

Let's Talk About... ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A Toolkit from Delaware Humanities

Extended Options



Continue the Conversation

To add additional activities to your event, this brief list provides some ideas for activities to facilitate further discussion.

- Book Club: select a book from the LEARN MORE section below (or another book on environmental justice) for participants to read before meeting together to discuss the book, what they learned, and how they connected to the story.
- Film Screening: select a video, documentary, or other film from the LEARN MORE section below (or another film that discusses environmental justice). After showing the film or video to participants, have them discuss what they learned and how it connects to their own communities.
- Current Events Analysis: select news articles for participants to read from the LEARN MORE section below (or other relevant articles). After participants read their chosen article(s), gather the group for a discussion on what they learned and how their articles are interconnected, allowing participants to share their new knowledge with each other.

Resource Selections by Theme:

If toolkit leaders would like to focus their toolkit experience on a specific part of environmental justice, we have provided below some categories and a brief tailored list of resources to start leaders off on curating resources for their participants. The resources listed here are from our larger LEARN MORE section and include articles, books for adults and children, and videos.

Environmental Justice & Activism:

- 1. As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice from Colonization to Standing Rock (2019) by Dina Gilio-Whitaker
- 2. The Nature of Hope: Grassroots Organizing, Environmental Justice, and Political Change (2019) edited by Char Miller and Jeff Crane
- 3. "Principles of Working Together," Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, https://www.ejnet.org/ej/workingtogether.pdf
- 4. "Residents Have Had Enough: Environmental Racism and Injustice in Southern Delaware County," Clean Air Council, https://cleanair.org/residents-have-had-enough-environmental-racism-and-injustice-in-southern-delaware-county/
- Jeanne Kuang, "It's Our Turn: Southbridge Residents Say They're Tired of Being a Dumping Ground," *Delaware Online*, November 7, 2018. https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/2018/11/07/its-our-turn-southbridge-residents-tired-being-dumping-ground/1754616002/

Environmental Justice & Indigenous Leadership:

1. As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice from Colonization to Standing Rock (2019) by Dina Gilio-Whitaker

- 2. One Earth: People of Color Protecting Our Planet (2020) by Anuradha S. Rao
- 3. We Are Water Protectors (2020) by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Michaela Goade
- 4. Rainbow Weaver/Tejedora del Arcoiris (2016) by Linda Elovitz Marshall, illustrated by Elisa Chavarri

Climate Change & Climate Justice:

- Sophia Schmidt, "Enlighten Me: Climate-driven Disasters Raise Environmental Justice Concerns in Delaware," *Delaware Public Media*, October 15, 2021. https://www.delawarepublic.org/science-health-tech/2021-10-15/enlighten-me-climate-driven-disasters-raise-environmental-justice-concerns-in-delaware
- 2. Bruce Stutz, "A Vulnerable Community Braces for the Impacts of Sea Level Rise," January 30, 2017. https://e360.yale.edu/features/a-vulnerable-community-braces-for-the-impacts-of-sea-level-rise
- 3. The Carbon Diaries: 2015 (2008) by Saci Lloyd
- 4. We are the Weather Makers: The History of Climate Change (2006) by Sally M. Walker

Environmental Justice & the Outdoors:

- 1. Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood (2020) by Tony Hillery and illustrated by Jessie Hartland
- 2. Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors (2014) by Carolyn Finney

Environmental Justice & Hope for Change:

- 1. *Afterglow: Climate Fiction for Future Ancestors* edited by Grist. These short stories are also available online from Grist: https://grist.org/fix/series/imagine-2200-climate-fiction/
- 2. The First Rule of Climate Club (2022) by Carrie Firestone
- 3. The Nature of Hope: Grassroots Organizing, Environmental Justice, and Political Change (2019) edited by Char Miller and Jeff Crane

Learn More

Interested in learning more about environmental justice? Look through the resources listed below to dive deeper. These resources are provided both for participants to learn more about environmental justice and for leaders to do further research before hosting a toolkit event if they so choose. Leaders may also wish to incorporate quotes or clips from these resources into their toolkit experience for additional context and background depending on their group's needs.

Books

Nonfiction:

Title & Author	Description
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As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice from Colonization to Standing Rock (2019) by Dina Gilio-Whitaker	From treaty violations to the desecration of sacred sites, this book explores the history of the Indigenous fight for environmental justice. It also proposes examining this history as a source of inspiration for the current, cross cultural fight for environmental protection and a sustainable future for everyone.
Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality (1990) by Robert D. Bullard	A foundational text in the EJ movement, this book focuses on environmental racism from toxic industrial polluters being placed in majority African American communities in the southern United States.
Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors (2014) by Carolyn Finney	This book highlights the injustice and racial violence that has shaped African Americans' relationships to nature. It also discusses African Americans today who are reimagining and reconstructing these relationships to nature.
The Nature of Hope: Grassroots Organizing, Environmental Justice, and Political Change (2019) edited by Char Miller and Jeff Crane	Focused on everyday people, this book highlights local environmental activism and social justice.
Baptized in PCBs: Race, Pollution, and Justice in an All-American Town (2014) by Ellen Griffith Spears	This passionate story outlines environmental injustice due to racism, classism, and war in the majority African American and working-class side of Anniston, Alabama. It uncovers how Monsanto and the U.S. military dumped chemical pollution and weapons in the area and how activists fought against it.
From the Ground Up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement (2000) by Luke W. Cole and Sheila R. Foster	This text covers the emergence of the environmental movement and provides a few case studies of communities combatting corporate pollution, including in Chester, PA.
Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor (2011) by Rob Nixon	A foundational academic text, this book analyzes environmental writers focused on the global South and advocates for an international approach to writing about and caring for the environment.

Fiction & Poetry:

Title & Author	Description

Afterglow: Climate Fiction for Future Ancestors edited by Grist. These short stories are also available online from Grist: https://grist.org/fix/series/imagine-2200-climate-fiction/	This collection features short stories focused on the future of earth's environment and the power of hope and community to create meaningful change.
Ghost Fishing: An Eco-Justice Poetry Anthology (2018) edited by Melissa Tuckey	Combining social justice and environmental topics, this collection of poetry discusses ecojustice themes like connection to land, diverse cultural traditions with the environment, natural resources, and more.
Parable of the Sower (1993) by Octavia Butler	This novel is set in a future desolate world ravaged by climate change and follows a young woman who can feel the pain of others as she forges a path forward both for herself and for others.
The Fifth Season (2015) by N.K. Jemisin	The first book in the Broken Earth Trilogy, this story follows a woman as she searches for her daughter in a place dealing with environmental disaster and societal collapse.
Tentacle (2019) by Rita Indiana, translated by Achy Obejas	Set in a future Dominican Republic, this story follows a character destined to return to the past to save the oceans and humanity.

Young Adult and Middle-Grade:

Title & Author	Description
The Carbon Diaries: 2015 (2008) by Saci	Set in the UK, this story follows sixteen-year-
Lloyd	old Laura as she balances living her life
	alongside a growing climate crisis and
	government-mandated carbon rationing.
The First Rule of Climate Club (2022) by	This story follows an eighth grader who
Carrie Firestone	begins to learn about climate issues and works
	with her friends to create positive change for
	her community.
One Earth: People of Color Protecting Our	Featuring dozens of interviews, this book
Planet (2020) by Anuradha S. Rao	focuses on the work of Black, Indigenous, and
	People of Color around the world fighting for
	the environment.
We are the Weather Makers: The History of	This book provides an accessible overview of
Climate Change (2006) by Sally M. Walker	climate change history and future projections,
	along with tips on how to make ecofriendly
	personal changes.

Children's Books:

Title & Author	Description
La justicia ambiental es para ti y para mí/Environmental Justice Is for You and Me (2021) by Hilda Lloréns Catalina M. de Onís, Khalil G. García Lloréns, and illustrator Mabette Colón Pérez	This bilingual (Spanish and English) book teaches young readers about environmental justice with special emphasis on its connections to racism, poverty, and how to combat it.
We Are Water Protectors (2020) by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Michaela Goade	This story for young readers is about an Ojibwe girl's efforts to protect the earth from pollution and degradation that could endanger her people.
Rainbow Weaver/Tejedora del Arcoiris (2016) by Linda Elovitz Marshall, illustrated by Elisa Chavarri	Combining cultural traditions with environmental topics, this story follows a young Mayan girl as she recycles plastic bags into traditional Mayan weaving. Written in both Spanish and English.
We Are All Connected: Caring for Each Other & the Earth (2022) by Gabi Garcia, illustrated by Natalia Jimenez Osorio	This rhyming book introduces children to values like empathy, justice, and taking care of the planet.
Seeds of Change: Wangari's Gift to the World (2010) by Jen Cullerton Johnson, illustrated by Sonia Lynn Sadler	This book follows the real-life story of Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan woman who fought for environmental issues, women's rights, and who was the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.
Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood (2020) by Tony Hillery and illustrated by Jessie Hartland	This book tells the story of how children helped transform an empty lot in Harlem into an urban farm for their community. It is based on the true story of the non-profit organization Harlem Grown, which now runs 9 urban farms and teaches children about sustainability and nutrition.

Articles:

Title & Author	Description
The full list of the 1991 Principles of	Here are Spanish and English versions of the
Environmental Justice:	17 Principles of Environmental Justice
	created in 1991 at the First National People of
In English:	Color Environmental Leadership Summit.
https://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.pdf	The principles cover topics like Indigenous

In Spanish: https://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles-es.pdf	sovereignty, nuclear technology, healthcare, military occupation, big corporations, and much more.
"Principles of Working Together" https://www.ejnet.org/ej/workingtogether.pdf	These Principles were created at the Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. The principles focus on core priorities on how EJ work and activism should be done, from inclusion to fundraising to leadership.
"30 Years Ago, Leaders Declared the Principles of Environmental Justice. They're Still Fighting to Make them Heard" by Tamara Toles O'Laughlin. https://grist.org/fix/justice/1991-national-people-of-color-environmental-leaderships-sum-declared-principles-environmental-justice/	This article outlines the legacy of the 17 Principles of Environmental Justice through a panel discussion with some of the delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit who created them and EJ activists who continue to rely on them today. This article is a condensed version of the YouTube video titled "1st National POC Environmental Leadership Summit 1991" and listed below.
"The Threat of Environmental Racism" by Robert D. Bullard. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40923229	In this 1993 writing, Bullard discusses the health disparities caused by the government and corporations siting harmful facilities in majority Black and People of Color communities around the United States, and especially in the South.
"At 75, the Father of Environmental Justice Meets the Moment" by Cara Buckley, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/12/climate/robert-bullard-environmental-justice.html	Part brief biography on Bullard, part recap of the EJ movement, this article also discusses concerns over the equitable distribution of funds recently earmarked for environmental justice in 2022.
"Inside Cancer Alley and the Grim History of Environmental Racism That's Killing Black Americans," by Sneha Revanur, https://sneharevanur.medium.com/inside-cancer-alley-and-the-grim-history-of-environmental-racism-thats-killing-black-americans-cc1745df2ace	This article is focused on environmental racism and recounts the history of "Cancer Alley," an 85-mile-long area of Louisianna where residents are far more likely to develop cancer than other parts of the country due to heavy pollution.
"Two different realities": Why America needs environmental justice," by Jeff Berardelli,	This article features an interview with Peggy Shepard who has been an environmental justice organizer for decades with the not-for-profit WE ACT for Environmental Justice. In the interview, Shepard discusses the origins and current state of environmental racism and more.

https://www.cbsnews.com/news/environment al-justice-movement-climate-change-racismpeggy-shepard/

Videos and Films

Title	Length	Description
A Fierce Green Fire (2012)	101 min	This film presents environmental activism throughout the 1960's to 2012, highlighting both the struggles and victories throughout the years.
Dark Waters (2019)	126 min	Based on a true story, this film portrays an environmental justice legal battle involving chemical pollution by the DuPont company and the lawyer and West Virginia & Ohio residents who uncovered it.
Environmental Justice: Peggy Shepard at TEDxHarlem: https://youtu.be/zJX_MXaXb JA	7.52 min	This short video explains "sacrifice zones" in environmental justice and discusses the work Shepard's organization WE ACT for Environmental Justice has done for decades.
Youth Perspective on Environmental Justice and Racism Cristal Cisneros TEDxCherryCreek https://youtu.be/oa8dDBP5-d8	12.06 min	Educator Cristal Cisneros discusses how environmental racism and injustice impact children and communities, including in her own life, and the importance of listening to young people's perspectives on environmental issues.
30 th Anniversary of First National POC Environmental Leadership Summit: Roundtable https://youtu.be/QQIbqsLIWWE	53.30 min	Featuring several environmental justice activists and scholars who helped create the 17 Principles of Environmental Justice and have since continued to apply them in their work, this panel pays tribute and acknowledges the legacy of women of color who pushed the environmental justice movement forward.
"1st National POC Environmental Leadership Summit 1991," YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fo9uaWbhpPc&t=1s	108.58 min	This video from the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit features clips of speakers' lectures and discussions.

Environmental Justice Social Inequality MCAT Khan Academy	4.32 min	This video explains how environmental injustice is created through structural inequality and a lack of decision-making power for marginalized groups. This video can help viewers understand how these issues operate and the political powers at play.
The Road to Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice	3.36 min	The Environmental Protection Agency released this video for the 20 th anniversary of the executive order that formally recognized environmental injustice and called for action.

Delaware-Specific Sources:

Source	Link	Description
"Environmental Justice for Delaware: Mitigating Toxic Pollution in New Castle County Communities," Union of Concerned Scientists, October 17, 2017.	https://www.ucsusa. org/resources/enviro nmental-justice- delaware	This report from the Union of Concerned Scientists outlines environmental justice issues throughout New Castle County with a focus on the health effects from pollution. Readers can view the full report or a shorter executive summary, both of which are in the link provided.
Bruce Stutz, "A Vulnerable Community Braces for the Impacts of Sea Level Rise," January 30, 2017. Marissa McClenton, "History of Juneteenth and Environmental Justice," June 18, 2021.	https://e360.yale.edu/features/a-vulnerable-community-braces-for-the-impacts-of-sea-level-rise/https://www.delawarenaturesociety.org/blog/juneteenth-and-environmental-justice/	This article discusses Southbridge, DE, which is at higher risk of flooding, along with other environmental justice issues. This article draws connections between environmental justice concepts and climate change effects. This short article connects centuries of slavery, Jim Crow policies, and racism to environmental justice, particularly since housing discrimination and other systemic racism created the environmental justice issues still experienced today.
Jhaney Hamlett, "Commentary: Beginnings of Environmental Justice is Black History" February 24, 2022.	https://baytobaynews .com/stories/comme ntary-beginnings-of- environmental- justice-is-black- history,72043	Discussing the origins of EJ, this article reminds readers that environmental justice history is also Black history. The author discusses some Delaware-specific connections and the history of redlining, which built the foundations for environmental injustice.
"Residents Have Had Enough: Environmental	https://cleanair.org/r esidents-have-had- enough-	This article is about Southern Delaware County in PA, which borders Northern Delaware, and

Racism and Injustice in Southern Delaware County," Clean Air Council,	environmental- racism-and-injustice- in-southern- delaware-county/	ongoing environmental justice efforts there, including the Walk for Our Grandchildren which trekked from Scranton, PA to Wilmington, DE and other environmental advocacy groups like the Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living (CRCQL) and the Marcus Hook, Trainer, and Chichester Residents for Public Health.
Zoë Read, "Delaware Rivers and Streams are the Most Polluted in the U.S., a New Report Says," WHYY, March 17, 2022.	https://whyy.org/articles/delawares-rivers-and-streams-pollution-enviornmental-integrity-project-water-safety/#:~:text=Delaware's%20rivers%20and%20streams%20are%20contaminated%20with%20pollutants%20such%20as,pesticides%2C%20PCBs%2C%20and%20dioxins	This source presents information on a recent report from the Environmental Integrity Project that analyzed the state of waterways and the Clean Water Act throughout the country. The article considers the industry pollution that has made Delaware waterways the most impaired in the country.
Sophia Schmidt,	https://www.delawar	This 10-minute audio interview with
"Enlighten Me:	epublic.org/science-	University of Delaware Associate Professor
Climate-driven	health-tech/2021-10-	Victor Perez discusses how recent natural
Disasters Raise	15/enlighten-me-	disasters in Delaware caused by climate change
Environmental Justice	<u>climate-driven-</u>	are connected to environmental justice issues.
Concerns in	disasters-raise-	
Delaware," Delaware	environmental-	
Public Media, October	justice-concerns-in-	
15, 2021.	delaware	
Jeanne Kuang, "It's	https://www.delawar	
Our Turn:	eonline.com/story/ne	
Southbridge Residents	ws/2018/11/07/its-	
Say They're Tired of	our-turn-	These two articles discuss concerns
Being a Dumping	southbridge-	Southbridge residents expressed over a
Ground," Delaware	residents-tired-	proposed slag grinding facility being placed in
Online, November 7,	being-dumping-	their community and DNREC later granting a
2018.	ground/1754616002/	permit to build the facility.
Sophia Schmidt, "Slag	https://www.delawar	-
Grinding Operation	epublic.org/delaware	
Approved for	-headlines/2019-08-	
Construction Near	20/slag-grinding-	

Port of Wilmington,"	operation-approved-	
Delaware Public	for-construction-	
Media, August 20,	near-port-of-	
2019.	wilmington	

Act and Engage

Want to support environmental justice efforts in Delaware? Here is a list of organizations to join and ways to get involved in promoting environmental justice throughout Delaware and beyond.

Program or Organization	Description
Delaware Concerned Residents for Environmental Justice https://www.facebook.com/DCR4EJ/ https://www.ssam.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/DCR4EJ_brochure_2022.pdf	DCR4EJ is a local grassroots organization made up of community members that is focused on education and advocacy on local EJ issues including chemical pollution, the climate crisis, public health, and more.
Reaching and Engaging Through Nature to Empower Wilmington (RENEW) https://www.delawarenaturesociety.org/activities/education/reaching-and-engaging-through-nature-to-empower-wilmington-renew/	This local Wilmington initiative through the Delaware Nature Society is focused on ensuring equal access to the beauty and fun of nature for all. The program holds several initiatives for various age groups to get involved.
The Gerard J. Mangone Climate Change Science and Policy Hub. https://sites.udel.edu/climatechangehub/	This University of Delaware center is focused on promoting education, research, and innovation on climate change issues. The center also houses the undergraduate Climate Scholars and graduate Climate Fellows programs for students at both levels interested in these issues.
Community Environment Project Fund: https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/community-services/environmental-project-fund/	This program provides grant money for Pollution Mitigation, Environmental Enhancement, and Recreational Opportunity projects.
Gardening for Water and Wildlife program at the Delaware Nature Society: https://www.delawarenaturesociety.org/what-we-do/protecting-habitats-wildlife/garden-for-wildlife/	This program provides resources on creating a garden and how you can have your garden be a Certified Wildlife Habitat.

Environmental Justice at DNREC, https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/environment-al-justice/	The Environmental Justice Office is housed in the Delaware Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and provides environmental resources for the public.
Delaware Division of Natural Resources and Environmental Control: https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/divisions/	A state department that oversees environmental issues, public health, energy, recreation, the Environmental Justice Office, and more. This site has resources, public notices, an event calendar, and more.
Environmental Justice Ministry through Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew: https://www.ssam.org/environmental-justice-ministry/	This initiative helped facilitate the creation of DCR4EJ and continues to host virtual monthly meetings and provide online resources on environmental justice.
Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum, Center for Environmental Justice and a current EJ exhibit https://anacostia.si.edu/cej https://anacostia.si.edu/liveandbreathe	This museum recently launched both the Center for Environmental Justice for research and awareness and the exhibit "To Live and Breathe: Women and Environmental Justice in Washington, D.C.," which focuses on how women of color have been at the forefront of the EJ movement for decades.