FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

1. Dig up a date...
2. Visit the Poe Museum to see the We Need To Talk art installation facing East Main Street as well as the one inside our Enchanted Garden. Enjoy our exhibits while you visit!
3. Stay for a while in our Enchanted Garden and discuss with your date (or any wayfaring spirits that may appear) the questions provided to you on page 4.
4. After you leave the museum, visit the other locations of We Need To Talk artwork, use our map on page 8 to help you navigate.
5. Once you get home, try our recipe on page 6 and consume some educational content on your preferred streaming service while you are enjoying your dinner. See our list on page 7.
WHO ARE WE?

POE MUSEUM:
Located in Richmond, Virginia, the Poe Museum is dedicated to *illuminating Poe for everyone, evermore*. We boast the world’s finest collection of artifacts relating to Poe’s life and writings, including the writer’s clothing, trunk, letters, bed, and even a lock of his hair. Our programs reach thousands of scholars, students, teachers, and literary enthusiasts every year.

In the midst of the recent social justice protests in and around Richmond, the Poe Museum took a position of “Nevermore.” We can never return to how things have been in the past. It is time to move forward... Since Mr. Poe was an artist of the written word, we opted to work with visual artists to make this public statement and join the conversation.

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Mending Walls RVA:
In Richmond, VA public art is one of the city’s biggest assets in the downtown area. As a city with one of the largest collections of public art in the United States, we now have the unique opportunity to use public art as a tool to bring empathy and connect at a time when we need it the most.

The name Mending Walls is derived from a Robert Frost poem published in 1914. The poem narrates a story of two neighbors working on a wall between their two farms. As the men work, the narrator questions the purpose of a wall, but as the story goes on his neighbor replies twice with the proverb, “Good fences make good neighbors.” It’s these hard conversations that the Mending Walls RVA project is looking to help facilitate through public art.
THE ART AT THE POE MUSEUM
WE NEED TO TALK:
QUESTIONS TO GET THE CONVERSATION STARTED

- How has privilege affected your life?
- How has Richmond’s recent political activism caused you to rethink your preconceived notions of race and identity in our community?
- What is your role in activism?
- What do you want Richmond (or your hometown) to look like in a year? What about 5 years? Or 50?

- Should you hold historical figures like Edgar Allan Poe to the standards of our modern notions of race and equality?
- If yes, then is it possible to separate art from the artist? Is every piece of art inherently autobiographical?
- Edgar Allan Poe often wrote about common fears of his time, like being buried alive, or suffering from an unknown illness. What do you think Poe would write about today?
- How do you think fear plays a role in racism and bigotry?

- What do you think about each of the We Need To Talk pieces? Do you have a favorite? If so, why?
- What do you think was the artist’s intent behind their work? Think about stylistic choices like subject, color, materials, and composition.
- How can you incorporate what you have seen and discussed today to your everyday life?
Think It Over

Poe Signature Notebook
Write down your thoughts

Literary Tea
Induces deep thinking

Poe Mug
Enjoy your coffee or tea

Ironclad House of Usher Coffee
Relish coffee and contemplation

Visit www.poemuseum.org/museum-store to get yours

Stay Up To Date:
Poe Museum:
Facebook | Instagram | Twitter
Mending Walls RVA:
Facebook | Instagram

Support the artists featured at the Poe Museum
@Cheathamsnail mail
@lamherart | @jaybordeaux
@jowarnise | @nicolepisaniello
@sumthen_slight
Virginia Gumbo

This recipe is from the 1800s and was documented in America’s first regional cookbook by Mary Randolph. She and her husband David lived in an urban mansion called Moldavia which Edgar Allan Poe lived in during his childhood.

Many classically Southern dishes like gumbo are actually derived from West African dishes. As enslaved people were brought to America and forced into labor, they brought along cultures and traditions from their home. For instance, okra is a plant native to Africa. It was first eaten in Ethiopia but it eventually moved across the continent to the western coast, which is where many enslaved people were captured. Dishes like gumbo, jambalaya, fried okra, and creole okra are influenced by African dishes.

Keep in mind that a lot of typical American southern culture exists because of the transatlantic slave trade. Enslaved people adapted and incorporated their traditions into southern culture when they were taken from their home and brought here. Recipes and food are a common indicator of the phenomenon because the cooks in many households were enslaved people, who carried on the tradition from their homelands. It is important to understand where traditions come from, especially in cultures with a difficult and problematic past.

Editor’s note: This is a recipe from the 1800’s, when many spices were not widespread. If you would like to add more flavor to the dish, we recommend adding garlic/onion powder, cayenne, oregano, and/or paprika to your taste preference.

Visit Local Black Owned Restaurants within Walking Distance of the Poe Museum:
Addis Ethiopian Restaurant
Maple Bourbon
Bateau
521 Biscuits & Waffles
The Nile
See a more complete list at BLK RVA
**Ingredients:**

1/2 tsp salt  
1 cup okra, thinly sliced  
1 medium onion, diced  
1/2 cup lima beans  
2 small yellow squashes, cut into 1/2 inch cubes  
3 tomatoes, peeled and quartered (or 1 cup canned tomatoes)  
2/3 pound chicken or veal, cut into 1 inch cubes  
1 Tablespoon butter, melted  
1/4 pound bacon, cooked, drained and broken into small pieces  
Additional salt and pepper to taste  
1 cup cooked white rice (optional)

**Instructions:**

In a medium saucepan on medium-high heat, bring 1 quart of water and 1/2 tsp salt to boil, add the okra and continue to boil for 10 minutes. Add the remaining vegetables and chicken or veal. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender and the meat is cooked.

In a small bowl, make a paste of the butter and flour and stir it into the soup to thicken. Add the bacon crumbles and serve in bowls. May be served over rice.

_Yields 5 servings_

Recipe via “Old Southern Cookery” Cookbook by Sue J. Hendricks and Christopher E. Hendricks

**While enjoying your Virginia Gumbo, consider watching something from these playlists (click link to view)**

Netflix: playlist includes: 13th, When They See Us, Homecoming and more....

Hulu: playlist includes Sorry to Bother You, Black-ish, Atlanta, and more...

Amazon Prime: playlist includes Guava Island, Homecoming, The Last Black Man in San Francisco and more...

And listen to Mending Walls RVA’s podcast on Spotify.
Visit:
1. 1914 E Main St. (Poe Museum)
2. 28 N 20th St.
3. 404 E Grace St.
4. 300 E Broad St.
5. 4 W Broad St.
6. 504 W Broad St.
7. 319 Brook Rd.
8. 511 N Adams St.
9. 2907 W Marshall St.
10. 3311 W Broad St.
11. 2928 North Ave.
12. 1812 W Main St.
13. 1100 Hull St.
14. 1625 Hull St.
15. 1621 Hull St.
16. 808 Oliver Hill Way

Notable sites ★
1. Monument Ave
2. VMHC