



FROM KANYE TO DYLAN: UNDERSTANDING THE EMMETT TILL CASE THROUGH MUSIC AND PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS

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UNIT OF STUDY	The Civil Rights Movement
<p>CONNECTION TO THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE FRAMEWORKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USII.25 Analyze the origins, goals, and key events of the Civil Rights movement. ▪ USII.26 Describe the accomplishments of the civil rights movement. ▪ USI.9 Explain the reasons for the passage of the Bill of Rights. ▪ the particular ways in which the Bill of Rights protects basic freedoms, restricts government power, and ensures rights to persons accused of crimes. ▪ USG.1.5 Explain how the rule of law, embodied in a constitution, limits government to protect the rights of individuals. ▪ USG.1.6 Explain how a constitutional democracy provides majority rule with equal protection for the rights of individuals, including those in the minority, through limited government and the rule of law.
<p>CONNECTION TO THE MODULE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emmett Price III Ph.D.: This lesson is based on and uses the concepts presented in Dr. Price's lecture, specifically using music as a primary tool for teaching the civil rights music and connecting students to the movement by linking hip-hop music to the movement. ▪ Kasher, Steven. <i>The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-1968</i>. New York: Abbeville Press, 2000. ▪ Carson, Clayborne, et al. <i>The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader: Documents, Speeches, and Firsthand Accounts from the Black Freedom Struggle</i>. New York: Penguin Books, 1991.
<p>MATERIALS NEEDED</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ West, Kanye. <i>Through the Wire</i>. The College Dropout (2004). ▪ Dylan, Bob. <i>The Death of Emmett Till</i>. (1963, 1991). ▪ Kasher, Steven. <i>The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-1968</i>. New York: Abbeville Press, 2000. Pages 20,22,49,67,80,86,89,103,104,105,106,107,109,130,131,178,202,205,232. ▪ Huie, Bradford William. "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi." 1999-2003. 1 July 2006 <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_look_confession.html> ▪ Berezov, Dora, et al. Letter. <i>Look Magazine</i>. Jan. 1956. 1 July 2006 <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_look_letters.html>. ▪ CBS NEWS. <i>Justice, Delayed but not Denied: 60 Minutes Confirms Two Are Focus of Emmett Till Murder Probe</i>. 21 Oct. 2004. 1 July 2006 <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/10/21/60minutes/main650652.shtml>. ▪ Copy of the Bill of Rights ▪ Song Writing Assignment & Rubric
<p>OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will understand the use of historical events as lessons to help them shape current and future decisions. ▪ Students will understand the importance of treating all individuals with dignity and respect. ▪ Students will recognize how technological advances in media coverage of historical events

have affected American viewpoints.

- Students will apply a variety of reading skills and strategies to examine print and electronic materials.
- Students will write with clarity, purpose and understanding of audience.
- Students will comprehend the meaning of primary source documents.
- Students will evaluate the impact of the author's point of view on the reader's understanding and perspective.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the Bill of Rights as protections of individual liberties from government authority by compiling articles from media sources, and then match the topics to specific clauses in the Bill of Rights.

Lesson: Time required to complete this lesson may range from three days to a week

Lesson

1. Play Kanye West's *Through the Wire*. Direct a class discussion around the reference to Emmett Till in the eight line of the first verse, focusing on the context of the song and the lyrics and why the artist chose Till as a point of comparison.
2. Play Bob Dylan's *The Death of Emmett Till*. While students listen to this song have them take notes (use whatever format you choose) about the Till case and have them answer the following questions. While playing the song either project the lyrics or give a copy of the lyrics for the students. Depending upon the depth of study that has taken place thus far, terms Dylan uses might have to be clarified.
 - What happened to Emmett Till?
 - Why did Kanye West make a reference to Till in *Through the Wire*?
3. Students read, "Coming of Age in Mississippi" by Anne Moody in *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader* (pg. 41-43). Direct a class discussion around the following ideas:
 - Why was Anne told by her mother to, "do your work like you don't know nothing."
 - Why did Anne respond the way she did at the end of the reading? Was she justified in her anger?
4. Students read "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi" from a 1956 *Look Magazine*. Have the students compare the depiction of events in the article to Bob Dylan's song.
 - What are the similarities / differences between the two?
 - What new information is gathered from this article?
 - Is this article biased? Do you believe it to be accurate?
5. Students read the Letters to the Editor from *Look Magazine* resulting from the previous reading.
6. Have students pick out two or three letters and be prepared to explain the meaning, perspective and significance of the letters they have chosen.
 - After reading the letters to the editor, what do you believe the public thought about the Till case?
 - Why was there such difference of opinion?
7. The Bill of Rights and Emmett Till: Provide students with a copy of the Bill of Rights and have them evaluate which of Emmett Till's rights were violated and should have been protected by the Constitution.
8. The Case is Re-opened: Students will read the CBS News article and take note to gather information that will be used in their final assessment. Instruct students to look for information that provides new insight into the Till case.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. Final Assessment: Re-write a song about the Emmett Till case that accurately captures this historical event from a new and unique perspective. (follow assignment and rubric provided)10. Hand out and review the assignment and rubric11. Brain-storm with students to develop a list of perspectives
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Informally during class discussion about both songs and Bill of Rights evaluation▪ Formally by answering the questions and presenting ideas about the Look Magazine article and letters to the editor▪ Formally by the final song writing assignment

See attached pages for materials

Emmett Till Song Writing Assignment

Assignment: Based on our study and evaluation of the Emmett Till case it is your assignment to re-write a song that captures this historic event from a new and unique perspective. The class will be brainstorming together to compile a list of possible perspectives to help begin the song writing process.

Requirements: The song must be written from a unique perspective that will allow the reader to truly understand both the historical significance and impact of this event. Also the song must be at least five verses long with a chorus separating each verse.

Grading: Grading will follow the rubric provided. Be sure to review each category to ensure proper completion of the assignment.

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Accuracy of Facts	All facts presented in the song are accurate.	Almost all facts presented in the song are accurate.	Most facts presented in the song are accurate (at least 70%).	There are several factual errors in the song.
Understanding & Perspective	The song contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's understanding. The author has really captured a unique perspective	The song contains a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's understanding. The author has captured a unique perspective.	The song contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the song. The author has tried to capture a unique perspective.	There is little evidence of creativity in the song. The author does not seem to capture a perspective.
Requirements	All of the written requirements (5 verses and a chorus) were met.	Almost all of the requirements were met.	Most (about 75%) of the requirements were met, but several were not.	Many requirements were not met.
Focus on Assigned Topic	The entire song is related to the assigned topic and allows the reader to understand much more about the topic.	Most of the song is related to the assigned topic. The story wanders off at one point, but the reader can still learn something about the topic.	Some of the song is related to the assigned topic, but a reader does not learn much about the topic.	No attempt has been made to relate the song to the assigned topic.
Spelling and Punctuation	There are no spelling or punctuation errors in the final draft.	There is one spelling or punctuation error in the final draft.	There are 2-3 spelling and punctuation errors in the final draft.	The final draft has more than 3 spelling and punctuation errors.