional)
- 3-2-1 People, Places, Power handout (attached and linked; one per student)
- 3P Event Table Teacher Key (attached and linked; optional)
- 3P Event Table Student Copy (attached and linked; one per student)
- I Notice, I Wonder chart (attached and linked, optional; one per student)
- Notebook paper

Engage

Teacher's Note: Grade Level Adaptions

At its heart, this lesson is a book study that fits very firmly within the ELA standards for fifth grade. However, *Tulsa Burning* is written to 4th-6th grade reading level. To help this lesson fit your unique classroom needs, its activities and materials can be adapted to a range of grade levels.

See the full list of the Oklahoma Academic Standards that this lesson can encompass in the attached **Grade Level Adaptations and Cross-Curricular Notes.**

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to follow along with the lesson. Begin with **slide 3.** Pass out a copy of the attached **I Notice, I Wonder chart** to each student, and have students pull out their individual copies of *Tulsa Burning* by Anna Myers. While looking at the cover of the book (either the physical book or the picture on the slide), use the I Notice, I Wonder strategy and ask students to individually fill out the I Notice, I Wonder chart. They should record in the "I Notice" column any observations they have about the cover, and in the "I Wonder" column, they should record any questions they have about the cover. The point of this activity is to activate students' prior knowledge and to engage their curiosity about the book.

Give students time to record their observations and questions. Then, have students discuss in pairs what they noticed and any questions that arose. Have pairs share out with the whole group what they discussed.

Possible Student Responses

Students may make observances such as, "I noticed that there's a fire and it's in Tulsa. That's a city in Oklahoma," and may raise questions such as, "I wonder what started the fire," and "I wonder why there's a rope?"

This cover image of *Tulsa Burning* may spark some hard questions that could come up during this lesson. This is often the case when it comes to discussing historical events, especially those surrounding racism. You may spend some time reflecting on what you feel is an age-appropriate way to address observations and how you will respond to any questions at this point in the study. Two articles follow that might help you reflect on teaching practice when it comes to difficult topics and conversations:

- Becoming Upended: Teaching and Learning about Race and Racism with Young Children and Their Families
- Facing History and Ourselves: Classroom contracts for respectful conversations

Explore

Move to **slide 4**. Introduce the essential question on the slide: *What roles do **people, places,** and **power** play in historical events?* Tell students that they will participate in several activities as they read this book and with this question in mind.

Move to **slide 5**. Play the short video clip on the slide of a flash point in a campfire ("Campfire, Stoking the Flames") from 7:18-7:40. Ask students, "What do you think caused this sudden flash where the flame grew larger?" Then, ask, "What other things might you do to cause a fire to increase in intensity?"

In a group discussion, have students identify what might make a fire change in intensity.

Possible Student Responses

Students may make suggestions such as "add more paper," "blow on it," "poke it with a stick," "add gasoline," and "add more wood."

You can help them relate their responses to more advanced vocabulary; for example:

"Yes—gasoline would be an accelerant," "a sudden change in oxygen like blowing on it would make a larger spark," point our that all 3 "ingredients" heat, oxygen, and fuel must be present for the fire to thrive.

Move to **slide 6.** Introduce the concept of a "flash point": a rapid rise in the intensity of a fire. The graphic on the slide also shows the elements needed to sustain a fire.

Transition the discussion into more metaphorical thinking with a few rhetorical questions, such as:

- "The fire flared up when poked with a stick. Has it ever happened to you that you had an outburst after someone picked on you or tested your patience?"
- "What other kinds of conditions have caused an outburst?"

After a brief discussion, move to **slide 7.** Pass out a copy of the attached **3-2-1 People, Places, Power** handout to each student (or have students use a piece of blank paper), and introduce students to the 3-2-1 strategy. Invite students to use this strategy to explore how the three Ps—people, places, and power—can cause rapid change. To do so, have students record the following:

- 3 emotions that might cause **people** to make a rapid change.
- 2 events that might cause **places** to change rapidly.
- 1 way/reason **power** may make a rapid change.

After giving ample time for students to complete the activity, have them share out some of their examples. As a group, reflect on the different perspectives students offer.

Possible Student Responses

This activity is intended both to help students reflect on their understanding of these concepts and to help you to evaluate that understanding. Some responses that you might see from students—or that you might guide them to consider—are:

- **People**: Fear, anger, happiness, and grief responses to a major life change, such as loss of someone close, a marriage or a child being born, moving to a new place, or feelings about making a difficult decision or about learning something new, may cause people to make a rapid change.
- **Places**: The effects of fires, floods, tornadoes, construction, growth, new businesses, or old businesses may cause rapid changes to certain places.
- **Power**: After an election, a war, a job promotion/demotion, or when one side has more powerful weapons than the other, the balance of power might cause rapid change.

Explain

Move to **slide 8.** Transition the discussion as you guide students towards thinking on a broader scale, asking, "What are some historical events that you have learned about where these conditions of people, places, and power built up to a sudden outburst like the flash point of a fire?"

After a short discussion, move to **slide 9,** and introduce the second definition of "flash point": *a serious situation or area that has the potential of erupting into sudden violence.*

Pulling from some of the historical events students recalled, choose an event to walk through as an example. View the attached **3P Event Table** as a guide for a whole-group discussion.

Possible Student Responses

For a number of possible student answers and suggested responses to those answers, see the attached **3P Event Table Teacher Key.**

Ask students to identify how each of the Ps played a role in the event. Record their ideas onto an Anchor Chart or in a whiteboard space as you discuss. Be sure to follow the format of the 3P Event Table.

Move to **slide 10,** and read aloud the second essential question: *How do we keep history from repeating itself?*

Have students answer this question in a discussion. You may follow this prompt with a further discussion prompt (**slide 11**): "Why is it important to identify flash points? What contributes to flash points in historical events?"

Teacher's Note: Why Flash Points Matter

Being able to identify flash points in historical events allows future generations to make different decisions to change the outcome. This is why we study history!

Extend

Sort students into small groups or pairs. Ask students to choose a historic event and identify the elements that led to the flash point of change. Pass out a copy of the attached **3P Event Table** to each student. Students should think of any event in history (including recent history) that involved **all three Ps** followed by a sudden eruption of violence. Ask them to record on their handouts how each P contributed to the flash point.

Possible Student Responses

Students may bring up recent or current events that have erupted in violence. These may include the Civil Rights Movement, the Boston Massacre, the events surrounding George Floyd, and the rash of hate crimes towards Asian Americans that have resulted from perceptions and ignorance surrounding COVID-19.

After giving ample time to complete the activity, have groups share out some of their examples. Reflect on the different perspectives offered by students.

Evaluate

For a simple evaluation, ask students to get out a piece of notebook paper. Ask students to refer back to the I Notice, I Wonder activity and what the class has discussed about the three Ps. Then, have students write down their own answer to the question, “Why do you think the publisher chose this cover?”

After students have written down their answers, introduce the Commit and Toss strategy. Using this strategy, have students crumple the paper containing their prediction into a ball, and then gently toss it somewhere in the room. Have each student pick up a new paper ball, uncrumple it, and read it to themselves.

Ask for a few students to volunteer to share their paper aloud.

Resources

- Cole, K., Verwayne, D. (May 2018). Becoming Upended: Teaching and Learning about Race and Racism with Young Children and Their Families. NAEYC. https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2018/teaching-learning-race-and-racism
- EJ Travels. (November 2015). Campfire, stoking the flames [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GteLCF_1Ipc&t=438s
- Facing History and Ourselves. (n.d.). Contracting [Video]. *Facing History and Ourselves*. https://www.facinghistory.org/professional-development/ondemand/contracting
- K20 Center. (n.d.). 3-2-1. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/117
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Commit and toss. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/119
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I notice, I wonder. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180
- Myers, A. (2018). *Tulsa burning*. Oklahoma City, OK: The RoadRunner Press.