



Black Disabled History Biography Lesson Plan



Lesson title: Black Disabled History Biography

Subject and topic: History

Grade level:

5-6

Duration:

3 to 5 class periods

Lesson summary:

In this lesson, students will be invited to research a famous Black Disabled person, either from history or modern day. Students will work in groups or individually to research their assigned person and create a final project in a creative format. Students will then present their findings to the class.

Standards:

- CC.1.2.6.G Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.
- CC.1.2.5.L Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
- CC.1.4.4.A Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information clearly.
- CC.8.3.6.A. Explain the social, political, cultural, and economic contributions of individuals and groups to United States history.
- CC. 15.2.5.O. Explain the importance of accepting diverse populations.
- CC. 15.3.5.A. Create work product with a variety of formats including note taking, outlines, essays, correspondence, journals and presentations.
- CC.15.3.5.H. Present information as an individual or in a small group.
- CC.15.3.5.N. Apply appropriate work ethic in the classroom.
- CC.15.4.5.K.Use digital media to enhance a content-specific work product.



Objectives:

- SWBAT research and present information on a black disabled person.
- SWBAT discuss the person's contributions to society.

Essential Questions:

- EQ1: What has my person contributed to society?

Vocabulary:

- Black History
- Disability History
- Research

Materials:

- Access to the library
- access to computers
- access to a printer
- construction paper
- Scissors
- glue

Lesson Prep:

You will need to plan two class sessions in the library (the first two class sessions).

Procedure:

Class Session #1

Introduce the class to the lesson. If you have not already, explain the importance of Black History Month and why we study Black History.

Tell the class that they will be doing a project for Black History Month. Define disability if necessary for your classroom. Explain "People with Disabilities have always been a part of our history- Black History and American History. However, we often forget or



overlook all of the things that Black Disabled people have accomplished. So, for this assignment, we will be focusing on the accomplishments of Black Disabled people.”

Hand out the assignment description handout (**Appendix A**). Explain that the students will be researching a specific African American with disabilities and then presenting that information in a creative way. Walk through the assignment description with the students and answer any questions they may have.

*Note: this project can be completed individually in groups.

If you choose to have the students work in groups, assign them into groups.

Allow the students to select the person they want to research from the list provide (**Appendix B**) **OR** Assign students their research subject by allowing them to pick names out of a hat.

Class Session #2

Begin the class by overviewing the rules of the library and good research practices.

Then, allow students to spend the rest of the period completing their research. Make sure to circulate to help answer questions, assist struggling students, and check-in on student’s progress.

Class Session #3-4 OR Homework

Class sessions 3 and 4 should be set aside for students to work on completing their presentations. Students should be provided with different materials they may need such as construction paper, markers, colored pencils, glue, scissors, poster board, or access to a computer, if possible.

This can be a homework assignment instead of an in-class session.

Class Session #5

This class session should be dedicated to student’s having the opportunity to share what they learned in class. You can do this in a traditional presentation format, group



share, a gallery walk, or another method. It is up to you- you know your students' needs best!

Related materials:

- Documents below

Evaluation:

Ask your students this question related to this lesson to gauge how much they learned

Is learning about the history of Black disabled people important?

Thank you for bringing the conversation about disability into your classroom.

Help us evaluate this lesson plan by visiting [our evaluation page to assess this lesson](#). You will find an evaluation both for you and your students to complete there.



Appendix A: Black Disabled History: Biography Assignment Handout

Assignment: To research the life of an African American with a disability and present the information you learned in a creative way.

Step 1: Select a Person to Research

The name of the person I will research is _____.

They are/were a _____.

Their disability is/was _____.

Step 2: Research this Person.

Start by using the library catalog. Are there any books available in the library about this person?

Next, try using databases. What articles can you find that mention this person?

Third, try using search engines. What can you find about this person?

At each step, test your source for accuracy and reliability. Ask

- 1) Where was this published?
- 2) Who wrote it?
- 3) When was it written?
- 4) Does the information I found match or contradict the information I already know about this person?
- 5) Can I trust this source?



After you have found your first source(s), take notes on the information that is relevant to the project (See guiding questions in Section 3). Then, use that information to help you find more sources. For example, if your first source tells you that this person was at the Section 504 sit-ins, look for books and articles about the Section 504 sit-ins.

Repeat this process until you have all the information you need.

Step 3: Compile all of the information

Now that you have found all your sources, it is time to go through your notes and figure out what information is important.

Guiding Questions are:

- ❖ Who is this person?
- ❖ **When** did this person live? What was their **life** like?
- ❖ What **contributions** did they make to American history?
- ❖ Why are they **important**?
- ❖ What is **interesting** about this person?

Find the most important information, and get rid of the rest! Remember: more information is not always better!

Step 4: Present the Information

Now it's time to make all of your hard work look good! Think of the best way to present all of the information you learned.

Here are some options:

- 1) Make a powerpoint presentation that you can present to the class.
- 2) Make a baseball card featuring this person. Include stats and information about them on the back of the card.
- 3) Make a small book about this person.
- 4) Make a poster.
- 5) Make a diorama about an important event in this person's life.
- 6) Write and perform a skit.



- 7) Write a song/rap about this person.
- 8) Have another idea for how to present the information? That's great! Just make sure you ask your teacher if it is okay, first!

Step 5: Share with the class!

You did all this hard work, now it's time to show it off. We will be having a gallery walk on this date: _____. This is an opportunity for you to tell your classmates about the person you researched.

Remember:

- 1) Your classmates don't know who this person is, so make sure you give background information.
- 2) Keep to the important stuff- and forget unnecessary information.
- 3) Talk in a way your friends can understand.
- 4) When you are not presenting, make sure to listen and be respectful!

Good luck, and have fun!



Appendix B: Famous Black Disabled People

Historical Figures

Andrew Foster- Educator, first African American to graduate Gallaudet (Deaf)
Audre Lorde- Poet (Breast Cancer)
Barbara Jordan- First Black Congresswoman from a Southern state (Multiple Sclerosis)
Brad Lomax- Activist (Multiple Sclerosis)
Cathay Williams- First documented African American woman soldier in the US (Undefined Disability)
Denmark Vesey- Slave rebellion leader (Epilepsy)
Don Galloway- Activist (Blind)
Elizabeth Suggs- Author (Osteogenesis Imperfecta)
Fannie Lou Hamer- Activist (Kidney Damage, Visual Impairment, Polio Survivor)
Harriet Tubman- Abolitionist (TBI, Narcolepsy, Epilepsy)
Harry Belafonte- Musician (Dyslexia)
Hydeia Broadbent- Activist (AIDS)
Jazzie Collins- Activist (HIV)
Johnnie Lacy- Activist (Wheelchair User)
Joyce Jackson- Activist (Arthritis)
Lois Curtis- Activist and Artist (Intellectual Disability and Schizophrenia)
Marsha P Johnson- Activist (Mental Illness)
Maya Angelou- Author (Selective Mutism)
Mildred Davidson- Inventor (Multiple Sclerosis)
Pat Parker- Poet and Activist (Breast Cancer)
Ray Charles- Musician (Blind)
Roger Demosthenes O'Kelly- Lawyer (Deafblind)
Sojourner Truth- Abolitionist (Hand Injury)
Sylvia Walker- Activist and Researcher who helped lead to ADA (Blind)
Wilma Rudolph- Athlete (Polio Survivor)

Modern Day Figures

4 Wheel City- Rappers (Wheelchair users)
Aaron Philip- Model (Wheelchair user)
Andraea Lavant- Activist (Spinal Muscular Atrophy)
Anita Cameron- Activist (Multiple Disabilities)



Antoine Hunter- Dancer (Deaf)
Betty Williams- Self-Advocate (Developmental Disability)
Blake Leeper- Athlete & Author (Limb Difference)
Claudia Gordon- First Deaf Black Female Attorney in US (Deaf)
Cyree Jarelle Johnson- Author/Poet (Autistic)
Haben Girma- Lawyer (Deafblind)
Halle Berry- Actress (Diabetes/Hard of Hearing)
Imani Barbarin- Activist/Writer (Cerebral Palsy)
Kathy D. Woods- Fashion Designer (Little Person)
Keah Brown- Writer (Cerebral Palsy)
Keri Gray- Activist (Cancer Survivor)
Kounterclockwise- Rapper (Wheelchair User)
Lauren Ridloff- Actress (Deaf)
Leroy Moore- Activist, Poet (Cerebral Palsy)
Mario Bonds- Performer (Blind)
Morenike Giwa-Onaiwu- Activist (Autism)
Robby Novak aka Kid President- Youtube Personality (Osteogenesis Imperfecta)
Simone Biles- Olympian (ADHD)
Stevie Wonder- Musician (Blind)
Timotheus Gordon Jr- Self-Advocate (Autism)
Treshelle Edmond- Actress (Deaf)
Vilissa Thompson- Activist (Wheelchair User)
Whoopi Goldberg- Actress (Dyslexia)

