

Teaching American History Grant: Learning Experience 2006-2007  
Stacia Snow- Kingston High School Kingston, NY

**Topic Title: Civil Rights Act of 1964**

**DATE: March, 2007**

**Grade Level: 12**

**Overview of the Learning Experience:**

- Unit: African American (4 week)
- Topic: Civil rights movement
- Students will study speeches from political leaders, the Civil Rights Act, and other documents from the time period and place them in context within the civil rights movement and analyze their effect.
- Standard 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4- History of the United States and New York
  - Students will:
    - **analyze the development of American culture, explaining how ideas, values, beliefs, and traditions have changed over time and how they unite all Americans.**
    - **describe the evolution of American democratic values and beliefs as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the New York State Constitution, the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other important historical documents.**
    - **develop and test hypotheses about important events, eras, or issues in New York State and United States history, setting clear and valid criteria for judging the importance and significance of these events, eras, or issues.**
- Standard 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4- Civics, Citizenship & Government
  - Students will:
    - **trace the evolution of American values, beliefs, and institutions**
    - **analyze the disparities between civic values expressed in the United States Constitution and the realities as evidenced in the political, social, and economic life in the United States**
    - **understand how citizenship includes the exercise of certain personal responsibilities, including voting, considering the rights and interests of others, behaving in a civil manner, and accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions (Adapted from *The National Standards for Civics and Government, 1994*)**
    - **explore how citizens influence public policy in a representative democracy.**
    - **participate as informed citizens in the political justice system and processes of the United States, including voting**
    - **evaluate, take, and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of American political life are and their importance to the maintenance of constitutional democracy (Adapted from *The National Standards for Civics and Government, 1994*)**

**Essential Question(s):**

- What can the study of the civil rights movement and political speeches surrounding the movement teach us about addressing social justice issues?
- What does JFK mean when he calls the Civil Rights Act a “moral imperative”?
- Is the law or the speeches more effective in the success of the movement?

**Time Allotment (classroom time): 5 Days**

**Vocabulary:** *civil liberties, civil rights, moral imperative, Brown v. Board of Ed, de facto discrimination, de jure discrimination, equality of opportunity v. opportunity of result*

**Resources:**

- <http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/democrac/39.htm> Backgrounder on Civil Rights Act 1964 (includes summary of law).
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-srOvwG81Iw> –Robert Shelton & Alabama response to movement and excerpt of JFK speech. 2:05 min.
- <http://www.jfklibrary.org> - JFK Radio and Television Report to the American People on Civil Rights, June 11, 1963 13:22 min.
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbUtL\\_0vAJk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbUtL_0vAJk) – Martin Luther King, Jr. “I Have a Dream Speech” 17:27 min.
- <http://www.historicaldocuments.com/CivilRightsAct1964LyndonJohnsonsRemarks.htm> - President Lyndon B. Johnson's Radio and Television Remarks Upon Signing the Civil Rights Bill July 2, 1964
- Alabama Literacy Test: <http://www.ccle.fourh.umn.edu/literacy.pdf>

**Materials:**

- **Internet/ LCD projector**
- **Class copies of each speech transcript**
- **Journals**
- **Analyzing primary source documents worksheet:**  
[http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/liberation\\_curriculum/pdfs/documentanalysis.pdf](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/liberation_curriculum/pdfs/documentanalysis.pdf)
- **PowerPoint**

**Procedure:**

- Day 1: Historical background of the movement through PowerPoint presentation and lecture. Inform students there will be a short quiz the next day on the information.
- Day 2: Pass out the Alabama Literacy test and inform students that any talking or questions will result in failure. Collect tests after 15 min. explain its origination and conduct class discussion regarding the various mechanisms used in the south to prevent African-Americans from voting.  
Homework: Hand-out Voting Rights Act Backgrounder to all students. Students are to read the document and make any notes in the margin of questions that arise while they are reading ie: vocabulary, what is the law establishing, enforcement issues, etc.
- Day 3: Share their HW findings with the class. Hand-out the transcripts of the three civil rights speeches. Each student should receive all three speeches. Divide the students into three groups and assign one speech to each section. The students read the speech and complete the analyzing primary source documents (APSD).
- Day 4-5: Play the 2 min. youtube.com piece to introduce the level of tension growing in the country over the Civil Rights Act. Next have several of the students who read the JFK speech share some of their answers of questions 1-3 on the APSD. Listen to the speech. Discuss. Have several students answer questions 4&5. Repeat the same before and after watching MLK’s speech. Have a student volunteer to be LBJ and read his speech to the American people (the class).

**Assessment:**

- Students will write a free write response addressing the three essential questions. Students will hand-in their APSD.

