



Sit-in Demonstration Sites

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CIVIC MINDEDNESS

Essential Question

What roles do individuals, groups, and institutions play in strengthening democratic ideals and practices?

LOUISVILLE CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL: CIVIC MINDEDNESS

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Lesson Summary

Students will hear the story, *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*, by Andrea Pinkney and begin to discuss the concept of civil rights. Through the use of primary source materials, students will uncover social and political factors related to the Civil Rights Movement taking place in Louisville. In addition, students will have time to explore related documents and consider the impact of local boycotts and activism on the national Civil Rights Movement.

College, Career, and Civic-Ready Anchor Standards

Civic Mindedness: Processes, Rules, and Laws

- Evaluate and critique how decisions, procedures, and policies are used to address problems and/or needs in a variety of settings.

STUDENT LEARNING TARGETS

Students will know:

- reasons why local citizens organized and protested in Louisville during the 1960s.
- social and political factors related to the Civil Rights Movement in Louisville.

Students will be able to:

- use primary sources to interpret the events of the Civil Rights Movement in Louisville.
- describe the impact the local boycotts and the voter registration drive had on the expansion of democracy in Louisville.
- determine the procedures for making civic decisions based on the needs of society.

Materials

- *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* by Andrea Pinkney
- 50 Years Later...Examining Louisville's 1961 Civil Rights Demonstrations <http://exhibits.library.louisville.edu/omeka/sitins/index.html>
- **Resource 1A:** Students demonstrate outside downtown Louisville's Blue Boar Cafeteria, 1961.
- **Resource 1B:** Teenagers rally for the right to be served at Louisville theaters, restaurants, and department stores, 1961.
- *Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic History* by Mervin Aubespain, Kenneth Clay, and J. Blaine Hudson
- KET Civil Rights Timeline <http://www.ket.org/civilrights/timeline.htm>
- MLK at the Jefferson County Armory Outline <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlk-jefferson-county-armory#>

- Kentucky's Black Heritage: The Role of Black People in the History of Kentucky from Pioneer Days to Present by The Commonwealth of Kentucky Commission on Human Rights
- MLK Jr. Visits Louisville in the '60s <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/history/river-city-retro/2015/01/16/history-mlk-jr-visits-louisville/21862081/>

Content Vocabulary Boycott: to refuse to buy, use, or participate in (something) as a way of protesting; to stop using the goods or services of (a company, country, etc.) until changes are made

Public Accommodations Ordinance: a proposed law that would allow equal access to public accommodations (e.g., restaurants, theaters)

Commitment to Social Justice: promotion of and respect for others' right to an equal voice in government, to be equal in the eyes of the law, and to be treated fairly

- *KET Civil Rights Timeline* <http://www.ket.org/civilrights/timeline.htm>
- *MLK at the Jefferson County Armory Outline* <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlk-jefferson-county-armory#>
- *Kentucky's Black Heritage: The Role of Black People in the History of Kentucky from Pioneer Days to Present* by The Commonwealth of Kentucky Commission on Human Rights
- *MLK Jr. Visits Louisville in the '60s* <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/history/river-city-retro/2015/01/16/history-mlk-jr-visits-louisville/21862081/>

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Establishing Engagement/Fostering Connections (entering activity/anticipatory set)

1. Use four pieces of chart paper placed on the classroom walls. Invite students to jot down what they already know about the following terms: sit-ins, segregation, civil rights, and non-violent protest. Give students approximately ten minutes to record their ideas. Review responses with the class, while probing student understanding of the Civil Rights Movement.
2. Show students the title and cover of the book, *Sit-in: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*, by Andrea Pinkney. Have students describe what they observe. How do they think this book might relate to the terms they just discussed?
3. Encourage student predictions about what they will discover from reading this book. Read aloud the text.

Deepening Understanding (guided practice)

Day 1

1. Support the development of students' civic mindedness by debriefing the book, asking students the following questions:
 - What is the constitutional and moral basis for African Americans' demand and desire for equal rights?
 - Who made the law that said African Americans couldn't eat at the lunch counter?
 - Who has the power to make rules and laws in society?
 - What role did the NAACP play in the fight for equal rights?
 - Who has the power to change rules and laws in society?
 - Is it ever okay for citizens to break the law? Under what conditions?
 - How did the Greensboro sit-ins influence other communities in the South?
 - Where their efforts successful?
 - Ask students how they believe they would have handled the situation.

2. Emphasize with students that the Greensboro sit-ins are just one event of the Civil Rights Movement in which individuals used democratic participation to influence government policy. The students' actions demonstrated a commitment to social justice. The book mentioned several events (e.g., murder of Emmett Till, marches). Students will now learn of some of the events that took place right here in our city that would lead to changes in the ways African Americans were treated.
3. Let students know that in 1961, local citizens organized to boycott downtown businesses engaging in discriminatory practices. Students will be exploring some primary source documents to learn more about some of these events.
4. Visit the University of Louisville Archives website 50 Years Later...Examining Louisville's 1961 Civil Rights Demonstrations <http://exhibits.library.louisville.edu/omeka/sitins/index.html>. Share the background information with students.
5. **Project Resource 1A.** Lead students through a photo analysis of the image by guiding students to consider the following:
 - People, objects, activities observed in the photograph
 - Inferences based on observations
 - Questions the photograph causes them to consider
 - Where students could find the answers to their questions
6. Divide students into pairs. Give each pair a copy of Resource 1B and have them complete the analysis questions. Have students discuss their analysis with the class. What inferences do students have after observing the photographs?
7. Ask student what they still want to know about the photographs. Record student questions and let students know that as they continue with the unit, they will seek answers to their questions.
8. Discuss with students that community members and leaders were exercising their voice to call for a public accommodations ordinance (or law) that would end segregation in community businesses (mainly downtown). They were demonstrating a commitment to social justice.
9. Share pages 185-191 of Two Centuries of Black Louisville: A Photographic History (two copies are available in each Jefferson County Public Schools library), highlighting key details and photographs to support student understanding.
10. Revisit student questions. Were they answered? Are there lingering questions?

Day 2

1. Remind students that they learned about tactics used by community members, such as boycotting downtown businesses, to bring changes to discriminatory practices.

2. Share with the students that in January 1960, a delegation of approximately 35 black and white community members, led by Charles W. Anderson, the first African-American man elected to the Kentucky General Assembly, appeared at City Hall to request a law ending segregation in public places (e.g. city theaters, restaurants, downtown businesses). The mayor at the time, Bruce Hoblitzell, was not supportive. One month later, another community member, William W. Beckett, an African-American Alderman, introduced a public accommodations ordinance to the Board of Aldermen. The ordinance was rejected. Finally, in March of 1960, Beckett was able to convince State Attorney General John Breckinridge to review the proposed Public Accommodations Ordinance. Breckinridge determined there was no conflict between the Public Accommodations Ordinance and Kentucky law. Even so, after Beckett reintroduced the ordinance to the Board of Aldermen, it was rejected a second time by a vote of 11 to 1.

3. Let students know these events led community members to employ another tactic or strategy. Since the Board of Aldermen was mainly democratic, they began a campaign to defeat the Democratic administration and replace it with a mayor and aldermen who would be supportive of a Public Accommodations Ordinance. African-American voters were urged not to register to vote in the upcoming election. In addition, they were aware of which candidates did not support desegregation efforts such as the proposed Public Accommodations Ordinance.

4. Project *MLK at the Jefferson County Armory Outline* <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlk-jefferson-county-armory#>. Probe students to analyze the document using the following questions:

- What type of document is this?
- What is the date of the document?
- Who is the author? What is the author's position/title?
- For what audience was the document written? Why?
- What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? (Quote from the document.)
- What ideas were being conveyed? Why were these ideas important to the people of Louisville?
- How do you think this message impacted the community?
- How do these words relate to the struggle to pass a Public Accommodations Ordinance?

Students may find it interesting that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at the rally in front of thousands of people.

5. Push students to consider the six points in King's speech as they relate to the importance of voting. Why would this be important to African Americans in Louisville during this time? Help students to understand the goal of the campaign was to replace city officials (i.e., the mayor and aldermen) due to their lack of support of a public accommodations ordinance.

6. Invite students in pairs to create campaign slogans/posters encouraging community members to vote. Have pairs share their campaign slogans/posters with the class.

7. Let students know the voter registration campaign was successful and in the November election of 1961, a new republican mayor, William O. Cowger, and Republican Board of Aldermen were elected – new city leaders who were committed to advancing civil rights in the community.

8. To further explore King's connection to Louisville during the Civil Rights Movement, visit the Courier Journal article, *MLK Jr. Visits Louisville in the 60s* <http://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/history/river-city-retro/2015/01/16/history-mlk-jr-visits-louisville/21862081/> and discuss the article and images.

Constructing Meaning (closure/independent practice)

1. Remind students that they have seen multiple examples of ways citizens demonstrated a commitment to social justice in their communities. Have students share ways citizens made civic decisions based on the needs of our community.
2. Have students, as an exit slip describe the impact the local boycotts and the voter registration drive had on the expansion of democracy in Louisville.
3. Have students realize that democratic participation of Blacks and Whites during the Civil Rights Movement, helped to change Americans' ideas about fairness and equality.

Home-to-School Connection:

1. Have students discuss with their parents, grandparents, caregivers, or accessible adult the following question: "What do you think has been the biggest change in our community (i.e., Louisville) during the past 50 years? Have students record their responses and be prepared to share them during the next class session.
2. Share with the students that in January 1960, a delegation of approximately 35 black and white community members, led by Charles W. Anderson, the first African-American man elected to the Kentucky General Assembly, appeared at City Hall to request a law ending segregation in public places (e.g. city theaters, restaurants, downtown businesses). The mayor at the time, Bruce Hoblitzell, was not supportive. One month later, another community member, William W. Beckett, an African-American Alderman, introduced a public accommodations ordinance to the Board of Aldermen. The ordinance was rejected. Finally, in March of 1960, Beckett was able to convince State Attorney General John Breckinridge to review the proposed Public Accommodations Ordinance. Breckinridge determined there was no conflict between the Public Accommodations Ordinance and Kentucky law. Even so, after Beckett reintroduced the ordinance to the Board of Aldermen, it was rejected a second time by a vote of 11 to 1.

Resource 1A

Students demonstrate outside downtown Louisville's Blue Boar Cafeteria, 1961



Source:

<http://exhibits.library.louisville.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/sitins/photos/sit-in-at-blue-boar>



Resource 1B
 Teenagers rally for the right to be served at Louisville theaters, restaurants, and department stores, 1961.

Source: Teenagers rally for the right to be served at Louisville theaters, restaurants, and department stores, 1961.

Use the chart below to list the people, objects, and/or activities observed in the photograph:

People	Objects	Activities

Based on your observations, what inferences can you make about the photograph?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What questions does this photograph raise?