

Preparing to Read:

Dr. Michelle Alexander’s

“The New Jim Crow”

\* The topic from this article is further explored in Dr. Alexander’s book [*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*](https://newjimcrow.com/about)

To make the most of your reading of the article, take some time to prepare.

**Apply Your Prereading Strategies**

* Skim the article. Are there tables/figures, footnotes/endnotes, headings or bulleted lists to help you keep track of Alexander’s argument? Highlight or annotate any text features.
* Read the title. What phrases do you think will be important based on the article’s title? Add these annotations to your copy.
* Where was this article published? What can you infer about the author’s purpose for writing this article? What can you infer about the intended audience? Add these annotations to your copy.
* What is your purpose for reading this text? Add these annotations to your copy. (Think about it: does your purpose for reading and your position as a reader with make you part of Alexander’s intended audience? How might your answer impact the way you read this text?)

**Read the Text**

* Use your Support Strategies:
  + This is a long article. You may find that you struggle to get through it and get it if you try to sit down and read it straight through, so be ready to *break it into chunks*.
  + *Check your understanding after each paragraph* and add a summary in the margin at least once per page to document important ideas as you find them in the text. (Important ideas, like thesis statements or topic sentences, present a position/argument and are supported by evidence/explanation
  + *Document important concepts*. Look for key concepts or ideas. In a textbook, these concepts are often bold-faced words that are followed by an example or definition. Outside of textbooks, readers have to be able to find these concepts on their own. When you find a key concept,
* Use Your Global Strategies
  + Alexander highlights the Southern Strategy and the Racial Caste System. (1) What are these? (2) What text-to-text, text-to-self, or text-to-world connections can you make to help you understand these concepts?
* Use Your Problem Solving Strategies
  + *Circle unknown vocabulary words*, then use your vocabulary attack strategies to determine the definition. Don’t forget to add the definition to your annotations!

**Prepare to Discuss**

* What questions do you have about the text now that you’ve finished reading?
* What connections do you see between Alexander’s piece and the Crenshaw TED Talk?
* How do Alexander and Crenshaw help us understand the unit themes of “Identity as Multifaceted” and “Racialized Identities”
  + Think about the word “Racialized”—how is it different from “Racial”?
  + How might an identity be “racialized”?