

## TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

### ***Lesson Title - Minorities in Mainstream American Society*** **From Cynthia Petrie**

**Grade** – 11th

**Length of class period** – 90 minutes

**Inquiry** – How well did the Civil Rights Movement, Supreme Court cases and Congressional actions of the 1950s and 1960s lead to the acceptance of African Americans and other minorities into the mainstream of American society?

#### **Objectives**

Content:

1. Students will learn about the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s and the legislation that this movement inspired.
2. Students will learn about changing roles and positions of minorities in society in the decades that followed the Civil Rights era.

Skills:

1. Students will improve their ability to analyze primary source documents to form an opinion
2. Students will improve their ability to see cause/effect relationships.
3. Students will improve their ability to work cooperatively in small groups
4. Students will improve their ability to support an opinion both in writing and orally

#### **Materials**

1. Transcript of intro. to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, "An Act" (attached)
2. Copies of various current magazines (students should be assigned to bring one in, but you may want to have a supply of them for use in the classroom)
3. TV listing for a recent week
4. Guiding questions for students to answer (attached below)

#### **Activities**

1. Students will have read the section in the textbook on the Civil Rights Movement and subsequent court cases and legislation as well have received

notes in class on the topic prior to this activity.

2. At the start of class review notes on Civil Rights with students. Read through the transcript of the Civil Rights Act (attached below) with them and ask students to explain what it guarantees. Ask them if they believe we have lived up to the requirements of this act. Take a few minutes for them to discuss this. (15-20 minutes)

3. Hand out the guided questions for the assignment. Break class into pairs. Have students take out the magazines that they have brought in. Give out extras as necessary. Each pair should have a different magazine. Have TV guide available for them to share. Students should then work with their partners analyzing their magazine by answering the questions on their handout. (5 minutes)

4. Once the class has completed the task (30-40 minutes), groups will then report orally on their findings. As they do this keep track of key information from each group on the board for wrap-up discussion.

5. When all data has been presented have a follow up discussion based upon the trend that they saw in the magazines, TV, and films. You may want to discuss points such as percentages of minorities they found, stereotypes and/or discrimination, and to what degree we have or have not overcome these based upon what is presented in the media. You may also want to ask the students if they believe the media is a good place to look for images of what it means to be an American and why or why not. Where else might they look? (30 minutes)

**Assessment** - Students will be graded on their written answers to the guided questions.

They will also receive a class participation grade for their group work

and  
oral presentation on their findings.

### **Connecticut Framework Performance Standards**

Students will be able to:

1. Assess the significance of the evolving heterogeneity of American Society.
2. Analyze laws that have been modified to meet society's changing values and needs.
3. Recognize the importance of viewing culture through a variety of perspectives.
4. Detect bias in data presented in various forms.
5. Use evidence to assess the role of traditions and customs on an individual or group's choices/decisions.

### **Transcript of Civil Rights Act (1964)**

An Act

To enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States to provide injunctive relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the Attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Civil Rights Act of 1964".

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

[http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Social\\_Studies/US\\_History/USH0011.html](http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Social_Studies/US_History/USH0011.html)

US History  
Civil Rights

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Consider the following question:

How well did the Civil Rights Movement, Supreme Court cases, and Congressional actions of the 1950s and 1960s lead to the acceptance of African Americans and other minorities into the mainstream of American life?

Look at the magazine that you have been given and answer the following questions.

1. How many advertisements have minorities in them? Approximately what % is this?
2. What type of ads do they appear in? Give examples. Do you notice any stereotypes?



8. Magazine articles, TV, films, and advertising are aimed at the “typical American”. Using the information that you have gathered, do you think minorities are considered “typical Americans” today? Explain your answer.