

Freedom Summer 1964

Amanda Escheman – Challenge School

Overview:

Students will analyze and interpret primary sources to identify and describe the goals, strategies, and impacts of the Freedom Summer Project of 1964 in Mississippi.

Audience: Grade 8

Objectives:

Students will create a museum exhibit for the primary source they are assigned.

Documents:

Primary Sources:

- Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Flier, 1960-1970
Smithsonian, National Museum of African American History & Culture
https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2013.201.9.1-2
- Letters from Mississippi, excerpts, 2007
Civil Rights Movement Archive
Wally (p. 7), Bonnie (p. 27), and Ruleville (p. 72)
<https://www.crmvet.org/>
- Unforgettable Stories and Images from Freedom Summer 1964, photos, 1960s
Freedom Forum
<https://www.freedomforum.org/freedom-summer-1964/>

Secondary Sources:

- Video clip (~3 min) from [Freedom Summer \(American Experience\)](#) by PBS.

Materials:

- Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) fliers.
- Letters from Freedom Summer volunteers.
- Photographs of Freedom Summer voter registration drives and freedom schools.
- FBI documents and newspaper clippings related to the disappearance of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) fliers.
- Letters from Freedom Summer volunteers.

- Photographs of Freedom Summer voter registration drives and freedom schools.
- FBI documents and newspaper clippings related to the disappearance of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner.
- Student notebooks or journals for written responses.
- Hexagonal thinking hexagons.

Procedure:

Lesson #1(45 Minutes)

- **Warm-Up** See. Think. Wonder. (5 Minutes) Show a picture of a freedom school classroom. Students record what they see, make inferences from their observations, and develop questions about the image. Have students share some of their questions.
- **Direct Instruction** (10 Minutes) Provide a brief introduction with background information about the Freedom Summer of 1964. Introduce key vocabulary: Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Council of Federation Organizations (COFO), Freedom Schools, Jim Crow, civil rights, etc....
 - Play a clip from [Freedom Summer, Chapter 1](#) (stop at 3:12)
- **Primary Source Analysis** (30 min) Small Group Work:
 - Divide the class into small groups (no more than 4).
 - Distribute different primary sources to each group. Primary sources are in the resources section.
 - For each primary source they are assigned, students should complete the [Primary Source Analysis Tool](#) from the Library of Congress. (print for students)

Lesson #2 (50 Minutes)

- **Warm-Up** (5 min) Hexagonal Thinking Activity. Based on the primary sources they analyzed in the previous lesson, ask students to label several hexagons (cut out 4-5 per student) with key people, organizations, and events referenced in the primary sources.
- **Small Group Hexagonal Thinking** (10 min) In their table groups, ask students to share their hexagons with others at their table. Working together, students should connect the hexagons however they choose, but at the end of the 10 minutes, the group needs to reach a consensus for the next activity.
- **Hexagonal Thinking Gallery Walk** (10 min) Individual students will rotate around to different table groups to view each hexagon cluster. The teacher will distribute blank hexagons at each table group. Students will be instructed to view, reflect, and add to each hexagon cluster based on the primary source they analyzed.

- **Small Group Hexagonal Thinking** (10-15 min) Students will return to their table groups and review the changes made to their hexagon cluster. Students will discuss any changes they would like to make to their cluster.
- **Individual Hexagonal Thinking** (10 min) Working independently, students will write down an explanation of the connections between the hexagons in a well-developed paragraph.

Lesson #3 (50 Minutes)

- **Warm-Up** (10 min) Students will share the paragraphs they wrote in the previous lesson with their table groups. Students will offer feedback on each other's paragraphs (one glow and 1 grow).
- **Exhibit Tent Card** (10 min) Using their primary source analysis notes and the paragraph they wrote; students will create a 3-5 sentence object label (tent card) for their primary source.
- **Exhibit Curation** (~5 min) Students will use this time to view the exhibits and collect evidence to identify the goals, organizing strategies, and impacts of Freedom Summer 1964 on the Civil Rights Movement.
- **Gallery Walk Reflection** (10 min) Independently, students will review their gallery walk notes and answer the following question: How did your primary source contribute to the overall understanding of Freedom Summer 1964?