

John Lewis
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Overview

John Robert Lewis was born the son of sharecroppers on February 21, 1940, outside of Troy, Alabama. One of ten children, he grew up on his family's farm and attended segregated public schools in Pike County, AL. As a young boy, he was inspired by the activism surrounding the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the words of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. In those pivotal moments, he made a decision to become a part of the Civil Rights Movement.

In 1961, John Lewis took part in the Freedom Rides, designed to test a Supreme Court ruling banning segregation on interstate buses. Lewis had to leave the original group early because of an obligation, but he returned to Nashville to organize additional riders to keep the rides going. Lewis left with a group from Nashville and faced a violent mob at Birmingham's terminal. When Lewis disembarked in Montgomery, he faced a worse situation, and mobs beat Lewis and other riders severely. Police arrested riders in Jackson, Mississippi, and Lewis was imprisoned for forty days in the Mississippi State Penitentiary in Sunflower County, Mississippi.

At the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom of 1963, Lewis was the youngest speaker, and during the famous Selma march to Washington Lewis was beaten mercilessly in public, leaving head wounds that are still visible today. Despite more than 40 arrests, physical attacks and serious injuries, John Lewis remained a devoted advocate of the philosophy of nonviolence.

John Lewis was elected to Congress in November 1986 and has served as U.S. Representative of Georgia's Fifth Congressional District since then. That District includes the entire city of Atlanta, Georgia and parts of Fulton, DeKalb and Clayton counties.

John Lewis holds a B.A. in Religion and Philosophy from Fisk University, and he is a graduate of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, both in Nashville, Tennessee. He has been awarded over 50 honorary degrees from prestigious colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Biography adapted from www.myblackhistory.net.

New Words

movement, civil right, social justice, nonviolence, protests

Grade Level

Middle Grades

Primary Learning Objective

The students will:

- examine the life and times of John H. Lewis from a chronological point of view using the "Read-Write-Talk" protocol.

Approximate Duration of Lesson

90 minutes

Materials and Equipment Needed

Computer, LCD projector and/or copies of articles, handouts of the timeline graphic organizer, whiteboard if available.

Preparation

The teacher should collect books or Internet resources on the biography of John Lewis. We recommend the following biography at <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/lew0bio-1> .

Procedures/Activities

- Discuss the day's objectives and lesson overview with students.
- Explain to students that the "Read-Write-Talk" is a reading and a post-reading strategy.
- Tell students that as they read the passage about John Lewis silently to themselves, they are expected to note (annotate) major topics, characters, and/ or events in the passage. Sticky notes may be used.
- Working with a partner, have students discuss the passage with one another using their individual annotations as a point of reference.
- Next, ask students to write individual responses to the following questions:
 1. What is most important in this passage?
 2. What does the author want the reader to think is important?
 3. How did the discussion with your partner help increase your understanding of the passage?
- Read the close caption transcript from a Georgia Public Television interview with John Lewis and view the video clips as well. Students will complete the timeline organizer in pairs. The graphic is found at the end of this lesson. The students can also create their own timelines by creating a fishbone graphic on a sheet of paper and insert the years of major importance as identified by the student.

Assessment Strategies

Students will use their timelines to create news segments for a simulated news report about John Lewis.

Extension

Students can map the miles marched by John Lewis using an internet-based map feature. Class can view Come Walk in My Shoes- <http://www.gpb.org/come-walk-in-my-shoes>

Remediation

Students can go back and view the interviews again to compare to their timelines. They can stop and continue videos at their own pace.

References

Official Government Website of Representative John Lewis

http://johnlewis.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=17&Itemid=31

The Achievements of Representative John Lewis

<http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/printmember/lew0bio-1>

Wikipedia Page of Representative John Lew

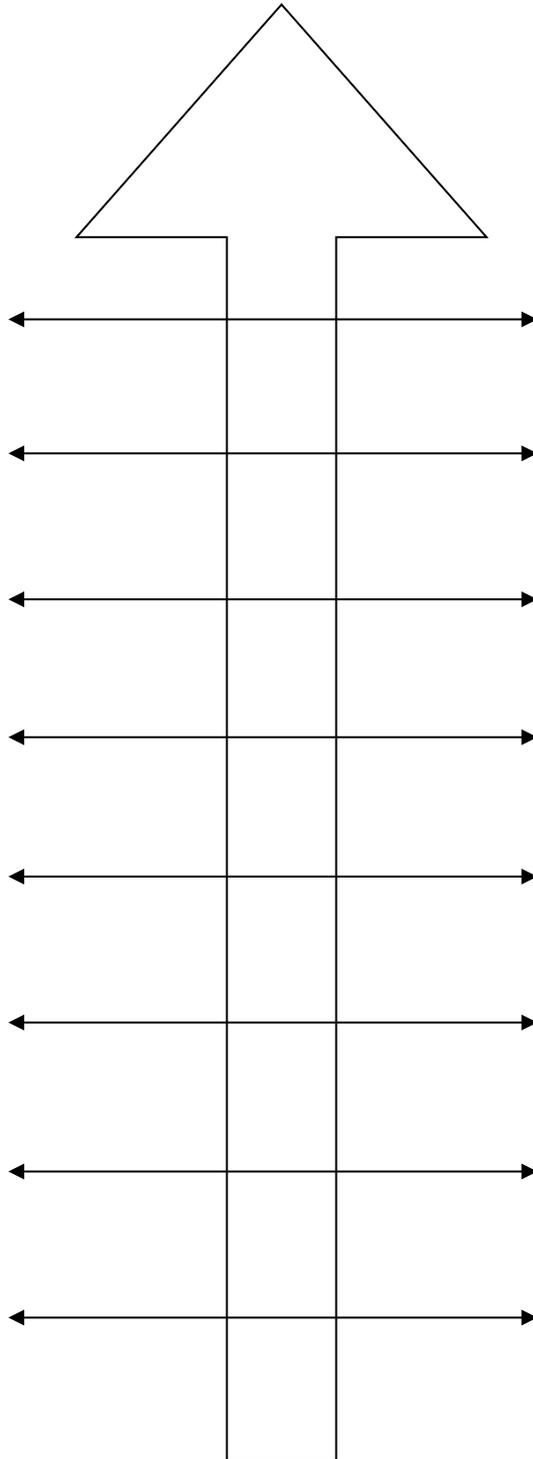
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lewis_\(U.S._politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lewis_(U.S._politician))

The Biography of John Lewis

<http://www.ibiblio.org/sncc/lewis.html>

TIMELINE

Write dates for each event in time order from left to right. Add details along the lines.



Social Studies Course of Study Standards

FOURTH GRADE

Standard 14. Describe the social, political, and economic impact of the modern Civil Rights Movement on Alabama.

- Identifying important people and events of the modern Civil Rights Movement

Examples: people—Martin Luther King, Jr., George C. Wallace, Rosa Parks; events—Montgomery bus boycott, Birmingham church bombing, Selma-to-Montgomery march

- Identifying benefits of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act

SIXTH GRADE

Standard 13. Describe the role of major civil rights leaders and significant events occurring during the modern Civil Rights Movement.

Examples: civil rights leaders—Rosa Parks; Martin Luther King, Jr.; events—Brown versus Board of Education; Montgomery bus boycott; student sit-ins; march on Washington, D.C.; Freedom Rides; Civil Rights Act of 1964; Malcolm X; voter registration efforts; Selma-to-Montgomery march.

SEVENTH GRADE – Citizenship

Standard 11. Describe examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence of groups, societies, and nations, using past and current events.

- Tracing the political and social impact of the modern Civil Rights Movement from 1954 to the present, including Alabama’s role. *Extension to consider the impact.*

ELEVENTH GRADE

Standard 12. Trace events of the modern Civil Rights Movement from post-World War II to 1970 that resulted in social and economic changes, including the Montgomery bus boycott, the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, the march on Washington, and the Freedom Rides.

- Tracing the federal government’s involvement in the modern Civil Rights Movement, including the abolition of the poll tax, the desegregation of the armed forces, the nationalization of state militias, Brown versus Board of Education, the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Explaining contributions of individuals and groups to the modern Civil Rights Movement, including Martin Luther King, Jr., James Meredith, Medgar Evers, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
- Identifying people and events in Alabama that influenced the modern Civil Rights Movement, including Rosa Parks, Autherine Lucy, John Patterson, George C. Wallace, Vivian Malone, Fred Shuttlesworth, *the Children’s March*, the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing, and the Selma-to-Montgomery march
- Describing the development of a Black Power movement, including the change in focus of the SNCC, the rise of Malcolm X, and Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panther Movement

- Describing the impact of African-American entrepreneurs on the modern Civil Rights Movement Examples: S. B. Fuller, A. G. Gaston

English Language Arts Course of Study - Appendix D:

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard 7. *Integration of information from Walking Tour, sculptures, and original photographs.*

Grades 6-8. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Grades 9-10. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts).

Grades 11-12. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Standard 7.

Grades 6-8. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

Grades 9-10. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Grades 11-12. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

English Language Arts Course of Study

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

[SL.6-12.1] Engage [initiate and participate – grades 9-12] effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade-level topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Information from Walking Tour, sculptures, and original photographs.

[SL.6.2] Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

[SL.7.2] Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study. *With extensions to lesson plan.*

[SL.8.2.] Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation. *With extensions to lesson plan.*

[SL.9-12.2] Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally), [in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, - grades 11-12] evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source [and noting any discrepancies among the data – grades 11-12]. *With extensions to lesson plan.*

Language Standards

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

[L.6-8.6]. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.