

Freedom Summer Perfect Pairs

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Overview:

Students will learn about the people who participated in Freedom Summer, the motivations behind their participation, and the struggles they faced.

Audience: Grades 10 through 12

Objectives:

- Students will research a participant in Freedom Summer using excerpts from *Letters from Mississippi* by Elizabeth Martinez, *Local People* by John Dittmer, or *Freedom Summer* by Bruce Watson. They will create a one-page resume for their participant, which includes a picture and information from six areas: objective, summary, career contributions, notable information, hobbies, and a quote pertinent to the participant. In addition to the resume, they will make a “nameplate” that identifies their participant.
- During the perfect pair activity, students will have about two minutes to share their story and to listen to the story of the person with whom they are paired. They will need to figure out who they have “met” and who would make the best mate to bring about the most change at the national level.

Documents:

Primary Sources

- Excerpts from Elizabeth Martinez’s *Letters from Mississippi*.

Secondary Sources

- Excerpts from John Dittmer’s *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*
- Excerpts from Bruce Watson’s *Freedom Summer*

Materials:

- Computers for research
- Resume template (included)
- Perfect Pairs note chart

Procedure:

Activity #1 (1-2 class periods)

Students will research their Freedom Summer participant and will create a “resume” for that participant.

Activity #2 (1 class period)

- Students will participate in the Perfect Pair Activity
- Give students two to five minutes to share their story and to listen to the story of the person with whom they are paired.
- Students will have two to five minutes to complete the perfect pair activity notes about the first pair.
- At the signal, both people seated at the desks will move and students will repeat the process.

Freedom Summer Perfect Pairs Activity

During Freedom Summer many people came to Mississippi to fight for voting rights. While we learn about some of the more well-known people, the bulk of the work was done by everyday volunteers and participants. To understand the impact of those individuals during Freedom Summer, you will spend part of the class period creating perfect pairs. Participants will be chosen on a first-come, first-served basis.

Your task is to research your participant and create a one-page resume for “yourself” that includes a picture and information that includes these six areas: *objective, summary, career contributions, notable information, hobbies, and a quote that is pertinent to who you are*. In addition to the resume, you should make a “nameplate” that identifies you (and any information you wish to share).

During the activity, you will have about 2 minutes to share your story and to listen to the story of the person with whom you are paired. It will be your “task” to figure out whom you have “met” and who would make the best mate to bring about the most change at the national level. Use the questions at the end of this handout to compare the participants. At the signal, both people seated at the desks will move.

Use the SNCC Digital Gateway at www.snccdigital.org, Elizabeth Martinez’s *Letters from Mississippi* (specifically “The Volunteers” on pages 347-371), John Dittmer’s *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*, or Bruce Watson’s *Freedom Summer* to research your participant. Use the index in the back of the books to find pages relevant to your participant. You may also use other credible online resources to research.

You will need to complete the Historical Notes for each participant you “meet” to determine which participant you should choose to make the perfect pair.

1. Marion Barry
2. Mattie Bivins (Dennis)
3. Unita Blackwell
4. Ed Brown
5. Peggy Jean Connor
6. Courtland Cox
7. Vernon Dahmer
8. Annie Devine
9. Victoria Gray

10. Freddie Greene
11. Fannie Lou Hamer
12. Aaron Henry
13. Leslie McLemore
14. Robert Miles
15. Amzie Moore
16. Bob Moses
17. Frances O'Brien
18. Hazel Palmer
19. Aylene Quin
20. Mama Dolly Raines
21. E.W. Steptoe
22. Muriel Tillinghast
23. Hartman Turnbow
24. Christopher Williams
25. Fred Bright Winn

By the end of the perfect pair activity, participants should be able to answer the following questions to gain perspective on their activities.

1. List the issues that Freedom Summer participants tried to address.
2. What factors contributed to the participants' desire to volunteer and work in Freedom Summer?

3. Did these participants have similar experiences during Freedom Summer?

4. To what extent did these participants achieve success in Freedom Summer?

5. Finally, who made the best match with your participant and why?

Resume Template

Full Name, City, and State

Objective: Describe how your person plans to bring about the most change on a national level.

Summary/Background Information:

- Include where they grew up, date and location of birth, and description of early life.
- Describe how they were educated—be sure to include any universities attended/degrees or religious training, if applicable.
- Include a notable event that may have influenced their path in life to becoming a participant in Freedom Summer—if this can't be found you must at least include a reason explaining why they chose to volunteer in the movement

Contribution to Freedom Summer:

- What did your individual do in Freedom Summer? This explanation should include TWO examples—examples could include past “job” experience, noteworthy publications, etc.
- As you provide examples, evaluate their contributions and put a positive spin on them—remember you are supposed to convince the “perspective pair” that they would make the best partner to bring about national change.

Other Notable Information:

- Did this individual make any other significant contributions to the Civil Rights Movement?
- What did they do after Freedom Summer?
- Do they have connections to individuals of interest or importance that may impact their role as the perfect mate?
- Provide at least two pieces of other information with a description/evaluation.

Hobbies & Interests:

- Describe at least two hobbies or interests of your individual. This is one you can be creative with, but ideas must be based on historically accurate actions/beliefs of your individual.
- Use complete sentences to answer this area within bullet points.

Memorable Quote:

Freedom Summer Perfect Pair Notes

Name	Positive Qualities/ Contributions	Negative Qualities/ Contributions	Compatibility Why/why not?
