

WASAH Lesson Plan Proposal
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Malcolm X - Ballot or Bullet

Description

The civil rights movement in American history was a very important time. There were many important people and themes during this time period. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X were two very significant people in the civil rights movement. Many times these two leaders were at polar opposites when it came to their ideas on how to gain equal rights. Looking at these two figures and reading their two speeches will help the students start to gain an understanding of this historical event.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech "Give Us the Ballot" is very different compared to Malcolm X's "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech. The stark contrast that they present is a very compelling look at the different thoughts during the civil rights movement. Students will read and discuss these two speeches using the method of Socratic Seminar.

I chose this topic because the civil rights movement is a great modern day movement involving freedom. A large group of Americans were looking to gain more equality and freedom through many different means. The civil rights movement is an important event that students should know and start to understand.

A Socratic Seminar is a great teaching method because we are using primary documents as the focus of discussion. The discussion is also focused amongst the students not on me. Socratic Seminars facilitate in depth discussion amongst the students about the topic given.

Doing this lesson I hope to gain a better knowledge of the civil rights movement. I also hope to understand the ideas of freedom for the leaders and participants in this movement. In past years of teaching this class I have not made it much past World War II. This year I plan on going well past WWII and teaching about America after the war.

Collaboration

I would hope to collaborate with Brett Barker (UW-MC), Jeff Pickron (UW-Oshkosh), and David Voelker (UW-Green Bay). I hope their expertise will lend some help in my research and construction of this lesson.

In-Service

I will be presenting how to use primary images in the classroom. I believe the elementary teachers in my school would benefit greatly from this resource.

Description of Lesson Plan

I will be using a Socratic Seminar as the theme of this lesson. Students will already have a background of the civil rights movement. They then will be given these two speeches

and asked to read them. Their homework will be to sum up these two speeches with a paragraph each. That is their “ticket” into the discussion. Each paragraph will be numbered; this will help the students use the documents as evidence. There will be one main question posed to them. I will also have many other sub questions created to help facilitate or keep the discussion on track.

All sources I will present on an overhead projector and have print outs made for each student.

Students will gain a better understanding of freedom through this lesson by looking at what freedom meant for the civil rights movement. Freedom in the eyes of African Americans could be much different compared to the students’ view of freedom.

Grade Level and Course

The grade level that this lesson will be given to is 8th grade. This is an American History course focusing on 1860 through present day. The types of students that this lesson will target are a wide variety of 8th graders.

Academic Standards

SS.B.8.1 -- Interpret the past using a variety of sources, such as biographies, diaries, journals, artifacts, eyewitness interviews, and other primary source materials, and evaluate the credibility of sources used

SS.B.8.10 Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, or nations

SS.B.8.5 Use historical evidence to determine and support a position about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice, and express the position coherently

Sources

King, Martin Luther Jr.; "**Give Us the Ballot,**" **Address Delivered at the Prayer Pilgrimage** 17 May 1957, Washington, D.C. <http://www.mlkonline.net/ballot.html>

Malcolm X; *The Ballot or the Bullet*. April 3, 1964; http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/speeches/malcolm_x_ballot.html

Myers, Walter Dean; *Malcolm X : a fire burning brightly*. New York : HarperCollinsPublishers, 2000.

Tredway, Linda; *Using Socratic Seminar: Engaging in intellectual discourse*. <http://www.middleweb.com/Socratic.html>