



We Are The Radical Monarchs

Film Study Guide

Director: Linda Goldstein Knowlton

97 Minutes, in English

Synopsis: Set in Oakland, a city with a deep history of social justice movements, **We Are The Radical Monarchs** documents the Radical Monarchs - an alternative to the Scout movement for girls of color, aged 8-13. Its members earn badges for completing units on social justice, including being an LGBTQ ally, the environment, and disability justice. The group was started by two fierce, queer women of color, Anayvette Martinez and Marilyn Hollinquest, as a way to address and center Anayvette's daughter's experience as a young brown girl. Their work is anchored in the belief that adolescent girls of color need dedicated spaces and that the foundation for this innovative work must also be rooted in inter-dependent sisterhood, self-love, and hope.

We Are The Radical Monarchs provides teachers and students an opportunity to explore a variety of issues surrounding social justice, activism, and community building. The following activities are designed to connect students' experiences viewing **We Are The Radical Monarchs** to other relevant events, texts, and themes while engaging research and critical thinking skills. Taught in conjunction with this guide, the film will encourage students to think about the importance of taking pride in one's identity and what it means to be a community activist.

Key Themes

Social Justice

Youth Activism

Feminism

History

Community Development

Identity

Useful Links and Resources:

The website for *We Are The Radical Monarchs* film: <https://wearetheradicalmonarchsmovie.com/>

The website for the Radical Monarchs: <http://radicalmonarchs.org/>

An interview with Anayvette Martinez, founder of Radical Monarchs:

<http://www.dilettantearmy.com/articles/radically-different-a-conversation-with-anayvette-martinez>

Post-Screening Discussion Questions

These questions prompt students to reflect on the key themes of the film while making connections to history and their own experiences. These questions can be completed individually, in groups, or as a class.

1. The Radical Monarchs offer a space for young girls of color to celebrate their identities and form bonds with other girls in their community. How did joining the Radical Monarchs affect the lives of the girls in the film? How did they evolve and grow over the course of the film?
2. Consider the name “Radical Monarch”. In the film, Maya states that to her, “radical” means “you make a difference in the world and you’re not just standing in the background. You’re loud and proud.” What does “radical” mean to you? What do you believe is the significance of the word “monarch”?
3. How would you describe Anayvette and Marilyn, the founders of the Radical Monarchs? What motivated them to create the group?
4. Anayvette and Marilyn saw their creation of the Radical Monarchs as fulfilling a need in their community that wasn’t being met elsewhere. Are there any similar organizations in your community?
5. The Radical Monarchs empower girls to become active members of their communities and advocates for social change. Why is it important for young people to participate in social movements?
6. In the film, the Radical Monarchs attend a town hall meeting where they encourage city council members to vote in favor of mandatory anti-racism training for police. In this scene, what made their activism successful?
7. The Radical Monarchs pay tribute to the Black Panthers by upholding the same social justice values, holding meetings with former members, and wearing berets. How can the knowledge of past movements help inform present day activism?
8. Throughout the film, Martinez and Hollinquest use social media platforms to organize events and bring attention to their causes. How can the internet be used as a tool for social justice? Can you think of other examples of activism on social media?
9. Critics of the Radical Monarchs argue that the girls are “too young” to understand issues such as gender identity, racism, and inequality. How do the girls in the film challenge this notion?
10. What qualities or perspectives make young people uniquely powerful activists?

Post-Screening Activity: What makes an Activist?

Overview: *Students will think critically about what qualities make a strong activist and reflect on the value of leaders in their own communities.*

Part One: The Radical Monarchs: *Students will analyze Anayvette and Marilyn’s leadership style and gain an understanding of what makes them strong leaders.*

After viewing ***We Are the Radical Monarchs***, complete the following table using examples from the film.

Anayvette and Marilyn

Qualities: <i>How would you describe these women? What makes them strong leaders?</i>	
Motivations: <i>Why did they start the Radical Monarchs? What drives them to be activists?</i>	
Actions: <i>What actions did they take to fight for change? How did they overcome challenges?</i>	
Challenges: <i>What setbacks did they face in meeting their goals?</i>	
Impact: <i>What changes did they make in their community? What impact did they have on the girls?</i>	

Part Two: Community Activists: Students will identify leaders within their own communities and draw connections between the film and their lived experience.

Key Terms:

Community: a group of people living or working together and sharing some common ideas.

Activism standing/fighting for change or for what you believe in.

Activist: a person who works to change a community, with the aim of making it a better place.

Answer the following questions about your own community.

1. Who makes up your **community**? Brainstorm a list of people, organizations, and leaders.

2. Using this list, choose a person or organization who you consider to be an **activist**.

Complete the following table about this community member or organization.

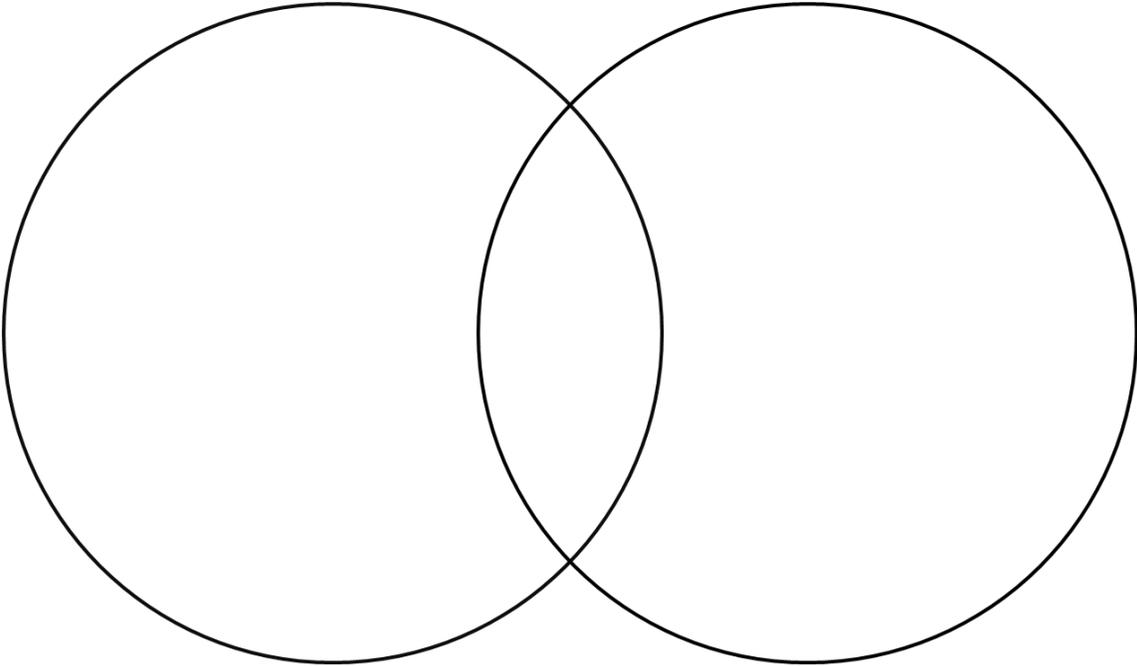
Community Member/Organization: _____

Qualities: How would you describe this person/organization? What traits make them strong leaders in the community?	
Motivations: What drives them to better your community?	
Actions: What actions do they take to fight for change? How do they overcome challenges?	
Challenges: What setbacks have they faced?	
Impact: What changes have they made in your community?	

Part Three: Connecting Your Community to the Film: *Students will draw connections between the film and their own communities in order to gain an understanding of the variety of characteristics and actions that make someone an activist.*

Compare and contrast the activist from your community with Anayvette and Marilyn.

Anayvette & Marilyn



Research Activity: Social Justice Organizations

Overview: *Students will conduct research on existing social justice organizations in their own communities. This activity asks students to think critically about the value of activism in their own neighborhoods, the qualities that make a strong leader, and the needs of their community.*

Part One: Identify a Social Justice organization: Have students research existing non-profit organizations in their own neighborhoods. Some online resources to assist your students include:

<https://onegooddeedchicago.org/organizations/>

<https://greatnonprofits.org/city/chicago/IL>

<https://envisioningjustice.org/resources/>

Part Two: Research: Complete the following table on an organization in your community.

Organization Name: _____

What community issues does the organization address?	
What is their mission statement?	
What actions are they taking to better their communities?	
Who is the leader of the organization?	
What stands out to you about this organization?	
What impact has this organization had on your community?	

Part 3: Reflection

Select a few aspects of your research that you feel your teacher and peers should know about the information you collected:

1. What did you learn about your own community through this activity?
2. Do you believe that this organization is making a positive impact?
3. What other actions could the organization take to better your community?

Critical Thinking Activity: Community Activist

Overview: *Students will identify and investigate an issue of importance to their community and propose a solution. They will then plan and implement action directed at solving the problem. This activity is designed to empower students to think critically about their communities through a Social Justice lens.*

Part One: Identify Community Needs:

The Radical Monarchs were created to fulfill a need in their community that wasn't being met elsewhere. Think of your own community and brainstorm issues or needs that you believe need to be addressed.

1. What specific community need(s) or issue(s) do you want to address?
2. Why are these issues important?

Part Two: Identify Solutions:

1. What solutions do you propose?
2. What specific actions can you and your peers realistically take to contribute to the solution?
3. What resources do you need to act on your ideas?

Key Terms

Social Justice: The objective of creating a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognized and protected, and decisions are made in ways that are fair and honest.

Feminism: The pursuit of the social, economic, and political equality of all people, regardless of sex, gender, sexuality, race, geographical location, socioeconomic status, physical and mental ability, and religion

Systemic Racism: Racism that occurs when political, economic, or social policies and practices favor one racial group over others. Systemic racism is different than interpersonal racism or prejudice in that it looks beyond individual interactions and instead focuses on the larger systems that govern citizens.

Intersectionality: The intersection of race, class, gender, and ability identities within each individual that informs how one views, discusses, and navigates the world.

Racial or Ethnic Identity: An individual's sense of social belonging to a racial or ethnic group based on any number of factors, such as heritage, appearance, upbringing, cultural affiliation, or experience.

Ally: Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.