

WASAH Lesson Plan/Unit Project Proposal
2009
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Description of the Topic and Lesson Planning Methods and Strategies

I would like to explore the African American Freedom Movement and the expansion of freedom. With this topic, I want to look at the conflict inherent in freedom for different groups in American society; the issue of expansion for some vs. contraction for others. Of particular interest is how ordinary citizens fit into the freedom movement; the efficacy of the individual. I would like to tie in a number of different individual stories to provide examples of the larger themes of the freedom movement.

Methods will include the examination of primary and secondary sources. I want students to be exposed to a number of examples of personal stories and then discover themes that run through narratives of activism.

Names of Scholars/Presenters

The scholarship and input of Jeff Pickron and Stephen Kercher would be beneficial to this unit. Either would be able to offer suggestions for further study and resources.

In-service or Training Presentation

Last spring, our school district received a Picturing American History grant. I would like to plan an in-service training that would include images depicting the expansion of American Freedom and invite one of the grant scholars to speak on the topic of the expansion of American Freedom using the images.

Lesson Plans or Unit of Instruction

I would like to develop a 1-2 week unit on the African-American Freedom Movement. The unit would include an introduction to the African-American Freedom Movement highlighting the struggle for civil rights in the United States in the larger context of freedom and liberty. The introduction would include the iconic experiences of the civil rights movement to provide students with the framework of the national movement. From this introduction, I would like to move to an exploration of local (Wisconsin or mid-western) experiences in the movement including desegregation of the schools beginning in Milwaukee Public Schools and then moving to the University of Wisconsin system.

For this unit, I will use a variety of resources. In addition to the textbook, I would like students to read Timothy Tyson's book, *Blood Done Sign My Name*. These two resources will provide the framework for discussion and comparison. We will also explore the Black Thursday at UW Oshkosh website. The website oral histories and primary documents will afford students the opportunity to compare Tyson's account of the black freedom movement with the protest at UW Oshkosh. Additionally, students will read excerpts from *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America* regarding school desegregation in Milwaukee and Boston. We will also explore the

Wisconsin Historical Society's website and digital archives for more information regarding the black freedom movement in Wisconsin.

Students will be able to look at the broad themes of the black freedom movement as well as specific examples that depict the broader themes. It is important for students to understand that history is real people doing real things. By finding examples of real people, students may better be able to understand the personal nature of history.

Course, Grade Level, Students

I want to use this unit of study in a Junior/Senior elective Humanities class. During the second half of the class we examine what it means to be an American. Themes of freedom and definitions of citizenship fit perfectly with the course.

Articles, Essays, Books

Freedom North Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980. New York:

Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Print.

Joseph, Peniel E. *Black Power Movement Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era.*

New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.

Theoharis, Jeanne, Komozi Woodard, and Charles Payne. *Groundwork Local Black*

Freedom Movements in America. New York: NYU, 2005. Print.

Tyson, Timothy B. *Blood Done Sign My Name A True Story.* New York: Three Rivers,

2005. Print.