

Prison Reform Packet

High School / College



TRUMBULL
COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

**Voices Oral
History Project**

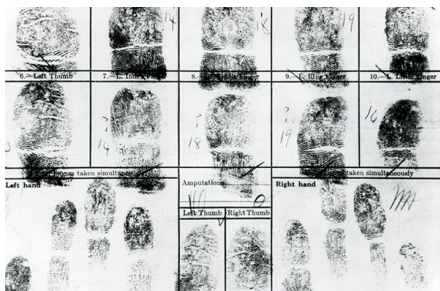
Introduction

In this packet students will explore topics regarding prison reform. The United States has one of the highest incarceration rates in the world, and the use of mandatory minimum sentences has led to an overly burdened system. People of color are incarcerated at higher rates in a system that does not prepare prisoners for the outside world once they are released. This often leads to reoffending and

returning to the prison system. This packet will provide resources on this cycle, the impact of the school-to-prison pipeline, and proposed prison reform ideas.



01



02

i. **Cover:** Fence with barbed wire **Freepik**



03

- 01. Prisoners in front of Main Cell Block 1971 Fremantle Prison. **Wikipedia; lwelam**
- 02. Police form with fingerprints, top view **Boston Review**
- 03. The State Penitentiary for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania 1855 **Wikipedia; Lithograph by P.S: Duval and Co.;**

Voice Interviews / Primary & Secondary Sources

Prison Reform

Voice Interviews

Bessie Breckenridge describes living in Texas and talks about her experiences of domestic violence from her partner. She talks about serving time in prison after being accused of child neglect.

<https://bit.ly/3aMWiUJ>

Bessie Breckenridge talks about earning her high school diploma while in prison. She also discusses earning a degree in business when she was 40 years old.

<https://bit.ly/3a0Wd0J>

Primary Sources

Thoughts on reform from Lucy Lang who served as assistant district attorney in Manhattan for 12 years and executive director of the Institute for Innovation for Prosecution

<https://bit.ly/3alqPDq>

Time - A 2020 American documentary film produced and directed by Garrett Bradley. It follows Sibil Fox Richardson, fighting for the release of her husband, Rob, who is serving a 60-year prison sentence.

<https://amzn.to/3cUMQ4G>

Secondary Sources

Brief history of the federal prison system written by the National Institute of Corrections

<https://bit.ly/3tG1Edi>

A project created by Vera Institute of Justice

<https://bit.ly/3rDruMX>

UN's stance on prison reform, including alternatives to imprisonment, UN instruments relative to prison systems, and reasons to promote prison reform

<https://bit.ly/2Ob6UVS>

ACLU policy priorities for prison reform

<https://bit.ly/3cTbend>

News segment from PBS News Hour on prison reform in Louisiana

<https://bit.ly/3aNqAa8>

School to Prison Pipeline

Voice Interviews

Michalene Hughley describes her early education in Warren

<https://bit.ly/36S11DK>

Agnes Bryant and Julia Redd discuss working options given to black students by school counselors

<https://bit.ly/3ryHtMn>

Fred Harris describes starting the Operation Torchlight program to fight against drug trafficking in Warren and provide new opportunities for young people.

<https://bit.ly/3cSGd2x>

Primary Sources

Interview with Judith Browne Dianis on the school to prison pipeline

<https://bit.ly/36PG8ZN>

Secondary Sources

This article focuses on the school to prison pipeline and discusses how this concept plays out in the school system. They also discuss the point that the juvenile justice system is disconnected from the school system

<https://bit.ly/3tDTCBB>

This article talks about the pipeline with relevant statistics, and they also talk about organizations that are trying to create change. It is from the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

<https://bit.ly/3jvy9WM>

American Bar Association article on their report from a school to pipeline task force

<https://bit.ly/2Z0sKh7>

American Bar Association report from their school to pipeline task force

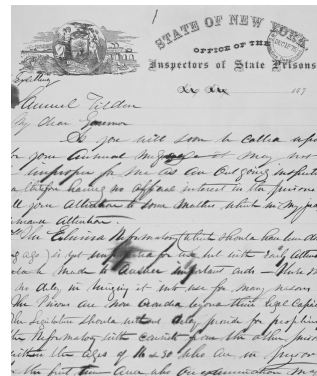
<https://bit.ly/3jw629R>

25 minute audio documentary from BBC that includes truancy court recordings, and interviews

<https://bbc.in/2N8xKh2>



04



05



Writing Prompts / Activities

01.

This site lays out lesson plans, reading syllabi, and other resources for teachers and students to dive into the justice reform topic.

<https://bit.ly/2YZAJeq>

02.

School to prison pipeline toolkit from New York Civil Liberties Union. While a lot of this content is for younger students, there are still a lot of good videos and resources included.

<https://bit.ly/39YzFOC>



03.

Literature review of **The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Time of Colorblindness**

Pick a topic under the prison reform umbrella (prisoner's rights, education in prison, private prisons, etc.), give a brief history of this topic in the United States, discuss what is being done today, and how to continue this work in the future.

Conduct a debate for and against the private prison system.



04. Prison hallway **by Luis Argerich**
05. Correspondence 1814-1886 **Tilden, Samuel J. (Samuel Jones), Author; New York Public Library**

- i.
i. Prison cells at Old Idaho Penitentiary in Boise, Idaho **The Epoch Times**

