



You Were There: The Little Rock Nine

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Overview

Topic: Civil Rights, The Little Rock Nine. This lesson will focus on one of the most important events of the Civil Rights Movement—the efforts, struggles, and reactions to the nine African-American students who integrated Little Rock Central High School. Students will view excerpts from the video *A Time for Justice*, use websites, and research primary documents to create a radio broadcast showing the impact of these events. This lesson assumes that students possess adequate background information on the struggle for Civil Rights. (Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Plessy vs. Ferguson, Brown vs. Board of Education, Jim Crow etc.)

Time Allotment

Two 90-minute blocks

Media Components

A Time for Justice — a film by Charles Guggenheim, 1992 (Available through Teaching Tolerance Montgomery, Alabama)

VCR with remote control

SmartBoard or other projection device (the use of the SmartBoard is not essential but it will benefit sensory learners)

These websites will be used by students and teachers as sites of primary documents. These sites provide photos of the events of the integrating of Central High School. Timelines and biographical sketches of the important participants are also contained in these sites.

www.centralhigh57.org

cnn.com/us/9709/24/little.rock

Watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/schoolintegration/

lilrockKn.pacbell.com/wired/bhm/

little-rock/home.htm

Ardemgaz.com/prev/central/counts.html

www.ark-ives.com/photo/gallery/central.php

pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/civilrights/features-school.html

www.journalism.indiana.edu/gallery/faculty/counts/integration.html

nps.gov/chsc/index.htm

www.monroe.k12.fl.us/KLS/BlackHistoryMonth/Littlerockhs/Littlerockhighschool.htm

www.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/

littlerock-rock-home.htmlwww.centralhigh57.org

www.cnn.com/us/9709/24/little.rock

www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/school-integration/lilrock/index.html

www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/BHM/little_rock/

www.ardemgaz.com/prev/central/counts.html

www.ark-ives.com/photo/gallery/central.php

www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/civilrights/features-school.html

www.journalism.indiana.edu/gallery/faculty/counts/integration.html

nps.gov/chsc/index.htm

www.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/

littlerock-rock-home.html

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to:

- explain the meaning of Civil Rights
- describe the events and efforts of nine students to integrate Little Rock Central High School



GE Fund



You Were There: The Little Rock Nine

- utilize a timeline to recognize chronology of historical events
 - research primary documents to recognize differing viewpoints of an historical event
 - create a radio broadcast to depict a historical event
- (This lesson addresses Va. SOL Language Arts 7.3, 7.7, 8.3, 8.6; Social Studies USII 1, USII.8; CE.1)

Materials

- a folder for each student group with the assignment written on the front
- six or more pictures downloaded and printed from websites which show the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas
- copies of pictures pasted to individual sheets of paper for each student group or blank paper in folder for writing captions
- student hand-out

Teacher Preparations

- Bookmark sites with photos of Little Rock Nine, timeline of events, and biographical sketches of the Little Rock Nine.
- Ideally, you should download the photos to a classroom computer for projection. If possible, remove other historical information so pictures can be projected without any historical context.
- Whether or not you are using a SmartBoard, you may wish to print out, copy, cut and paste each photo onto a separate piece of paper and put the photos together in the assignment folder—one for each student group. Otherwise, create assignment folders with blank paper for students to use when brainstorming captions for the images projected onto the SmartBoard.
- Type the assignment onto paper, copy it and paste it to the front of each group's assignment folder: "In an effort to increase the circulation of our magazine, write captions for each photograph that will create interest on the part of our readers."

Introductory Activity

1. Project photos from relevant websites onto the SmartBoard (or see #4 below if not using a SmartBoard).
2. Tell students they are working for a magazine and must write captions for each photograph.
3. Say to students: Our magazine is trying to increase its circulation by focusing on human-interest stories. Use the photographs to write captions that will create interest on the part of the reader. We will be able to determine historical accuracy after watching the excerpts from the video.
4. Divide students into groups of 4-5. Provide each group an assignment folder (if not using SmartBoard, the assignment folder should have the pictures pasted onto individual sheets of paper inside). Give each group time to brainstorm and draft captions using their assignment folders. Have students write their captions on the SmartBoard or on the sheets of paper in their folders. If not using the SmartBoard, allow time for groups to share their captions with the rest of the class.
5. Tell students they will be watching excerpts from video to see if their captions are historically accurate and to capture the emotional impact of the events.

Focus For Media Interaction

1. Tell students they will be viewing photographs from the internet and watching an excerpt from *A Time for Justice* to give them insights into the social attitudes of the 1950s in America. This will help us understand the struggles of integrating Central High school in Little Rock, Arkansas. The photographs from the internet will be projected onto the SmartBoard and students will write captions for them on the SmartBoard, as though they are working for a magazine. A group of four-five students will formulate one caption for each projected photo.
2. Students will watch the video excerpts as students who might have been in the same situation as the nine African-American students. They will first watch the clip without sound and then again with

the sound to see if the emotional impact of the excerpt is influenced by language. During the viewing of the video, students will need to answer a series of questions.

Time Cues

To synchronize your VCR with the time cues that are included with this lesson, zero/reset your time counter at the very beginning of the program, before the introduction and titles. Time cues are expressed as “minutes:seconds;” for example, 3:15 means three minutes and fifteen seconds.

Pause vs. Stop

When using a video interactively with students, teachers need to decide when to use **PAUSE** and when to use **STOP**. **PAUSE** the video when the anticipated discussion or activity will take less than two minutes. **STOP** for longer periods. Pausing for too long at one time can cause video heads on the VCR to become clogged which may require cleaning to correct.

Learning Activities

1. FOCUS: SAY: We will watch the video first without sound and then watch excerpts with sound. I will be asking you questions after we watch the excerpts with sound and we will discuss if we would have answered the same questions differently without the sound and with the sound. Does the language help us understand the emotional impact of these events? Now watch this first excerpt to see what was happening at Central High School.

PLAY the video, beginning at approximately 8:50 with the picture of Central High School. Watch the entire clip silently. **PAUSE** at 10:00 when student is getting on the bus. **FOLLOW-UP.** Ask students: Why are crowds gathering in front of this high school? What different groups of people are present at this gathering? Why do you think they might be at this high school? Allow time for student reactions.

2. FOCUS: SAY: Now we will continue watching the video to see what happens three weeks later. Watch to see how things have changed. **RESUME** as the troops are marching. **PAUSE** at 11:05, just as the bell rings in the video. **FOLLOW-UP.** Three weeks later a new group of people is present. Who are they? What are they doing? How are these students being transported to school? How does that differ from the way you get to school?

3. FOCUS: Watch now to see what it was like at the high school. **RESUME. PAUSE** at 11:29 as students are discussing sit-in demonstrations. **FOLLOW-UP.** How do you think these nine students inspired others just by going to school?

4. Now let’s watch this same sequence with the sound. How is our impression different? Let’s see how we answer the questions differently. **REWIND AND REPLAY** beginning with Learning Activity #1. Use the same questions as above. For segment #3, include this question in the **FOLLOW-UP** discussion: Why is going to school described as “it was like going to war”? **FOLLOW-UP. SAY:** Let’s look back at the captions for our photos. Are there any we might want to change? If so, how?

Culminating Activities

Students, working in groups of 4-5 students will prepare radio broadcasts depicting the events of the Little Rock Nine and present broadcasts to their class. They will need to visit the bookmarked websites to view biographical sketches of the personalities involved and a timeline of the events. One student will act as the radio commentator who is interviewing at least three to four different personalities who were involved in this event. One person must portray one of the Little Rock Nine, one person must portray a bystander, and one person must portray someone from the armed services. One student can portray different characters to help make your broadcast more comprehensive. The broadcast should include questions that reveal answers to who is involved, what is happening, why it is happening, how it is happening and where it is happening. The production can be an on-the-spot news report or an interview of relevant people. The report should be

presented at the front of the classroom as if it were a live on-air broadcast with the class “behind the scenes” at the broadcast studio.

Assessment

Rubric for Oral Presentations in Radio Broadcast Format: Rated on a scale of 1-5, 5 being highest.

1. Is the student portraying a news reporter?
2. Has one interview delivered a definition of civil rights?
3. Do the questions and answers asked of the Little Rock Nine highlight their efforts and struggles to integrate Little Rock Central High School?
4. Are the broadcasts showing the listeners an event in the correct sequence of events?

Community Connections

Invite local African-Americans to class to share their involvement in the struggle for Civil Rights.

Cross-Curricular Extensions

English:

- Write to the Little Rock Nine thanking them for their efforts and struggles in helping to make Civil Rights a reality for all Americans
- Write poems and acrostics about the Little Rock Nine.

History:

- Research Plessy vs. Ferguson and Brown vs. Board of Education to compare and contrast the two.
- Create a timeline of five of the most important events of the Civil Rights Movement, illustrate it, and compare it with what other students have done.

About the Author

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Anice Machado is a sixth grade history teacher at Maury River Middle School and has been with Rockbridge County Public Schools for 32 years. She earned her B.A. from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and holds a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Virginia Tech. At Maury River Middle School Anice is the student council advisor and coordinates activities for the Gifted Education Program. For the last 7 years she has been a coach for Destination Imagination teams.

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YOU WERE THERE: A RADIO BROADCAST

In groups of 4-5 students, you will create and share a radio broadcast depicting the events of the Little Rock Nine. You will need to visit the bookmarked websites to view biographical sketches of the personalities involved and a time line of the events. One student will act as the radio commentator who is interviewing at least three to four different personalities who were involved in this event. One person must portray one of the Little Rock Nine, one person must portray a bystander, and one person must portray someone from the armed services. Of course, one student can portray different characters to help make your broadcast more comprehensive. Your broadcast should include questions that reveal answers to who is involved, what is happening, why it is happening, how it is happening and where it is happening. Your broadcast can be on-the-spot reporting or you can be interviewing people at the radio station. Remember to be authentic to the time period.

The following rubric will be used to evaluate your presentation. You will be rated for each on a scale of 1-5, 5 being the highest.

Do you portray a news reporter or radio commentator?

Do you include a definition of civil rights somewhere in your broadcast?

Do your questions and answers highlight the efforts and struggles of the Little Rock Nine to integrate Little Rock Central High School?

Is your broadcast showing the listeners an event in the correct sequence of events?