

Social Studies Content Themes for Elementary/Middle School
From
“The Making of Milwaukee Curriculum”

African Americans:

Teaching about African Americans in Milwaukee

The following activities are from “The Making of Milwaukee” on-line curriculum.

- The Mighty Migration (Mapping and Writing Diaries)
- American Black Holocaust Museum (Fieldtrip)

THE MIGHTY MIGRATION

1. Migration Map

(Note: Teachers and/or students may want to visit the following sites to gather background information for this activity):

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/intro.html>

<http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/>

http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/frameset_reset.html?http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/stories/0701_0131.html

<http://www.inmotionaame.org/home.cfm>

- a. On a blank map of the United States, have students show the migration of African Americans from the South to northern cities such as Chicago and Milwaukee.
- b. Students should use a variety of colors, lines and arrows to show the various routes taken from southern states.
- c. Discuss with students the following questions concerning the migration of blacks to northern cities:
 - Why did blacks leave the South?
 - What did blacks leave behind as they migrated north (traditions, family, jobs, homes, culture, etc)?
 - What types of challenges did blacks face as they migrated (segregated facilities, safety risks, uncharted territories, long trips, etc.)?

2. Dear Diary...

Photos of the following topics are available in the “Image Library” of the “In the Classroom” section on The Making of Milwaukee website, www.themakingofmilwaukee.com. Choose “Lesson Activities Photos” from the pull down menu and use the “search” tool to locate the photos related to the topics below:

- a. Have students consider the movement of African Americans from the South to the North. They should reflect on the challenges blacks faced once they settled in Milwaukee. Briefly discuss the following issues with students:
- North Side blight
 - Hillside housing project/low income housing
 - Hostility with whites
 - Resistance to diversity in neighborhoods/communities
 - Poverty and prejudice
 - Acquiring jobs in a new city
 - Milwaukeeans United for School Integration Committee (MUSIC)
 - Protests
 - Father Groppi marches
 - The riot of July 30, 1967
- b. Students will take on the perspective of an African American who has migrated to Milwaukee during this time period. Using the topics of the reflective activity, students will write 1-3 diary entries explaining their experiences in Milwaukee. They should bring to light the difficulties that were explained Video Chapter 16, *City Under Siege*.
- c. Students may also consider interviewing someone who lived in Milwaukee during these difficult times. They should use the information in the interview to create a journal or diary for that particular person based on the information they gathered. These diary or journal entries can cover several days or weeks in which these events took place. Students should draw on the interviewee's experiences to bring about a passionate, realistic account of what it was like to live in Milwaukee during this era.

Follow-up Learning Activities:

- Students may exchange diaries with a partner, read a day's entry to a small group or select a passage to read to the class.
- Have students respond to the following questions in written form or group discussion:
 - What were the experiences of new blacks arriving in Milwaukee from the South?
 - What fears did whites have about an increasing black population in Milwaukee?
 - How does the "inner core" (North Side of Milwaukee) in the 1960s compare with the "inner core" of 2006?

3. Rising Above Racism...A Message for Milwaukee

- a. Allow students to reflect on the events surrounding the racial tensions in Milwaukee.
- b. Encourage students to write a persuasive speech that will be presented in a local Milwaukee church. The speech's message should focus on the following:
 - The racial tensions of Milwaukee in the 1960s
 - How blacks have faced and struggled through racial animosity
 - What needs to be done in Milwaukee to make it a great place for ALL people to live, regardless of color, race, religion and socio-economic status?
- c. Speeches should be written in the context of the 1960s. Limit speeches to 1-2 minutes to ensure that all students will be afforded the opportunity to present and promote their ideas.
- d. After listening to speeches, discuss the following questions with students or have students discuss them in small groups:
 - What are the benefits and consequences of a diverse city?
 - How can racial equality be obtained in cities that contain an assortment of ethnic groups?
 - Does violent behavior lead to progress towards racial equality? Why or why not?
 - Have race relations improved today in comparison to what Milwaukee experienced throughout the 1960s? Explain by incorporating specific examples.
- e. Students may also contact local churches to present their speeches. Assist students in making contacts and organizing a visit to local churches and their congregations to deliver their powerful messages. Encourage community leaders to work with students in delivering informative and passionate speeches that help uplift individuals during difficult times.

AMERICA'S BLACK HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

1. Organize a trip to America's Black Holocaust Museum in downtown Milwaukee. Prepare students by covering content about the African culture, the African Slave Trade, the Middle Passage, Colonization, Plantation Life and the Underground Railroad.
2. Show portions of the critically acclaimed television miniseries, "Roots", to give students a different perspective on African traditions and customs.
3. Have students develop at least five questions that they would like to ask tour guides on the trip.

4. As a follow-up, have students participate in an open forum where they discuss their experiences at the museum, the artifacts and documents displayed and the information delivered by tour guides. Teacher may develop a series of questions pertaining to the content delivered at the museum as an additional assessment.
For further information contact:

America's Black Holocaust Museum, Inc.

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