



Ethnic Studies Lesson 4O: African American Civil Rights Leaders

TOPIC:

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

GRADE LEVELS:

11-12

TIME:

1½ HOURS

California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Themes, Values, and Principles Alignment

Themes:

1. Identity
2. History and Movement
4. Social Movements and Equity

Values and Principles:

1. Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).
2. Celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color by providing a space to share their stories of success, community collaboration, and solidarity, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth.
6. Connect ourselves to past and contemporary social movements that struggle for social justice and an equitable and democratic society, and conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for a post-racist, post-systemic-racism society that promotes collective narratives of transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing.

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):
Reading—Informational Text (RI.11-12)

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas. (RI.11-12.2)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):
History-Social Science Content Standards—(Grades 9-12)

Analyze the origins, goals, leadership, and tactics of various civil rights movements, including those of Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos. (11.10)

Evaluate the impact of social movements and reforms on changing societal norms and policies. (11.11)

Analyze the impact of landmark Supreme Court cases and legislation, such as *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, on the advancement of civil rights and liberties. (12.5)

Lesson Purpose

Students will research the people, places, and events of the early civil rights movement of the 1960s in order to understand the movement's views on resistance, violence, and morality.

Essential Questions

What were the views of early civil rights leaders on resistance, violence, and morality? What were some of this early movement's legacies?

How has life changed for African Americans over the last 250 years?

Materials

[MLK Center for Nonviolent Social Change: MLK: Nonviolence Is the Most Powerful Weapon](#)

[PBS: MLK in Gandhi's Footsteps](#)

[Worksheet for 4Q](#)

[Nobel Prize: Martin Luther King Jr. Biographical](#)

[Southern Christian Leadership Conference: About Us](#)

[National Women's History Museum: Rosa Parks](#)

[National Women's History Museum: Fannie Lou Hamer](#)

[National Women's History Museum: Montgomery Bus Boycott](#)

[National Archives: Selma Marches](#)

[US Civil Rights Trail: Freedom Riders](#)

[MSNBC: The Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)

[History: What Is the Voting Rights Act of 1965?](#)

[Unit 4 KWL Chart](#)

Vocabulary

nonviolence	civil rights	morality, ethics, religion
nonviolent resistance	Martin Luther King Jr.	Mahatma Gandhi
Southern Christian Leadership Conference	Civil Rights Act of 1964	Voting Rights Act of 1965

Lesson Steps

Step 1:

- As a class, ask students what they already know about Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement of the 1960s. In order to refresh students' impressions of MLK Jr., have the class watch [MLK Center for Nonviolent Social Change: MLK: Nonviolence Is the Most Powerful Weapon](#) and [PBS: MLK in Gandhi's Footsteps](#). As students watch, have students pay attention to MLK Jr.'s views on nonviolent resistance, religion, and the legacy that he would want for the civil rights movement. Pause the videos frequently for students to take notes.
- When students have finished watching the video, bring up the [WORKSHEET](#) for this lesson. Work with students to add details to points 2, 3, and 4 on the worksheet with examples of MLK's views on nonviolent resistance, religion, and legacy. Let students know they will be comparing these beliefs to the Black Power movement of the late 1960s and 1970s in the next lesson.

Step 2:

- Let students know that they will be working in pairs to research some aspects of the continuing civil rights struggles of the early 1960s. Remind students that this is a continuation of the struggle from the early days of slavery, through abolition, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the hundred years since the end of the Civil War. Students will make a copy of the shared worksheet to use as a pair and will take notes on their worksheet while reviewing the following websites. Students can choose as many of the sites as will fit into the time to research, but they do not have to research them all. Students should be careful to cite their sources. Make sure students understand that these events and people are just representative. There were innumerable other activists during this time. Have students form research pairs.
 - [Nobel Prize: Martin Luther King Jr. Biographical](#)
 - [Southern Christian Leadership Conference: About Us](#)
 - [National Women's History Museum: Rosa Parks](#)
 - [National Women's History Museum: Fannie Lou Hamer](#)
 - [National Women's History Museum: Montgomery Bus Boycott](#)
 - [National Archives: Selma Marches](#)
 - [US Civil Rights Trail: Freedom Riders](#)
- When students have completed their research, have them share their findings with one other group. Students will save their work for the next lesson.

Step 3:

- Some of the legacies of the early civil rights movement were the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Have students listen to [MSNBC: The Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) and [History: What Is the Voting Rights Act of 1965?](#) Students should take notes on the who, what, when, where, and why of these acts. Help students create event cards for these acts when the video is complete, and post them on the class timeline. Students should take a minute to write notes in their Google worksheet about the legacies of the early civil rights movement as well as carefully cite their sources of information.

Step 4:

- As a class, ask students this lesson's questions, "What were the views of early civil rights leaders on resistance, violence, and morality? What were some of this early movement's legacies?" Also, ask students this unit's question, "How have the lives of African Americans changed over the last 250 years?" Make note of what was learned on this unit's KWL chart.

Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection

As time allows, and for homework, have students watch [NBC News: Daughters of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X Reflect on Fight for Equality](#) (video 13 minutes, 30 seconds). Have students watch the first 5 minutes and 50 seconds and take notes in order to answer the question, “If the early civil rights movement was one of nonviolent resistance, why was there so much violence, and why were its leaders assassinated? What can we learn from the daughters of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X?” Students would write a short paragraph.

Additional Readings and Resources

[FEE Stories: MLK’s Philosophy Was Rooted in the Natural Law Tradition](#)

[History: 8 Key Laws That Advanced Civil Rights](#)

[Minnesota Public Radio: The FBI’s War on King](#)

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, 183-224.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS REGARDING ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES: America is a pluralistic country, ethnically. It is also a pluralistic country politically—left, right, and center. Ethnic studies educators have ready access to resources from the left-of-center in the [2021 California Model Curriculum](#) and in the [Liberated Model Curriculum](#). This Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum favors teachers exposing students to views from across the political spectrum. Educators often lack guidance to materials from outside the left-of-center. Therefore, in the sections on Additional Readings and Resources, the Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum alerts educators to credible resources that provide an alternative to the other Model Curricula. In doing so, this curriculum encourages educators to acquaint students with evidence-based views from left, right, and center.

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After reading the lesson materials, add evidence to the appropriate section in order to create a compare-and-contrast essay after Lesson 40. Cite your sources carefully.

1. Main Idea and Introduction thoughts:
2. Compare and contrast the views of early civil rights leaders and leaders of the Black Power movement in terms of religion, morality, and ethics.
3. Compare and contrast the views of early civil rights leaders and leaders of the Black Power movement in terms of resistance and non-violent resistance.
4. Compare and contrast the legacy of early civil rights leaders and leaders of the Black Power movement in terms of their legacies.
5. Conclusion:

Ethnic Studies 4A: KWL Chart

KNOW	WONDER	LEARNED
<i>What do we think we already know about this topic?</i>	<i>What do we wonder about this topic? Write your questions below.</i>	<i>After the research is completed, what did we learn? Make sure to cite your source.</i>