Inspiration to Act: Building Community
From That Day On

The leading chronicler of social and political injustice in mid-century American painting, Ben Shahn was a persuasive artist whose bold works convey enormous compassion for human suffering. *From That Day On* belongs to the Lucky Dragon series of paintings that Shahn created to commemorate the deaths of the crew of the Lucky Dragon, a Japanese fishing boat caught in the radioactive cloud of a 1954 U.S. hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific.

Shahn, who believed he could best illuminate universal tragedy by focusing on specifics, here has honored the fisherman Aikichi Kuboyama, who died seven months after the bomb blast. Kuboyama’s burned and darkened flesh is juxtaposed with the tender new skin of his baby daughter. This shocking contrast, along with the representation of living plants in the decorative textile patterns, denotes the cycles of birth and death. Kuboyama’s enormous, grievously wounded hands underscore his innocence and helplessness. A dragon emerging from a red cloud at the upper left reminds the viewer of the event itself, the role of fate (the dragon is often a symbol of destiny), and what Shahn called “the ineffable, unspeakable tragedy” of atomic power, whose threat to civilization weighed heavily on his thoughts in the last years of his life.

Ben Shahn, *From That Day On*, 1960, 71 1/2 in. x 35 3/8 in., Oil and tempera on canvas on board, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Gift of Mari and James A. Michener, 1991
After engaging your students in discussions about the artwork and the theme of community the next step will be the Action Projects! Explore ideas with your class about ways they can raise awareness about their diverse communities and how we engage with them. To get you started, here are some ideas:

1. Have your class create art posters that show how we come together as a community to help in times of crisis. Invite the wider school to view their gallery.
2. Find out about global aid projects. Create an awareness campaign for an area outside of the US.
3. Engage with local groups to find out how to be active in the community. Share this research with the wider school.
4. Create a short drama piece that shows why community is important. These could be presented in assembly or filmed and screened.
5. Create a community newspaper/blog that is shared through the school and homes.

Take pictures of your completed projects and send them to education@blantonmuseum.org and austin@adl.org.
**TALK**

*Show your students From That Day On by Ben Shahn.*

Encourage your students to just look for a full minute
Ask your students to turn to a friend and discuss what they see. Collect some one-word responses, phrases or ideas on chart paper.

**LOOK**

*Engage your students in some guided looking with these discussion questions:*

- What's going on in this picture?
- What colors do you see? What is the mood of this work?
- What might be the relationship here?
- Does this seem familiar?
- Why might the man’s hands be so large?
- Where might these people be? How can you tell?
- What do the expressions tell us?
- This work was created to commemorate the deaths of the crew of the Lucky Dragon, a Japanese fishing boat caught in the radioactive cloud of a 1954 U.S. hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific. How and why has the artist used his voice to raise awareness?
- What are the different community groups we belong to?
- How can we help our communities generally, and during times of crisis? (natural disasters, violence in the community)
- What does it mean to be an active member of the community?
- How do you inspire allyship in your community?
**TALK**

Ask your students to turn to a friend and talk about the different ways that people contribute or aid our communities. Collect ideas on chart paper.

**MAKE**

Guide students to draw their “Universe of Obligation.”

- Starting with themselves in a center circle, write or draw the people that build their community.
- Encourage students to move towards their global community.
ADL's No Place for Hate®, the Blanton Museum of Art, AISD, and The CREATE Lab have teamed up to bring anti-bias education and object based learning to our schools. This resource is one in a series featuring a work of art from the Blanton selected to foster important conversations and inspire students to act! The theme for this series is Community, and this work of art should be used to foster curiosity about our many communities and raise awareness of our sense of belonging.

This guide has everything you need to create successful discussions and a No Place for Hate Action Project.

Here you will find:

- No Place for Hate guidelines for Action Projects
- Information about the artist and artwork
- Guiding questions for initial discussion and making
- Suggested community action projects

As this guide reaches multiple schools, we hope it will inspire students to work together to create action projects that can be shared and celebrated.

Please share your projects to austin@adl.org, education@blantonmuseum.org and Cultural.Proficiency@austinisd.org

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No Place for Hate® is a self-directed framework helping educators and students take the lead on improving and maintaining a school climate where all students thrive. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) offers resources to ensure that anti-bias and diversity education are an integral part of the school curriculum. No Place for Hate® also helps create and sustain inclusive school environments where all students feel valued and have the opportunity to succeed by promoting respect for individual difference while challenging bigotry and prejudice. Launched in Austin schools in the fall of 2004, the popular campaign has been embraced by hundreds of campuses throughout the Central Texas region. Austin ISD is the largest No Place for Hate® school district in the United States.

The Need for Discussion

The success of No Place for Hate® relies on the assurance that all members of school communities have a central voice in creating a plan that will lead to lasting change. The foundation for creating that change is a strong coalition of school leaders — students, educators, and family members — who have a stake in the outcomes of that plan.

There is no more obvious stakeholder than a student. Too often, adults assume they know what is needed to support youth, but without engaging students in the process, change can be elusive. No Place for Hate® Committees create activities that amplify students’ voices and give them opportunities be active participants.

All qualifying activities must be consistent with the No Place for Hate® mission by challenging bigotry, bias and bullying; exposing young people to diverse identity groups, backgrounds and points of view; promoting respect for individual and group differences; and providing opportunities for community-building within the school. Projects should challenge students to think critically, instill a sense of empathy, and empower students to become allies for one another.

No Place For Hate® Activities Should:

- Involve all students in active learning
- Involve all students in discussion and debriefing of activities
- Address school-based issues
- Have a school-wide impact
- Take place throughout the school year, with three or more activities spread out over time
- Focus on inclusivity and community

For more information visit austin.adl.org/noplaceforhate.