This year in the MAT program has been a structured time to reflect on my teaching practice and develop action steps for the future. I have been given many readings, theories, strategies, and tools for developing a culturally responsive teaching practice and have been supported in using these tools to craft concrete action steps. In this project titled, “Reflection and Action,” I wanted to show how I intentionally engage with resources to push my learning and growth using tools I have learned in this program to help me answer the question: How can I interrupt my own implicit bias and microaggressions in the classroom? I analyzed this question through the lens of the two antiracist impulses Mica Pollock’s (2006) articulates: to treat everyone equally regardless of race, and to acknowledge the real lived experiences of people of color. I felt tension between these two impulses in my student teaching when I made a racist mistake. By reflecting on my feelings of surprise and shame, because I made a racist mistake multiple times in my classroom I reimaged how I can interrupt my implicit biases and address microaggressions in my classroom, especially when I am the one who has caused harm. In this project, I have developed a blueprint of how I can use different tools in my toolbelt to foster an anti-racist and culturally responsive teaching practice as I move into my first year of teaching.

Through revisiting anti-racist resources, reflecting on my learnings from them, and then framing next steps for reflection and action in the context of my dilemma, I have gathered new strategies for interrupting my own implicit bias and racism in my classroom. I selected a few books that have been impactful in my anti-racist learning. With my question about implicit bias and microaggressions in mind, I revisited key passages from texts with the format of a double-entry journal I had learned earlier this summer in Education 628. Texts include fiction and non-fiction books, my interactive notebook from Education 628, restorative justice questions, and the expertise of my students. I highlighted an excerpt that was meaningful and relevant to my dilemma within each resource, and wrote a short reflection on it. I then printed out my reflections and installed them on bookmarks to mark the excerpt I was reflecting on. On the back of the bookmark, I developed my next steps based on my reflection. Blue bookmarks signal a reflective action step, and pink bookmarks signal an teaching-action step. Books without bookmarks are either books that have been foundational in my understanding of racism and anti-racism, or books that I plan to read in the upcoming year as action steps (these books include a blank blue bookmark to prompt my reflection as I engage with them). Each resource is cited in the community bibliography, which also includes a short note of appreciation for the person who recommended and/or gifted the book to me, to recognize the communal work of building an anti-racist society. While I focused only on a few resources in this project, this will serve as a template for me to engage with resources and professional development in the future in a reflective and action oriented way.

Advice from AP World History Students. (2020).