

# The Civil Rights Movement—Box Investigation

## INTRODUCTION

Through the materials and activities in this trunk, students will further develop their understanding of the major themes of the American Civil Rights Movement as well as lesser known contributing elements, including the Great Migration, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Black Separatist movement. Students first explore national historic items representative of the Movement's themes. They are then presented with local and regional items and asked to consider those items in context of the national themes.

Activities and materials in the trunk are intended to be a supplement to regular classroom lessons and activities on this topic. This trunk is appropriate for middle to high school students and can be used as a jumping off point for further inquiry into the themes presented.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the people and events that contributed to the Civil Rights Movement, with an emphasis on differing approaches to social change during the Movement.
- Discuss the significance of these people and events and how they connect to each other as part of the Civil Rights Movement and United States history.
- Describe the migration of African Americans in the United States and its effect on the Civil Rights Movement.
- Examine the major themes/events of the Civil Rights Movement through a local/regional lens.

## NCSCOS CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

### Grade 11

#### United States History

**Goal 11:** Recovery, Prosperity, and Turmoil (1945-1980) - The learner will trace economic, political, and social developments and assess their significance for the lives of Americans during this time period.

**Objective 11.02:** Trace major events of the Civil Rights Movement and evaluate its impact.

#### Advanced Placement United States History

**Goal 14:** The Beginnings of the Cold War and the 1950s (1945-1960) The learner will assess the causes and effects of United States/Soviet tensions, the Civil Rights Movement and economic prosperity.

**Objective14.04:** Identify the major events of the Civil Rights Movement and evaluate the role of landmark Supreme Court cases.

**Objective 14.05:** Assess the impact of the leaders of the Civil Rights movement.

### **CLASSROOM TIME REQUIRED**

Box Investigation: 1-2 class periods for initial investigation, 2 or more for additional research

Analysis of Local Primary Sources: 1-2 class periods

Additional time necessary for follow-up/extension activities as desired

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

5 Boxes containing printed primary source clues and various audio files on CD (see Box Resource Guides included with this lesson plan)

Historical Sleuthing worksheet (included in this lesson plan)

Box Resource Guides:

- The Harlem Renaissance
- Separate But Equal
- The Great Migration
- Non-violent Protests
- Black Separatism

### **TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES NEEDED**

Computer(s)

- Internet connection preferable to access resource websites and online sound files, some audio CDs require an Internet connection
- One computer for each group of students would be ideal to encourage a more robust experience during the box investigations, allowing for supplemental research

DVD player (stand alone or computer integrated) with projection screen or large TV

### **PRE-ACTIVITIES**

Students should be familiar with the concept of a primary source and have had practice analyzing primary sources (images, documents, maps, etc) from an objective and subjective point of view. For more information on introducing students to primary sources please visit the Library of Congress' Teacher Resources: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>

### **ACTIVITIES**

#### **Day 1: Box Investigation—"National Items"**

1. Begin this lesson by brainstorming what students already know about the Civil Rights Movement. Ask them to share specific people, places, and events related to this topic. Write the students' responses on the board.
2. Divide students into 5 groups. Distribute a box to each group of students and a copy of the **Historical Sleuthing worksheet**.

3. Explain to students that they will carefully examine each item in their box.
4. Students should understand that the items in their box all relate to a particular aspect or theme of the Civil Rights Movement and that they should analyze the items to help them determine what aspect their box represents.
5. In order to examine the clues, students should use both objective and subjective analysis. Remind students that to objectively analyze means that you only look at things you can actually see in the item and that to subjectively analyze means that you make judgments about the item based on its objective features. In order to accomplish this, students should use and complete the **Historical Sleuthing worksheet** to describe and record information about the items in their box. If each group of students has access to a computer, it is advisable to ask them to do some light research on the Internet related to their item. By using keywords related to what they *think* the item might be, they can validate their guesses and learn more about the item and theme. This will be helpful in the group presentations/discussions following the box investigation.
6. Ask each group of students to consider the following questions as they examine the contents of their boxes. (Write these questions on the board for students to refer to as they work.)
  - a. What aspect or theme of the Civil Rights Movement do my items represent?
  - b. *How* are these items representative of this aspect of the CVM?
  - c. How do you think this aspect or theme figures into the Civil Rights Movement? How might it have been important or significant to the movement?
7. The instructor should frequently check with each group to be sure they are successfully examining their items and that eventually they are able to reach the appropriate conclusion about their box.
8. Have student groups share their findings with the rest of the class via an impromptu oral presentation, using their Historical Sleuthing worksheet, any Internet research, and the questions in step 6 to guide them.
9. You may wish to have students take notes on other groups' presentations for use in follow-up/extension activities.

#### **ASSESSMENT**

- The instructor should assess student understanding during the group sharing time at the conclusion of the box activity. Students who made the appropriate connections during the activity will have correctly determined their civil rights topic and have answered the questions from step 6 (activities) while sharing with the class. Overall, did each group present the essence of their theme in a way that had impact for the audience?
- The instructor may also choose to collect and view the students' completed Historical Sleuthing worksheets.
- Results of the informal assessment for this lesson may be used to dictate the direction of the unit of study to follow this activity. (The instructor may note certain aspects of the Civil Rights Movement on which students need additional focus or may note aspects of special interest to the students.)

**Please read!!** After completing the box investigation, please consult the Box Resource Guides to ensure that all clues are returned to their correct box.

## RELATED WEBSITES

*Primary sources used in this lesson are from:*

With an Even Hand: Brown v. Board at Fifty, Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/brown-aftermath.html>

African-American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship, Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aohtml/exhibit/aointro.html>

The African American Mosaic, Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam011.html>

The African-American Experience in Ohio, 1850-1920, Library of Congress

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ohshtml/aaeohome.html>

Columbia University History Department (Paintings by Jacob Lawrence)

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/history/odonnell/w1010/edit/migration/migration.html>

The Greensboro Sit-ins (from the Greensboro News and Record)

<http://www.sitins.com/index.shtml>

*Additional primary sources for this lesson can be found at:*

The Library of Congress

[www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)

The Greensboro Sit-ins (from the Greensboro News and Record)

<http://www.sitins.com/index.shtml>