

Title: Desegregation of the Military

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Course: US History

Time Frame: 1 class period

Grade Levels:

6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Classroom/Homework Activity to be performed:

Students will be divided into groups and assigned a primary source document concerning the desegregation of the military. Each group will play the role of an advisor to President Truman and will analyze a document which he would have had in his office. As a group, the document will be discussed and analyzed. Each student will write a tweet addressed to President Truman giving an opinion based upon the document analyzed. Students will share tweets with the rest of the class.

Rationale:

This activity will give students an awareness of the types of documents that advisors consider as they advise a president. Their analysis will help them see the different viewpoints to consider. Their tweets will be a fun way for them to express their advice.

Lesson objectives - the student will:

Read a primary source document

- * Discuss the document with students within his group
- * Complete a document analysis worksheet
- * Write a tweet advising President Truman on action to be taken
- * Share tweet with the class

Primary materials (book, article, video documentary, etc.) needed:

The following documents can be found on the Truman Library and Museum website. They (along with several other documents) are found on the Online Documents page under Civil Rights Program: The Desegregation of the Armed Forces.

https://trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/desegregation/large/

- * Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Dagen to President Truman, dated June 15, 1948 (To be assigned to Charles Ross, Press Secretary)
- * Memorandum, "Negroes in the Armed Forces," 1945 (To be assigned to Philleo Nash, Special Assistant to President Truman)
- * Letter from Mayor Hubert H. Humphrey to Forrestal, dated April 16, 1948 (To be assigned to Secretary of Defense Forrestal)
- * Letter from Americans for Democratic Action to President Truman, dated July 22, 1948 (To be assigned to Clark Clifford, White House aide)

* Memo from Milton Stewart to Robert K. Carr, dated April 7, 1947 (to be assigned to Stuart Symington, Secretary of the Air Force)

* Letter from Americans for Democratic Action to President Truman dated July 22, 1948 (To be assigned to David Niles, Advisor to the President)

* Letter from Nash to Clifford dated April 9, 1948 (To be assigned to Kenneth Royal, Secretary of War)

Full description of activity or assignment:

Introduce this lesson by giving an overview of the service of Negroes in the military from the American Revolution through World War II. Discuss the problems of Jim Crow within the United States. Present the students with the decision that President Truman is facing in whether to desegregate the United States Armed Forces. Advise the students that they will be divided into small groups of three. Each group is to be one of President Truman's advisor. They will receive a primary source document that they will evaluate as a group. (Worksheet attached)

After students have completed their document evaluation, each student is to compose a tweet directed to the President expressing their opinion of the action that he should take.

Full explanation of the assessment method and/or scoring guide:

Primary Source Document Analysis 10 points

Group Participation 10 points

Individual Tweet (Content) 10 points

Individual Tweet (Follows guidelines of a tweet) 5 points

Primary Source Document Analysis

What type of document are you analyzing?

Who is the author of the document?

Who or what is the intended audience of the document?

What is the purpose of this document?

What is being reported on or discussed?

What is communicated about the desegregation of the military?

What is the overall tone of the document?

What might you remember most about this document? Why?