

“United We Stand: Connecting Through Culture” Initiative Reading and Discussion Themes List

Reading and Discussion Theme	Theme Summary	Book Titles in the Theme	Book Authors
United We Stand: Where We Come Together	Even in the midst of divisions within our culture, we often come together with others unlike ourselves. In the shared spaces of work, school, and other public settings we have interactions—some tense, some pleasant, some neutral—that help us learn more about one another and our shared goals and values as residents of these very diverse, but united, states. This series explores some of the American spaces where we come together, assessing through history, imaginative writing, and images how our interactions inform our sense of who we are, individually and collectively.	<i>A Different Mirror: A Multicultural History of American</i>	Ronald Takaki
		<i>Work: A Story of Experience</i>	Louisa May Alcott
		<i>Darkroom: A Memoir in Black & White</i>	Lila Quintero Weaver
		<i>The Other Americans</i>	Laila Lalami
		<i>Interior Chinatown</i>	Charles Yu
Link to Scholar Theme Essay: https://www.okhumanities.org/doccenter/6d608b5827df4c55b0e32bd14ce2c74c			
United We Stand: Most American	In the title essay of her collection <i>Most American: Notes from a Wounded Place</i> , series curator Rilla Askew posits that Oklahoma, although often obscured in the national narrative, is, in fact, the most American of places. Our state’s history, our simultaneous woundedness and hope, reflect the whole of the American paradox. This series seeks to foster cross-cultural understanding, empathy, and community resilience by introducing readers to works that recognize the myriad ways we are they, and they are us.	<i>Most American: Notes from a Wounded Place</i>	Rilla Askew
		<i>The Roads of My Relations</i>	Devon A. Mihesuah
		<i>Citizens Creek</i>	Lalita Tademy
		<i>American Ending</i>	Mary Kay Zuravleff
Link to Scholar Theme Essay: https://www.okhumanities.org/doccenter/57ae6d9ef4464a4797d5dc826a1d6d62			
Memory, Memorials, and Painful Pasts	Historical sites and the memorials we place on them can bring communities together or tear them apart. Often those with the greatest ability to do both are sites where tragic or painful events have taken place. Through works of both non-fiction and fiction, this theme explores cases in which the public memory of painful pasts has had profound impacts on communities in the present.	<i>The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory</i>	Edward Linenthal
		<i>The Submission</i>	Amy Waldman
		<i>How the Word is Passed</i>	Clint Smith
		<i>Down Along With That Devil's Bones</i>	Connor Towne O'Neil
		<i>The Memory Monster</i>	Yishai Sarid
Link to Scholar Theme Essay: https://www.okhumanities.org/doccenter/5933ea345a6a440892f1764cc8d4b596			

Civil Rights and Equality	The current moment in our culture requires that we look hard at our ideals and history and the extent to which we have—and have not—ensured the enactment and protection of civil rights within our society.	<i>The Known World</i>	Edward P. Jones
		<i>Native Guard</i>	Natasha Trethewey
		<i>The Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age</i>	Kevin Boyle
		<i>The Plague of Doves</i>	Louise Erdrich
		<i>Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity</i>	Katherine Boo

Link to Scholar Theme Essay: <https://www.okhumanities.org/doccenter/abef39c8008041219000cc3b503259ee>

Of Shadows and Light: Stories of African American Resilience	This theme explores African American resilience in the struggle against marginalization and exclusion that have historically shaped black life. Collectively, these works not only give insight into the endeavor of trying to find a sense of place and belonging within American society, but also challenge us to reflect upon the meaning of the democratic ideals that bind Americans together.	<i>A Matter of Black and White</i>	Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher
		<i>Between the World and Me</i>	Ta-Nehisi Coates
		<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	Zora Neale Hurston
		<i>Citizen: An American Lyric</i>	Claudia Rankine
		<i>The Cross and the Lynching Tree</i>	James Cone

Link to Scholar Theme Essay: <https://www.okhumanities.org/doccenter/c1cd4d9237344c6695901970d08da24d>

Being Ethnic, Becoming American: Struggles, Successes, Symbols	In a nation of people with different ethnicities, it's as important to understand other cultures as it is our own. An ethnic identity can sometimes be at odds with being an American. This series explores the rewards and obstacles of being ethnic and becoming American.	<i>Bless Me, Ultima</i>	Rudolfo Anaya
		<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i>	James Baldwin
		<i>The Way to Rainy Mountain</i>	N. Scott Momaday
		<i>Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts</i>	Maxine Hong Kingston

Link to Scholar Theme Essay: <https://www.okhumanities.org/doccenter/f6a478914e7040858168e47d9f71ced6>



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