



Ethnic Studies Lesson 4S: African American Civil Rights Effectiveness

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:

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)

Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence. (RI.11-12.6)

Writing—(W.11-12)

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. (W.11-12.2)

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

Analyze the impact of social movements and reforms on changing societal norms and policies. (11.10)

Analyze the impact of landmark Supreme Court cases and legislation on the advancement of civil rights and liberties. (12.5)

Lesson Purpose

Students will review and investigate African American cases, people, organizations, and events to determine what aspects of American democracy have been used to further African Americans' civil rights, and their effectiveness.

Essential Questions

How did African Americans use the court system, legislative acts, the right to demonstrate, the right to form organizations, the right to vote, and other rights guaranteed in a democratic society to improve their civil rights, and how effective have these measures been?

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

Materials

[WLKY News: Batson v. Kentucky: jury](#)

[VICE News: We Talk to Interracial Couples 50 Years after Loving v. Virginia](#)

[WORKSHEET](#)

[Unit 4 KWL Chart](#)

Vocabulary

voir dire

miscegenation

Lesson Steps

Step 1:

- As a class, ask students if they remember the *Hernandez v. Texas* case that we reviewed at the end of the Latino/Hispanic American unit. In that case, the Supreme Court found that it was unlawful to exclude members of a jury because of their race. Lawyers could find another way to exclude members of a jury in the jury selection process, called voir dire. Have students watch [WLKY News: Batson v. Kentucky: jury](#) (video 2 minutes, 11 seconds). Students should take notes on the who, what, where, and why in order to create an event card. Students should also note what elements of democracy were used to advance civil rights. Once students have completed the video, help students as a class to create an event card and post it on the timeline.
- Let students know that there were other important Supreme Court cases that struck down elements of segregation. Have students watch [VICE News: We Talk to Interracial Couples 50 Years after Loving v. Virginia](#) (video 6 minutes, 2 seconds). As students watch, have them make note of the who, what, where, and why in order to create an event card. Students should also note what elements of democracy were used to advance civil rights. Once students have completed the video, help students as a class to create an event

card and post it on the timeline. Ask students what aspects of democracy were used to advance civil rights. How did these cases improve civil rights for all African Americans?

Step 2:

- Remind students that they have been discussing the aspects of democracy that have helped to improve civil rights for African Americans throughout this unit. Ask students what aspects of American democracy were used to hinder civil rights. (Help students remember the Three-Fifths Clause of the Constitution, Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, etc.) Show students this lesson's [WORKSHEET](#) and put the counterexamples in the correct category. Make sure to cite a source for each entry.
- Students will be working in pairs and using the timeline and other unit resources, such as the class KWL chart, the class timeline, short paragraphs, essays, and displays, in order to create a graphic organizer to help with this unit's essay. Break students into pairs and ask students to make a copy of the unit [WORKSHEET](#). Check in with students frequently to make sure they are finding examples with citations in each of the categories.
- When students have completed their research, have pairs meet to compare notes. Let groups of four students meet with another group of four to compare notes.

Step 3:

- As a class, ask students this lesson's questions, "How did African Americans use the court system, legislative acts, the right to demonstrate, the right to form organizations, the right to vote, and other rights guaranteed in a democratic society to improve their civil rights, and how effective have these measures been?" Also, ask students this unit's question, "How have the lives of African Americans changed over the last 250 years?" Make notes of what was learned on this unit's KWL chart, as well as any ongoing questions.

Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection

Ask students to complete an essay (five paragraphs or longer) summarizing their learning of "How has life changed for African Americans over the last 250 years?" All students should have access to the KWL chart for this unit, and all students should cite the sources of their information accurately.

Additional Readings and Resources

Glazer, Nathan, and Moynihan, Daniel P. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. M.I.T. Press, 1963.

Reilly, Wilfred. "The Whiteness of Wokeness." *Commentary*, November 2021. <https://www.commentary.org/articles/wilfred-reilly/whiteness-wokeness/>

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

Sowell, Thomas. "Legacy [of slavery' a legacy of cliches and lazy thinking.](#)" Daily Telegram, July 20, 2015.

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.

Names: _____

Ethnic Studies 4S: Group Research

After reviewing this unit's resources, find examples of the following aspects of American Democracy that have supported African American civil rights.

Aspect of American Democracy	Counterexamples
Court Cases	
Legislative Acts	
Constitutional Amendments	
Right to demonstrate	
Right to form organizations	
Right to vote	
Right to a jury trial	
State Laws	

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>