



Birmingham Civil Rights Institute Curriculum and Lesson Plans

Women of the Movement

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Overview

As the old adage goes, “Behind every great man, is a great woman.” Women of the Movement were oftentimes behind the scenes preparing for demonstrations, performing “secretarial” duties, cooking meals for the organizers, and cleaning up after rallies. Nevertheless, there were some women leading the way as well. Yet, like so many other pages in history, women were seldom given headline credit for their role in the Civil Rights Movement, even though without their tireless work, the Movement could have very well failed.

The Montgomery bus strike was largely planned and fueled by women, for it was African American women in the labor force who found themselves tired of giving up their seats after a hard day on a thankless job. According to Lynne Olson, author of “Freedom’s Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830 to 1970,” the women supporting the bus boycott arranged car pools and hosted bake sales to raise money for alternate transportation. However, once the strike began to bear fruit, prominent men often took the helm, Olson said.

Though historians now acknowledge that women were pivotal in the critical battles for racial equality, Rosa Parks is one of the very few female civil rights figures who are widely known. Most women in the movement played background roles – either by choice or due to bias – since being a woman of color meant facing both racism and sexism. For many, the wives of the movement’s prominent male leaders, including Coretta Scott King, Betty Shabazz and Myrlie Evers Williams, were among the most visible women in the struggle; however, while their husbands were alive and leading the way, we seldom heard them speak.

Celebrity status was one major exception, for example, Mahalia Jackson, Marian Anderson, Joan Baez, and Josephine Baker were among the women invited to perform at the March on Washington in 1963. However, Daisy Bates, the President of the Arkansas NAACP, was the only woman given a prominent speaking role, yet her name or image seldom come to mind.

In this lesson, students will learn more about Daisy Bates, who was instrumental in the movement to organize the Little Rock 9 and integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. Bates was also publisher of the Arkansas State Press, a weekly African American newspaper. To this end, students will create their own newspaper with every headline and story focusing on the contributions women made in the Civil Rights Movement.

New Words

Adage, tireless, secretarial, prominent, pivotal, instrumental

Grade Level

Adaptable for all grade levels.

Primary Learning Objective(s)

The Students Will:

- Recognize the roles women played in the Civil Rights Movement (CRM).
- Identify women who played key roles in the CRM and research their efforts.
- Summarize the contributions of select women in the CRM and
- Write newspaper articles about their work.

Approximate Duration of Lesson

Two class periods, or a combined Language Arts and Social Studies block for one day.

Materials and Equipment Needed

Computers with Internet access, writing materials, white paper, rulers, computer publishing software like Microsoft Publisher (optional), printer (optional).

Background/Preparation

The teacher will need to become familiar with the information given in the overview of this lesson. The teacher will need to identify biographies and/or articles about women who were actively involved in the Civil Rights Movement and bookmark them on the computer, compile a list for students to look up with recommended websites, or print copies of the information for students to use.

Procedures/Activities

- The teacher should ask students to name women that they know were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. As they give you names, write them on the board and ask students to share what contributions these women made.
- The teacher should name some of the women they researched in preparation for this lesson. Ask students if they ever heard of these women and/or if they know what they did for a living or how they contributed to the CRM. After they have made a reasonable attempt, tell them who the women are.
- Divide the students into small groups of 4-5 and tell them that they are going to create a group newspaper. They will need to create a title for their newspaper and they will each need to write a newspaper article about a woman that you have assigned them and the contribution that woman made to the Civil Rights Movement. They will need to print a picture of the woman, an image related to her contribution, or illustrate a picture on their own.
- Next, assign each student a woman to research and have them get started (see a list under "Additional Resources" and "References"). If computers are available, allow students to type their articles on the computer and print them out. Be sure to narrow the margins to about 2 inches to reflect a traditional newspaper column. You may want to limit their words to fewer

than 300 for space limitations as well. If you have access to a computer with publishing software, like Microsoft Publisher or Microsoft Word, use a newsletter template to create the newspaper.

Assessment Strategies

Students should be assessed on their creativity, the quality and content of their newspaper articles, and on the neatness and organization of their newspapers.

Extension

To extend this activity, students could create a Powerpoint or Prezi presentation of their combined research and share with other classes. Students could also create a class book titled, Women of the Movement, featuring the images and articles of each woman.

Remediation

Students could have the option of drawing a picture or printing one from the Internet and writing a few simple sentences about who they are and what their contribution was to the Civil Rights Movement.

Additional Resources

Virginia Foster Durr	Betty Shabazz	Anne Braden	Myrlie Evers-Williams
Corretta Scott King	Shirley Chisholm	Juanita Craft	Mary Church Terrell
Marian Anderson	Mahalia Jackson	Septima Clark	Ida Bell Wells-Barnett
Dorie Ladner	Joyce Ladner	Diane Nash	Gloria Richardson
Modjeska Monteith Simkins	Elizabeth Harden Gilmore		

References

Women had Key Roles in Civil Rights Movement

http://www.nbcnews.com/id/9862643/ns/us_news-life/t/women-had-key-roles-civil-rights-movement/#.UWRNNJNOSSo

Daisy Bates

<http://www.biography.com/people/daisy-bates-206524?page=1>

Daisy Bates: First Lady of Little Rock

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/daisy-bates/>

Civil Rights March on Washington

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/marchonwashington.html>

March on Washington, DC for Jobs and Freedom

<http://www.socialwelfarehistory.com/eras/march-on-washington/>

Ten Things to Know About the March on Washington

<http://www.tolerance.org/blog/ten-things-know-about-march-washington>



Birmingham Civil Rights Institute Lesson Plan-Standards

Women of the Movement - 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 14. 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.