What do you already know about the Nword?

- Pejorative to dehumanize black people
- Is complicated
- If you are white, very offensive to utter this word.
- Comes for the word “Negus,” meaning “king” (Kendrick Lamar)
- Embodies duality and contradiction
- It can hurt to read or hear it.
- Some people think it’s okay for some people to say it.
- It has been used to put down people of color, specifically Black or African American people
- It has been used to demoralize black people and its roots come from the word for “black”
- Derogatory term for people of African descent
- Nword + Social media= Expulsion
- I cannot use it.
- Bad meaning/ poor origin
- Derogatory and racist
- A word formed to demean others
- The Nword has been used as a derogatory slur through history to refer to a black person
- It’s derived for Portuguese and Spanish slave traders
- Derogatory history
- From “Negro” (black); inflammatory and horrifying
- It’s got a loaded history and hurts people
- I cannot say it but others can.
- Symbolic of a history of oppression and used to oppress
- It’s offensive
- It is debated at our school and in the world at large
- Not acceptable for use by people who are not African American.
- It means black person
- Racist, denigrating, demeaning label
- The word has become more widely and publicly used in recent years
- It makes me uncomfortable
It directly ties into the oppression of black people.

What do you want to know about the Nword?

- How was the Nword reintroduced into our society as a “term of endearment”?
- What does it mean when black people use the Nword?
- I’d like to know more about discussions about this word and “respectability politics”
- When was it first used?
- Why do white people “want” to use the word?
- Why the contentious debate about ownership of the word?
- When was it popularized?
- When does it arise in history? Was it pejorative from the beginning?
- More history of its origins and usage
- It’s origins, time and place
- Why can the word not be repurposed
- When African Americans do use the word, do they wish they did not have to say it at all deep down?
- Why people want to say it
- Should I say it our loud, reading *Huck Finn* or Beason’s “Sell Out”?
- Why does it hurt so much when I hear the word?
- When did African Americans start referring to each other with the Nword?
- Where do we go from here?
- Can white people be ‘niggers’?
- What is the origin of the word?
- Is there any good that can come of the word?
- Does the prevalence in rap mean that the youngest kids are using it freely and across classes?
- Why is it used by people of color?
- What did the word originate from?
- Where did the Nword originate geographically?
- What were the early origins of the Nword?
- Why do some people think it’s okay for some people to say it?
- How to introduce the word when found in texts?
- Do we want to de-stigmatize the word?
- When was it first used?
- History of the Nword and what is the politically correct approach for addressing its use with kids and adults?
- What is the history of the word?

What do you know now about the Nword that you did not know before this talk?
• Black: “Definitions are made by the definers not by the defined.”
• I have never seen pictures with ropes for hanging in ads!
• *Paris Is Burning* is where voguing started.
• I did not know that Kendrick Lamar was the impetus behind repurposing “Negus.”
• “Oh Susanna!” has a racist verse.
• The numerous uses of the Nword in the late 19th century “Americana” songs I sing with my kids.
• The word cannot be recovered.
• Didn’t know that Agatha Christie and Dr. Seuss used “nigger” in their work
• Lyrics and folktales
• How pervasive the Nword was in children’s songs and advertisements
• That there were children’s books—made to fit their hands—that glorified the horrific deaths of black children
• Origin of the word and I know very little of current popular culture
• The names of the characters in *Little Black Sambo*
• What “thug life” stands for
• Racist lyrics to familiar folk songs—oh no!
• “Nigga” and “niggah” being previously present in the history of the word
• Too many to list. I do know that I don’t know enough of history
• The Nword has been spelled in different ways long before now so it does not contribute to its reclamation.
• You cannot reappropriate something you did not own.
• All this NWA debate!
• I did not know that there was a rich debate with the African American community about reapproriating the Nword
• I do not know that the ice cream truck tune had racist lyrics.
• I had no idea it was used a teaching tools in books
• While not very surprising, I learned that far more of the children’s rhymes and songs we sing (“Oh Susanna!”) have racist origins and lyrics. To time research and be more vigilant.