

ELEGY - **STRANGE FRUIT: A COMMUNION**

GOALS:

- Identify the historical and biblical allusions.
- Analyze elements in the poem that refer to the title.
- Analyze diction for tone.
- Analyze articles and source material relevant to the poem.
- Analysis – Synthesis – Evaluation Discuss changes that might help curtail these tragedies.

THE TITLE: **STRANGE FRUIT** - Lynching, Lyrics, Music and a Sacrament

WATCH

[EJI: ILLUSTRATED DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM – LYNCHING](#)

LISTEN TO

[NPR: THE STORY OF THE MAN BEHIND STRANGE FRUIT](#)

READ THE LYRICS:

[STRANGE FRUIT](#) written by Abel Meeropol (1937)

Draw a picture to illustrate a part or all of the lyrics or
Discuss the images in the lyrics.

LISTEN TO

[STRANGE FRUIT](#) – sung by Billie Holiday 3:03

REFLECT AND DISCUSS

What impression does the song create for you?
What is the one image that lingers with you?

READ THE

Britannica definition of [COMMUNION](#)

BEFORE READING THE POEM

SOCIAL CONTEXT FOR THE POEM:

Refer the results the [HARVARD IMPLICIT BIAS TESTS](#) and the article [I WAS A RACIST POLICE](#)

READ THE

ARTICLE [ACLU – RACIAL PROFILING: DEFINITION](#)

EXAMPLES OF RACIAL PROFILING

[POLICE CALLED ON MAN TRYING TO CASH PAYCHECK](#) 2:32, CBS NEWS

[OUTRAGE AFTER TWO BLACK MEN ARRESTED AT STARBUCKS](#) 2:17, NBC NEWS STORY

THE POEM

TRAGIC EVENTS AND COURT CASES

THE MURDER OF FOUR UNARMED YOUNG BLACK TEENS AND TWO BLACK MEN

1. OSCAR GRANT (1986 – 2009)

READ THE BLOG POST

by reporter [CHRIS HAYES: NO JUSTICE FOR OSCAR GRANT](#)

STAND YOUR GROUND LAW

Trayvon Martin and **Jordan Davis** were murdered by civilians.

In both cases the **stand your ground law** was used to justify the killing.

Read the [CNN ARTICLE WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'STAND YOUR GROUND' LAWS](#)

2. TRAYVON MARTIN (1995 – 2012)

READ THE

[TRIAL AND IMPACT OF THE VERDICT](#). Students can present a mock trial based on the evidence provided on this website.

Profiling: Blaming the Victim

Reporter Geraldo Rivera blamed the way Trayvon Martin dressed for his murder

WATCH THE VIDEO

Reporter Geraldo Rivera: [LEAVE THE HOODIE AT HOME](#)

READ THE ARTICLES:

Comments spared [THE HOODIE MOVEMENT](#).

The birth of [BLACK LIVES MATTER](#)

3. JORDAN DAVIS (1995 – 2015)

READ THE ARTICLE:

This case was referred to as [THE LOUD MUSIC TRIAL](#)

4. KALIEF BROWDER (1993 – 2015)

READ THE ARTICLE:

[HOW NEW YORK CITY KILLED KALIEF BROWDER](#)

SOCIAL JUSTICE DISCUSSION

- From the general background information and the specific information on the unarmed youth, do you think Black Lives Matter is an effective Non-Violent strategy to raise awareness and effect change?
- Are there other deaths of unarmed men and boys that you are aware of?
- **BRAINSTORM AND DISCUSS** – These murders did not happen at the hands of official police. However, all of the cases show egregious shortcomings in the law and the criminal justice system. What are societal and legal changes that might make a difference?