

## Art Analysis and Discussion Guide

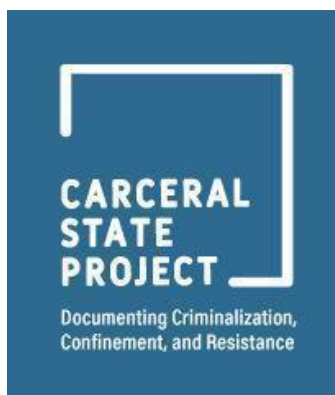


Community Impacts of Worksite Immigration Raids

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ICE in the Heartland is a joint project between the University of Michigan and the University of Iowa.



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## Discussion Guide Introduction

In the spring and summer of 2018, a series of large-scale worksite raids struck immigrant and mixed-immigration status communities throughout the rural heartland of the United States. These raids, which targeted immigrant workers in rural agricultural, food processing and manufacturing worksites in six different communities, resulted in over 600 arrests.

Large-scale raids are unannounced, surreptitious and violent. Workers, families, and communities often experience raids as chaotic disasters and isolated events. In the days that follow, media descends and reports on terrorized and separated families. But the harms of raids extend for months and years, and the chaos experienced by each rural community often follows a predictable trajectory.



The ICE in the Heartland project brings together interviews from people living in these communities, focus groups with student researchers who conducted and coded the interviews, and art from young artists to provide a fuller picture of enduring and traumatic impacts of large-scale immigration worksite raids in rural America.

The artists reviewed interviews from workers, family members, and community residents impacted by the raids and produced several unique works of art inspired by what they learned. As a collection, these works of art seek to illustrate and bring to life the deep impact of these raids and urge viewers to learn more and take action to support more humane and just immigration policies.

This discussion guide is meant to be used to complement an exploration of the artworks produced through this project, either through interaction with a traveling exhibit or through a printed or online visual gallery.

The guide includes tips on how to prepare for and address potentially emotional and/or controversial issues in the classroom, viewing and discussion protocols and questions to process the art, as well as a supplementary reading with guiding questions to provide important background knowledge.

## **Guidelines for addressing controversial issues in the classroom:**

### **Introduction:**

One of our most important roles as educators is to help students learn to think critically about important social issues, including those that have the potential to generate controversy. Our students need support and instruction in order to learn how to participate in constructive dialogue around these issues, even when it might make them uncomfortable.

Immigration and immigration policy have come to be polarizing issues in our current political discourse, and it might be tempting for educators to simply bypass these topics and avoid potential political controversy. In some states, educators face backlash from parents and school boards and even legal consequences for teaching about issues of social justice and racism. However, it is this very context that makes it important to explore these issues and hear from those people directly impacted by government actions. Through engagement with the art and the supplementary materials, we believe that students can develop their understandings of immigration and immigration policy in a way that humanizes immigrants and centers their experiences. In addition, students have the opportunity to consider the role of art in working for social justice and informing humane government policies.

The guidelines below should be read and considered carefully before delving into this issue (or other similar issues) in order to create dialogue that is thoughtful and productive, even if it is also uncomfortable.

### **Guidelines:**

#### **Prepare yourself:**

- First know thyself! When preparing to take on an issue in the classroom, you need to consider if this is an issue you care deeply about. Do you have strong views? Will you be able to listen well to students who might not agree with you? Will they feel they can speak up? If you do have strong feelings, how will you work with students who feel differently? Think about these questions ahead of time so that you are not caught off guard if a student says something with which you deeply disagree. At times, these might just be differences of opinion, but students might also hold and voice misguided ideas you feel compelled to challenge. There will be times when you may need to stop and manage offensive speech that might harm other students, whereas other times you may want to push a student's thinking without shutting them down. Know your own triggers and have a plan so that you are able to stay calm and be a facilitator of learning!
- Prepare yourself academically and cognitively as well. Learn as much as you can about the topic from a range of sources. Explore divergent perspectives and consider the evidence base for different positions. At the same time, don't feel like

you have to be the all-knowing expert! It is acceptable and even helpful to say to your students, “That’s a great question... I don’t know the answer, but I’m going to write it down and we’ll see if we can address it later.”

### **Prepare for and with your students:**

- Know your students! What issues set them off? What views are percolating in the classroom? Which students tend to say things without first thinking, and which students are prone to angry reactions? Which students start clowning around when things make them uncomfortable? How can you proactively prepare yourself and them for the topic and the discussion?
- Talk with your students about emotions, and respect emotions when they arise, especially in these kinds of activities. If a student gets upset when talking about these issues, that is very understandable and potentially productive. So let them know it’s ok to feel that way, but work with them on how to manage and express the emotion. Acknowledge discomfort and validate it, and find positive ways to help move past it without delegitimizing it. At times, humor may be appropriate to lessen tension, but be careful and never use it to humiliate a student or trivialize their feelings. Asking everyone to pause and take a few deep breaths (inhaling, holding their breath, and then letting it out) can help a great deal!

### **Prepare your classroom culture:**

- Establish a safe classroom climate BEFORE engaging with controversial issues. Students need to build trust with each other and their teacher in order to fully engage with these topics. HOW to do this is beyond the scope of this discussion guide, but seek out help from master teachers or other instructional leaders in your building. Consult high quality online resources such as Learning for Justice and tap into the many available (and often free) professional learning materials. Start here if you need ideas:  
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/professional-development/critical-practices-for-an-tibias-education-classroom-culture>
- Establish group and discussion norms at the beginning of the school year, preferably in the first 2-3 weeks. In particular, help students collaboratively develop norms for the following:
  - how to disagree respectfully.
  - how to listen productively.
  - how to deal with interruptions and how not to interrupt.
  - how to ask thoughtful questions.
  - how to participate in discussion, including how to manage equitable talk time.
  - how to choose and use appropriate language in different contexts.

- Students need to talk about what these norms look and sound like in action, and also about non-examples- what it looks and sounds like when these norms are NOT in place. Consider having parents or community members come in and talk about norm setting and respect in their own workplaces. Help students understand that healthy, professional work settings have these kinds of norms and that these ideas go far beyond the classroom.
- Work with students to respect and value multiple perspectives, but help students learn to discern when a “perspective” becomes hurtful or offensive. This is not an easy process, and different people have different standards... but this is why we need to talk about them! In this process, establish clear boundaries for classroom language. We want students to speak their minds, but we do not want them using racist, xenophobic, sexist, homophobic, or other offensive language that will make other students feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Teach students to focus on ideas and not on individuals when there is disagreement! Some views can be deeply tied to important identities carried by students, so helping them see that we can question ideas without calling their identity into question is important.

#### **Prepare for interactive learning and dialogue:**

- Clarify and make visible the purpose for any discussion, especially when they delve into controversial issues. What do you hope the outcome of the discussion will be? Do students think this topic matters? If not... why should they? Why do you? What’s the point of talking about it?
- Beyond your general classroom norms, establish clear norms for discussions with the input of students. Have them generate ideas, and then help them refine their ideas and develop a list of 5-7 norms that gets classroom consensus. Post these somewhere everyone can see them, and consider having students sign them as well. Share them with parents and administrators. When setting up a discussion, revisit them and modify as needed.
- Have discussion protocols or routines in place, and practice them ahead of time with less sensitive subjects. Classroom “discussions” often aren’t really discussions; many times they involve the teacher asking questions and the same four or five students answering them while everyone else sits back and tunes out. Disrupt this dynamic by starting small! Use the Stop and Jot routine with an interesting prompt to give students time to think and informally jot down some ideas before asking them to talk about them. Then have students Turn and Talk with one or two other students, sharing what they wrote and responding to each other. Keep these moments short (30 to 60 seconds), and consider using a timer. Then have students form larger groups of four to six and share again, and only then bring the class together. Using

this kind of approach gives every student time to talk in safer spaces and also gives them time to develop ideas and “practice” before speaking in front of the whole class.

- Explicitly teach students the discourse of dialogue. For example, teach them how to express disagreement by providing sentence stems and having them use them in discussion (e.g. I think that what she says is interesting, but I have a different idea... I’m glad you shared that thought, but I disagree because...

### **Prepare for implementation around a specific topic:**

- Communicate with administration and families ahead of time if you have concerns about a particular topic. As needed, have support staff either on hand or alerted to an upcoming topic that might trigger students dealing with trauma, anger, etc. In schools that serve immigrant communities, students may have been directly impacted by ICE activities and may be dealing with trauma themselves.
- Attend to necessary knowledge. Is there content or vocabulary that students need BEFORE they engage with this topic? How will you build it if they don’t have it?
- Locate the issue in an academic discipline and tie it to real world experts, organizations, or events. Let them know that other people care deeply about this issue and are actively studying it and trying to solve it.
- Locate the issue in your curriculum. How does it connect to other problems you have studied? If it doesn’t, why is it worth exploring now? Why should they care about this issue?
- Find out what your students already think about the topic. This can help you clarify any misconceptions and also head off potential problems.
- Linked below are resources from Learning for Justice that might be helpful for background knowledge development for both you and your students.
  - <https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/immigration-myths>
  - “In this lesson, students will deconstruct common myths about immigrants and the process of immigration in the United States. They will also have an opportunity to share their knowledge with the greater community.”
  - <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/summer-2017/walking-undocumented>
  - “*Walking Undocumented*: In June 2017, Wildin Acosta walked across the graduation stage—but he almost didn’t make it. Read about his incredible

journey and the team of student journalists and teachers who helped make it happen.”

- o <https://www.learningforjustice.org/moment/supporting-students-immigrant-families>
- o “Educators who work with immigrant communities want to know how to best support students and their families. We created this web package to supply the types of resources educators have told us they need. We’ll continue to make updates, knowing that immigration policies and practices in the United States—and the corresponding needs in schools—are continually changing.”

### **During implementation:**

- Revisit norms and model civility yourself.
- Once discussion begins, move it along by asking open-ended questions that invite dialogue and connect to things students have learned or sources with which they have engaged.
- As much as possible, help students support their views with evidence, and gently model effective argumentation. Probe student thinking by asking them to support their ideas with examples, statistics, or other evidence. Try using the visible thinking routine, [What makes you say that?](#)
- Keep a running list of “Need to knows,” questions that arise that can guide future research.
- Be an active facilitator, monitoring participation and tone, and keeping the discussion moving. Help students learn how to confront and challenge ideas, not people, and to not take it personally when their own ideas are challenged. For example, you can ask students to support, extend, or challenge each other’s ideas, and model what this might look and sound like.
- Invite students to clarify statements that might set other students off, giving them space to dial back something they may not have thought through.
- Build in moments to reflect and process.
- Summarize what students say and ask them to verify if that is what they meant. Engage them in reflection and processing activities.
- If things are not going well, address the problem! Validate the fact that these discussions are hard, and then involve students in plotting a way forward. Have a backup plan if you feel the need to change course. If the conversation gets too

heated, it can be wise to pause and come back to it another day, but you need to have something to which students can be redirected.

- **Discuss solutions and responses to injustice and provide pathways to action!**  
Students are interested in complex, difficult issues, but they often want to go beyond the problem and think about solutions and even take action, and we need to encourage this!
- After the initial discussion, revisit the topic at some point and provide some additional processing and follow up. Get feedback from students on how it went, and take that feedback into account the next time around.

## Viewing and Activity Guide

Duration: 1 class period (approximately 55 minutes)

Preparation:

Students will be analyzing a series of 6-8 paintings. There are a few options available to provide students with access to the paintings . Select the option that best meets your needs and context.

- A select group of invited partner teachers in SE Michigan will have the opportunity to bring in a traveling exhibit with the original paintings on canvases on easels. If you are one of these teachers, you will need a space large enough to accommodate a gallery walk type activity with 6-8 easels.
- Other educators can choose between a PowerPoint presentation or color printouts of the slides. The PowerPoint slide deck can be used for an online gallery posted on a class site or workspace or can be projected and worked through with a whole class.
- Color printouts of the slides can be organized on walls or desks for a gallery walk or stations activity, or printed out in packets for small group analysis.

Activity Sequence:

- 1) Choosing the question most connected to your content or of most interest to your students, ask students to Stop and Jot (silently write) for one to two minutes in response to one of the following prompts displayed on your screen or board:
  - What makes you feel safe and at home in your community? What things make you feel less safe?
  - To what extent does the United States actually provide “liberty and justice for all”? What does the word “all” really mean?
  - What images or works of art come to mind when you think about problems like discrimination, poverty, or violence? Do you think art can help us understand issues of social justice and see problems from different perspectives? If so, how?

Ask a few students to share what they wrote, and then tell them they are going to explore the connections between visual art and social justice while learning about a specific aspect of immigration policy and enforcement in the United States. Explain that they will be delving deeper into the ideas shared from their Stop and Jot responses in this process.

- 2) Prepare the students for the next portion of the lesson by reviewing the instruction for the art analysis they are about to carry out. Explain that they are going to view and analyze a series of paintings from the same project, but that they will not get much information for their first viewing. Instead, they are going to use a worksheet to analyze the paintings and develop conjectures or best guesses based on their prior

knowledge and what they see. Then they will get additional information about each painting and carry out a second analysis using the new information.

Pass out the attached Art Analysis handout and review.

- 3) Provide students access to the artwork and have them engage in their first analysis using the prompts on the handout. Depending upon your course, students' needs, space, class size, and time, choose the most appropriate structure from the list below or adapt one and create something new. At a minimum, students should analyze at least one piece of art, and at most they will analyze all eight; you will have to decide what is reasonable based on your time and class size. Remember as well that students will need handouts for each image (or you can have them write in a notebook using one handout as a guide).
  - a. Whole class slideshow
    - i. Using the slide deck, project the images of the artwork one at a time, giving students time to take notes on their handout. Students can work individually or with a partner.
  - b. Digital gallery: individual or small group analysis
    - i. Provide students with access to an online slide deck or embed the images in a Jamboard or other platform. Have students work through a predetermined number of images either on their own or in small groups.
  - c. Physical gallery walk or stations: individual or small group analysis
    - i. If you have access to the traveling exhibit, this option works best. Alternatively, you can print out the slides as color copies and post them up on your classroom walls or at desk/table stations. Students then move through the gallery either on their own or with a group taking notes on a predetermined number of images.
  - d. Group analysis
    - i. You can also divide your class into groups and print out one copy of the slide deck for each group. They can then work as a team to divide up and analyze all the images.
- 4) Have students discuss and share their reflections from their notes in a whole class discussion, focusing one piece of art at a time. Ask students to generate conjectures about the events that may have inspired these works and share their ideas about the goals of the artists.
- 5) Now provide the background of the collection and the artist's statements for each piece. To do so, you can use the additional slide deck with the statements and present it or print it out in packet form for group review. Give students time to read each statement and take notes, then have them use the Second Viewing handout to add to their earlier reflections.

- 6) Ask students to then quickly form into groups of four if they are not already in groups. Provide or project the discussion questions handout. Ask each group of four to pick one work of art and one question to talk about for 5-10 minutes. Each person in the group should quickly share their thoughts, including additional questions, on the discussion question they chose. They should then talk about what ideas they share in common about the artwork and then decide on one “big idea” they want to share with the class.

Then ask each group to share their big idea. If any time remains, ask students to respond to the ideas shared by other groups by supporting, extending (or adding to), or challenging (respectfully disagreeing) the ideas that were shared.




Then ask the students to reflect on how the background information and artists’ statements added to their analysis of the artwork and have several students share their thoughts.

- 7) Close out by asking the students to write an individual reflection on the artwork and the activity. What does it make them think and feel? How do these works of art support, extend, or challenge their thinking about immigration policy, equity, and social justice? This can be done as an exit pass or as homework. This should be informal writing and assessed for thought and effort, not issues like grammar and spelling (so that students are encouraged to think about ideas and can focus on expressing their feelings).




### **Extensions:**

- 1) If you want to devote more time to discussion, below are additional questions:
  - What stories are told in these pieces that get lost in the news coverage of these events, and how are these stories told?
  - How can art help people connect emotionally to stories they might otherwise dismiss because of desensitization?
  - How does the emotional nature of art help us engage with issues that might otherwise make us feel uncomfortable?
  - How can art move us to action?
- 2) If you want students to respond through the arts, consider:
  - Precedent studies in which students analyze and compare several works of art (music, visual arts, etc.) dealing with the same issue, and then produce their own work informed by one that they analyzed.
  - Student production of visual art about a similar issue or a connection to immigrant rights in their community or region
- 3) Use the additional lessons, activities, and resources.

**Analysis Worksheet: First viewing**

<p>What do you see?</p> 	<p>Describe any people in this work:</p>  <p>List and describe important objects or landmarks:</p>  <p>Describe the activities you see (what is happening):</p>
<p>What do you think it means?</p> 	<p>What symbols or representations do you see in colors, objects, activities, or people?</p>  <p>What story or message do you think the artist is trying to communicate?</p>  <p>Why do you think this? What prior knowledge and clues in the picture lead you to think this?</p>
<p>What does it make you wonder ?</p> 	<p>What questions does this picture raise for you? What more do you need to know to understand what is happening?</p>

**Analysis Worksheet: Second viewing with artist's statements and background**

	<p>Use the new information to add your first viewing notes...</p>
<p>What do you see?</p> 	<p>Describe any people in this work:</p> <p>List and describe important objects or landmarks:</p> <p>Describe the activities you see (what is happening):</p>
<p>What do you think it means?</p> 	<p>What symbols or representations do you see in colors, objects, activities, or people?</p> <p>What story or message do you think the artist is trying to communicate?</p> <p>Why do you think this? What prior knowledge and clues in the picture lead you to think this?</p>
<p>What does it make you wonder ?</p> 	<p>What questions does this picture raise for you? What more do you need to know to understand what is happening?</p>

**Small group discussion guide:**

Choose one of the questions below to discuss with respect to one of the works of art. Take a moment to think, and then go around your group and give each person no more than 1 minute to share their thoughts. Then, talk about important ideas that everyone brought up. Agree on one “big idea” that you want to share with the class.

- What is the title of this picture and why did the artist choose this title?
- How does this work of art try to tell the story of the immigration raids from the perspective of the communities they impacted? How does it seek to reclaim the humanity of the families and communities?
- What were the goals of the artists involved in this project? Do you think they achieved these goals?
- What did this picture make you think about? How did you react to it? What changed when you received additional information?
- How is viewing art different from learning about issues in other ways, like reading an article?