



Torchlight K Seneca Village Educational Resources

While reading *A Green Place to Be*, you will be introduced to Seneca Village, but not much depth is given on the topic. Seneca Village is an integral piece in the creation of Central Park. Had the people of Seneca Village had their property rights honored, the New York landscape might be very different. Sadly, we do not have a lot of information about the village, but we can use the resources available to us to have a more in-depth conversation about what we do know and honor the community that was destroyed to make way for Central Park. Below, you will find a collection of articles and a video(s) that you can dive into before your discussion so that you might impart this information to your learner. Learners who are ready to process this information are welcome to read along, look at the photos, and explore the video(s) as well.

This article from the New York Times references a collection of 7th graders, sponsored and funded by the Historical Society, doing a project on Seneca Village. The Historical Society provided source documents to the kids, the same documents that historians were presented. It discusses the census of 1855, reporting 225 people living within the village. It states the village's location was near a bone-boiling factory (for glue production). This fact could be part of the research the author of *A Green Place to Be* did that compelled them to include the description of the smell in the air. It would be wise to discuss this detail with your learners to help them understand that the smell of the air and the description of the "swampy" land might have been included to help the reader understand that people of the free Black community were, in many ways, never afforded the same opportunities as white people, including the location of their homes. That, however, in no way means they were not able to make a strong, supportive, and thriving community wherever they lived. The location of someones home is in no way a reflection upon the people living there.

The article also speaks to the thriving nature of the village, the mixture of structures located there, and much more: <https://nyti.ms/297JKrI>

The Central Park Conservancy wrote an interesting article about the 2011 excavation of Seneca Village by Columbia University students and includes pictures of their finds:
<https://www.centralparknyc.org/blog/uncovering-seneca-village>

The Central Park Conservancy provides a good summation of the previous resources and a video exploring the family with ties to Seneca Village's early landowner, Andrew Williams:
<https://www.centralparknyc.org/blog/rediscovery-and-research-of-seneca-village>