**The Power of One: Activism in the Civil Rights Movement**

By: Ashley Anderson, Dawny Chin, Stephen Marositz, Francesca Needham, and Jasmine Ross

Enduring Understanding:

* Can one person really make a difference?
* How can you start a change?
* Who can make a difference?

Essential Questions:

* Who were the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement?
* What were the organizations, and why were they started?
* Which places and events in the United States played a role in the Civil Rights Movement?

Unit Description:

* This unit is an exploration of the Civil Rights Movement through the lens of “I can make a difference.”

Main Subject Area:

* Social Studies

Subjects Integrated:

* Reading
* Writing
* Math
* Music

Grade Level:

* 3rd Grade

Prior Knowledge:

Students will have prior knowledge of race relations in the United States of America due to discussions they’ve had about civil rights and slavery in previous grades.

NYS Standards:

* **Standard 1: History of the United States and New York**
  + Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.
  + **Standard 1, Key Idea 1**
    - Key Idea 1: *The study of New York State and United States history requires an analysis of the development of American culture, its diversity and multicultural context, and the ways people are unified by many values, practices, and traditions.*
    - Performance Indicators--Students will:
      * *Elementary*
* know the roots of American culture, its development from many different traditions, and the ways many people from a variety of groups and backgrounds played a role in creating it
* understand the basic ideals of American democracy as explained in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and other important documents
* explain those values, practices, and traditions that unite all Americans
  + **Standard 1, Key Idea 2**
    - Key Idea 2: *Important ideas, social and cultural values, beliefs, and traditions from New York State and United States history illustrate the connections and interactions of people and events across time and from a variety of perspectives.*
    - Performance Indicators--Students will:
      * *Elementary*
* gather and organize information about the traditions transmitted by various groups living in their neighborhood and community
* recognize how traditions and practices were passed from one generation to the next
* distinguish between near and distant past and interpret simple timelines
  + **Standard 1, Key Idea 3**
    - Key Idea 3: *Study about the major social, political, economic, cultural, and religious developments in New York State and United States history involves learning about the important roles and contributions of individuals and groups.*
    - Performance Indicators--Students will:
      * *Elementary*
* gather and organize information about the important accomplishments of individuals and groups, including Native American Indians, living in their neighborhoods and communities
* classify information by type of activity: social, political, economic, technological, scientific, cultural, or religious
* identify individuals who have helped to strengthen democracy in the United States and throughout the world
  + **Standard 1, Key Idea 4**
    - Key Idea 4: *The skills of historical analysis include the ability to: explain the significance of historical evidence; weigh the importance, reliability, and validity of evidence; understand the concept of multiple causation; understand the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments.*
    - Performance Indicators--Students will:
      * *Elementary*
* consider different interpretations of key events and/or issues in history and understand the differences in these accounts
* explore different experiences, beliefs, motives, and traditions of people living in their neighborhoods, communities, and State
* view historic events through the eyes of those who were there, as shown in their art, writings, music, and artifacts.

Community Resources:

* Local and school library to get books and do research
* Green McAdoo Cultural Center
* Monument of MLK

Parental Involvement:

* Embedded into our classroom philosophy is a strong connection with family and familial involvement. For this particular unit we call upon family members to share their stories with us regarding the Civil Rights Movement. For our third grader class, their grandparents will probably present the more direct connection to this time period. Looking to the past with our grandparents, we want those experiences to speak to and inform present day civil rights and injustice. This may be more suited for parents since it is present day and is a direct reflection of 'their generation.' These presentations, conversations, and commentaries will allow the students to strengthen family bonds, foster community development, and gain an understanding of oral history. With all of that in mind it is the goal that the students will reflect on their present lives and examine what civil rights issues they connect with and how they can contribute to those efforts.

Hackman’s Five Essential Components of Social Justice Education:

* **Content Mastery/Factual Information**: *Students learn the significance of broad and varied information acquisition through data collection, historical contextualization, and micro-macro levels of content analysis. Leads to a student centered classroom, with thinking that connects individuals/community to the larger society.*
  + The students will be discussing people, events, behaviors, opinions, and music from the Civil Rights Movement era. They will also be learning about the organizations that were created as a result of the Civil Rights Movement and how they influenced and assisted the protests. At the end of the unit, there will be a connection make to the film “The Color of Friendship”, which they will be able to then associate with their own lives.
* **Critical Analysis (Systems of Oppression):** *Students learn the significance of P5*

*Process = Perspective + Positioning + Power + Possibility*

* + The unit will begin with a simulation that involves segregation and unequal treatment of the students. This will involve placing post-its or a colored dot sticker on certain students’ desks. The students, both oppressed and privileged, will reflect on the simulation, how they were at an advantage or disadvantage because of the segregation, and what they did, or could have done, to equalize the classroom. Through conversation and written pieces, the students will seek to understand the varied perspectives involved and how the difference would have affected his or her outlook on the simulation. This will directly connect to the motives and actions of the Civil Rights Movement.
* **Action and Social Change:** *Students learn that their knowledge is empowering, which transforms them into authentic change agents. Provides hope and possibility.*
  + By learning about the Children’s March, students will see that age did not matter in the Civil Rights Movement. This knowledge will generate some serious and mature thoughts about the Movement, which will then inspire the students to create slogans, signs, and songs about the protests. Hopefully, the students will connect these protests to the Occupy Wall Street movement happening all across the globe.
* **Personal Reflection (Educator/Students):** *Educators and students learn to examine and recognize the relationships of power, privilege, biases, domination, imposition, oppression, and the impact on individual/institutional/systematic levels. Leads to the development of a socially just classroom environment.*
  + As was previously mentioned, the students will be reflecting throughout the unit on the simulation, as well as the topics that will be discussed. It will be made sure that the students know that every discussion will be held sacred, in an open and honest environment. The questions they have regarding the Civil Rights Movement and any related subjects that may arise deserve to be heard and acknowledged.
* **Multicultural Group Dynamics:** *Culturally relevant learning/teaching environment is customized, built on an understanding/recognition of group dynamics and impact of teaching on social identities. Leads to cross-cultural communication; dialogue on diversity issues.*
  + It is of great importance that we acknowledge both the positive and negative sides of both Blacks and Whites in the Civil Rights Movement. The issues that will arise through these discussions carry potential feelings of resentment, pain, and hurt, among many others, and those feelings will need to be addressed. The students may make connections between civil rights issues and issues of their own, ones they encounter on a daily basis. This form of reflection and expression will be completely welcome into the discussions.

Unit Implementation:

* Week 1
  + Introduce the unit and the idea of segregation and book clubs.
    - Day 1
      * Role-play. Students will be segregated into two groups (students with blue eyes and students without blue eyes). The students with blue eyes won’t be treated as nicely and won’t be able to participate in various activities during the day.
    - Day 2
      * Reflect on the activity from day one. Have a group discussion. Then, students will write a reflection narrative.
    - Day 3
      * “The Lorax” read aloud. Introduces the idea that it doesn’t take someone famous or powerful to make a change.
    - Day 4
      * Continue to talk about how anyone can make a difference. Introduce the unit using Civil Rights Leaders book clubs. The students will learn that these people weren’t powerful or well known, but that their actions made them national heroes.
    - Day 5
      * Continue to introduce the unit and discuss the blatant differences between the north and the south during the Civil Rights Movement. Explain that not all whites wanted segregations, and how there was still segregation in the north. Explain how people from the north and the south gathered to fight segregation and to gain equal rights for blacks throughout the country, but particularly in the south.
* Week 2
  + Focus on key organizations and figures and explore the music of the Civil Rights Music
    - Day 1
      * Discuss the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and how this organization helped to make Martin Luther King, Jr. famous. This lesson is also a Current Event lesson. We will focus on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s monument and talk about the controversy surrounding it.
    - Day 2
      * Discuss Malcolm X and the Black Panther movement. Focus on how like Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X was fighting for change, but in a different way. Discuss the pros and cons of the two different methods of protesting.
    - Day 3
      * Discuss Rosa Parks and the Montgomery, AL bus boycott. Students will stage their own protest. They’ll create slogans and posters and protest throughout the school
    - Day 4
      * Discuss how Marian Wright Edelman fought not only for equal rights for blacks, but also for the poor, and for children. Explain how she brought Bobby Kennedy to Mississippi to see the poor, especially the poor children. Discuss Bobby Kennedy’s role in Civil Rights movement until his death.
    - Day 5
      * Learn about the Freedom Singers and the famous artists of the day who supported the movement (like Sam Cooke and Marvin Gaye) and sang globally recognized songs asking for change.
* Week 3
  + Book clubs and the unit will come to an end. This week will focus on the children’s role in the Civil Rights Movement. Students will learn that children their age and younger stood up for their rights, and that they can do the same.
    - Day 1
      * Watch “The Children’s March” documentary. Learn how children as young as 5 protested in Mississippi and Alabama.
    - Day 2
      * Learn about the Clinton 12, the first black students to integrate in to an all white school in the south. Skype with the team at the Green McAdoo Cultural Center in Clinton, TN. Students will conduct an interview with the team and some of the original Clinton 12.
    - Day 3
      * Day 3’s lesson will integrate math into the unit. The students will construct number lines to determine how long the Civil Rights Movement lasted. This will then lead us to create a time line of the era.
    - Day 4
      * Each book club will present what it has learned about it’s leader to the class.
    - Day 5
      * As a culminating activity, the class will watch “The Color of Friendship.” This movie shows how two people overcame segregated beliefs, became friends, and made a change in each other’s lives.

Accommodations:

* At its core differentiation is providing each student the support they need to succeed in the classroom.  Using a universal design approach, this unit was constructed in a way that each learner can be included in every lesson in its pure form. With this foundation we engaged a multi-modal mindset when choosing our activities in an attempt to appeal to visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners alike.

* The unit begins with a role-play. Students are listening, responding, and participating in a way that physically and mentally engages them.  This activity is particularly beneficial in creating a sense memory or memory of understanding. This activity as a foundation can be referenced and easily retrieved in their mind by the student because a connection has been established. The debrief of this activity occurring on day two is a reflection day that will include discussion, writing, and drawing. If the student feels more comfortable verbally sharing their reaction that is acceptable. If they are the type of learner that prefers writing or drawing it is all the same. As long as the expectation has not been lowered and a student has generated an on-task response, it is appropriate.

* Looking towards the end of week one we share two read alouds and introduce the book club. Book clubs are independent groups led by the students. In these groups students will be able to take on various roles such as recorder, word wizard, summarizer, leader, and so on. Students will be placed in one of three reading groups based on reading level; higher readers, on-point, and needs support. These are not the names of the group but rather just used for teacher reference. An appropriate biography has been chosen for each level. Students will have the opportunity to present their biography as a group at the end of the unit. This allows for public speaking, creative design, gathering of data, and managerial skills on the part of the student. The student will be able to choose what capacity their participation lies in.

* Week two of the unit highlights major organizations and people in the civil rights movement. The activities designed for each day vary to keep student engagement high and allow for more participation across and learners. We begin with Martin Luther King and discuss his monument statue that has posed controversy in present day. This allows students to activate schema by connecting to current events. The independent activity looks at real photographs of the statue, adding a mixed media aspect that we have not explored yet. Students will be asked to interpret the pose of the statue, which requires a level of independent thinking we have not yet covered in this unit.

* Briefly touching up the rest of week two we have an additional role-play and art project that allows students to become activists in the bus boycott. Students will be able to make signs, slogans, and actually participate in a mock rally. This allows for creative design, art, speech and language for slogan writing, leadership skills in executing a rally, as well as a physical memory in historical context. Finishing out week two is our lesson on songs of the Civil Rights Movement, which allows students to access a text, present the text, and engage with the text. A copy of words will be provided as well as posted on the SmartBoard to follow. We can read the text aloud together, highlighting unknown words as a word study lesson. We will then perform the song, providing a different context, creating another impressionable memory for the students.

* Week three presents us with a variety of activities as well. We will be screening two movies as well as using Skype. The Children’s March will provide students with relatable context of students their own age as well as the Color of Friendship. The Skype session with the Green McAdoo Center allows students to access technology and a medium they are familiar with, to conduct a long distance interview.

Time Needed:

* 3 Weeks

Materials and Resources Required for Unit:

**Annotated Bibliography**

**Books**

Burns, Stewart. *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1997. Print.

In this book, Stewart Burns uses more than one hundred original documents to create a compelling account of this year-long protest of racial segregation. This book is challenging, but would be used to emphasize points made in class. The book has maps of the area and other great primary sources to really engage the students.

Cohn, Diana. *¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.* Cinco Puntos, 2005. Print.

This is a bilingual fictional story set in Los Angeles, focusing on the janitor’s strike in 2000. This story does not fit in exactly with our theme, but could be used as an example of other boycotts/strikes on a smaller level, and how one person or group of people can make a change – no matter if it’s in a large or small community.

Greenfield, Eloise. *Mary McLeod Bethune*. Perfection Learning, 1994. Print.

This is the biography of Mary McLeod Bethune, an educator and civil rights leaders best known for starting a school for African-American students in Daytona Beach, Florida. This book would be used for book clubs, for lower readers.

Gunderson, Jessica, and Seitu Hayden. *X: a Biography of Malcolm X*. Mankato, MN: Capstone, 2011. Print.

This book is a great and kid-friendly biography of Malcolm X. It would be used for book clubs, for average readers.

Holsaert, Faith S. *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 2010. Print.

This book shares many accounts of women – northern and southern, black, white, and Latina – working for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. This book would be used for teachers to get information and first hand accounts of many activists in this time period.

Johnson, Angela. *A Sweet Smell of Roses*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children’s, 2005. Print.

This story gives a great and moving fictional account of two young girls who sneak out of their home to go see Dr. King speak and join the Civil Rights marchers. This book has beautiful illustrations, and would be used as a read-aloud during the unit.

Litwin, Laura Baskes. *Fannie Lou Hamer: Fighting for the Right to Vote*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow, 2002. Print.

This book is a biography of Fannie Lou Hamer, a civil rights activist. It would be used for higher level readers in the book club.

Martínez, Elizabeth Sutherland. *Letters from Mississippi*. Brookline, MA: Zephyr, 2007. Print.

This book focuses on year 1964, when SNCC sent volunteers to Mississippi to expand black voter registration in the state. This book would be used by teachers for background information of primary sources.

Pinkney, Andrea. *Sit-Ins: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*. Little, Brown for Young Readers, 2010. Print.

This picture book demonstrates the Woolworth’s lunch counter sit-in, in which four college students staged a peaceful protest. This would be used as a read-aloud during the unit.

Seuss. *The Lorax*. New York: Random House, 1971. Print.

The Lorax is a classic Seuss story with a powerful message. While it does not directly address the Civil Rights Movement, it would be used for one of the first lessons to have students address the issue of fair or not fair, etc…

Tillage, Leon Walter, and Susan L. Roth. *Leon’s Story*. New York: Scholastic, 2002. Print.

Leon’s Story describes a boy’s life before, during, and after the Civil Rights Movement. It is an alternative for a book club book for average readers, but could also be used as a read-aloud.

Wiles, Deborah. *Freedom Summer*. Aladdin, 2005. Print.

This story tells the tale of two young friends immediately following the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It would be used as a read aloud during the last week of the unit.

Williams, Yohuru R. *A Constant Struggle: African-American History, 1865-present*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Pub., 2005. Print.

This book is a very complete and interesting history of African Americans from 1865 – present. It would be used for background information for teachers.

Woodson, Jacqueline, and Earl B. Lewis. *The Other Side*. New York: Putnam’s, 2001. Print.

Similar to *Freedom Summer,* this story tells the tale of two young girls who are friends, but separated by the fence that separates the African-American community and the white community. This would be used as a read aloud in the unit.

**Electronic Sources**

*www.greenmcadoo.org/*. Green McAdoo Cultural Center. Web.

This website would be used to demonstrate the Cultural Center to the students. Teacher and students would then Skype with a member of the center, and receive a virtual tour of the center and the museum. Students would also ask student-generated questions and conduct an interview with the member.

*Mighty Times: The Children's March*. Dir. Hudson and Houston. Teaching Tolerance, 2004.

This film shows the Birmingham Children’s March, in which over 4,000 black students organized a peaceful walk-out. This would be shown at the end of the unit.

*The Color of Friendship*. Dir. Kevin Hooks. Walt Disney Video, 2000.

This movie shows two friends from completely different worlds who have to learn a lesson about tolerance and acceptance. This would be shown at the end of the unit.

*Voices of the Civil Rights Movement Black American Freedom Songs, 1960-1966.*Smithsonian Folkways, 1997. CD.

This CD has twenty-two tracks of songs from the Civil Rights Movement. It would be used in class for listening and to explore the music and the message behind it – motivating factors, etc…

"Grandparent Interview." Personal interview or Web. 13 Dec. 2011.

The grandparent interviews would be conducted either in person or via the Internet. They would be used to gain information from first hand recounting of events to better understand the atmosphere and make a more personal connection.

Materials:

* Paper
* Pencils
* Books (*The Lorax*, *Mary McLeod Bethune*, *X: A Biography of Malcolm X*, *and Fannie Lou Hamer: Fighting for the Right to Vote*)
* SmartBoard
* Children’s March DVD
* Color of Friendship DVD
* Civil Rights Movement Music
* CD Player
* Posters
* Markers
* Crayons
* Glitter
* Glue
* Handouts
* Newspaper Clippings
* Pictures of the Civil Right Movement
* Skype
* Picturs and article about the MLK monument