



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

By Jennifer Juskowiak

Teacher's Guide

Lesson Overview

This lesson immerses students in the events of the civil rights movement. Students will understand the struggles associated with the civil rights movement, the actions people engaged in, and the emotional toll it took on the country. Children will incorporate the ideas of authority and justice to aid them in their understanding of what was occurring in the United States during this monumental period of history. The lesson also requires students to evaluate the civil rights of people today, developing creative solutions for how they can help create equality for all types of people.

This lesson does require preplanning. The teacher will need to gather all related materials prior to starting the lesson. In addition, the teacher should review all materials, especially Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech to decide what excerpt will be used as well as the meaning of each segment.

Correlations to the SVPDP curriculum can be found at the end of this lesson plan.

Suggested Grade Level

Upper elementary (grades 4–5)

Estimated Time to Complete

Minimum of 120 minutes

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, students will be able to

- describe the purpose of the civil rights movement and outcome;
- identify key individuals in the fight for equality;
- identify where people in government get the authority to make, apply, and enforce rules and laws and manage disputes about them;
- evaluate how conflicts about diversity should be prevented or managed;
- evaluate the civil rights of individuals today;
- analyze how to create equality for all groups in the United States.

Materials Needed

- *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* textbook
- *Foundations of Democracy, Authority* textbook
- *Foundations of Democracy, Justice*, “Instructional Tools for Solving Problems of Distributive Justice”
- *Foundations of Democracy, Justice*, “Instructional Tools for Solving Problems of Corrective Justice”
- Images from the civil rights movement
- Written accounts of events from the civil rights movement
- Printed copy of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech
- Audio and video of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech (located at <http://www.mlkonline.net/video-i-have-a-dream-speech.html>)

Before the Lesson

It is always important to assess students’ prior knowledge on a topic prior to starting. The class can create either a Thinking Map—Circle Map or a **KWL** chart (What I **K**now, What I **W**ant to Know, What I **L**earned) to review what they already know about the civil rights movement. They can also use this tool to brainstorm what they would like to learn more about in relation to the civil rights movement.

Prior to, during, and even after the lesson, the teacher can share a variety of literature that supports the concepts of this lesson. Here are a few suggested titles:

- *Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni
- *This is the Dream* by Diane Shore
- *Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins* by Carole Boston Weatherford
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor

Lesson Procedures

1. Begin the lesson. Complete “Ideas to discuss: Are these actions by the government fair?” from *We the People: The Citizen & The Constitution*, Lesson 19 (page 152). Discuss and chart times in history when the government was not fair to all people.
2. Read about it. As a class, read *We the People: The Citizen & The Constitution*, Unit Four, Lesson 19.
3. View images. Show the students pictures from the civil rights movement on an overhead projector screen, or an ELMO digital visual presenter, etc. The students will identify what is occurring in the picture, who was in charge, and whether that person/group was demonstrating power or authority. The students can then identify the source of authority in the pictures.
4. Do group work. Divide the students into small groups of three or four and provide each group with written accounts of activities from the civil rights movement (e.g. an article about Rosa Parks’ refusal to give up her seat on a bus; the Woolworth Department Store lunch cafe’s sit-ins, the March on Washington, etc.). Have students read their accounts, identify how they

related to the civil rights movement, the cause or purpose of the action, and the immediate result or outcome. The students will then analyze how this event helped lead to the creation of the Civil Rights Act (use the instructional tools from the *Foundations of Democracy, Justice* text to evaluate the correctional justice of the Civil Rights Act). Students will share their accounts and findings with the class.

5. Discuss it. The teacher will introduce the impact of Martin Luther King Jr. on the civil rights movement. Have students recall prior knowledge on the man and create a brief biographical sketch before introducing his “I Have a Dream” speech.

Suggestion: Break for the day and pick up the subsequent pieces tomorrow.

6. Read about it. Briefly review information about Martin Luther King Jr. Then read his “I Have a Dream” speech as a class (teacher discretion to use the whole speech or excerpts). Periodically stop and discuss what MLK is trying to say through his words (put into everyday language).
7. Listen to it. After reading and figuring out the meaning of Dr. King’s speech, provide the students the opportunity to listen and watch the actual speech at the website <http://www.mlkonline.net/video-i-have-a-dream-speech.html>. Discuss how the video influences the students over simply reading the words. Why is there a change in how you feel from reading versus listen and watching it? Discuss the impact this speech may have had over people at the time of the civil rights movement, as well as why it had this impact.
8. Have a class discussion. Ask the students if they believe all groups are treated equally within the United States today. Develop a class list of groups the students believe are still treated unfairly today.
9. Write about it. Students will write their own “I Have a Dream” speeches for a group they feel are not treated fairly today (this can come from the class list previously created or it can be self-developed). Students will specify the current problem or treatment, the hopeful solution, and the actions necessary to create the desired outcome.
10. Conclude the lesson. Students will share their speeches with the class.

Common Core State Standards

Students will

- refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text;
- determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes;
- determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
- explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text;
- explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text;

- compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

Correlations to SVPDP Curricula

Foundations of Democracy, elementary school level

- Authority
Unit 1, Lessons 1, 2, and 3
Unit 2, Lesson 7
Unit 3, Lesson 9
- Privacy
Unit 1, Lesson 2
Unit 3, Lesson 5
- Responsibility
Unit 1, Lesson 2
Unit 2, Lesson 3
Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7
- Justice
Unit 1, Lesson 1
Unit 2, Lessons 2 and 3
Unit 3, Lessons 6 and 7

We the People: The Citizen & The Constitution, Level 1 (elementary school)

- Unit 4, Lessons 19 and 21
- Unit 5, Lessons 22, 23, and 24

Project Citizen, Level 1

- What Is Public Policy and Who Makes It?