

## Lesson Plan: Civil Rights Movement

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Grade Level: 8-11

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**AIM/Objective:** Students will be able to understand the impact of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer on both civil rights and voter registration in the Mississippi Delta.

### Instructional Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Interpret the following documents:

- Mississippi voter registration form (1964)
- A passage from the Mississippi State Constitution

2. Explain the economic motivators for Jim Crow and the disenfranchisement of African-Americans.

3. Assess the consequences of African-Americans 1964 struggle for:

- African-Americans
- The “regular” (all white representative) Southern Democratic Party

4. Evaluate the short term impact of Fannie Lou Hamer’s “non-violent” protests in achieving African-American Civil Rights.

**Motivation:** Fanny Lou Hamer did not know that she was even eligible to vote until she was 45 years old. How can this be explained?

Elicit 3-4 student responses.

Power point & mini-lecture: (see attached power point on sharecropping)

**Content:** Sharecropping, Jim Crow, literacy tests, legalized apartheid, large black majority in Mississippi Delta & South.

**Assessment:** Students will read copies of the Voter registration form given to Fannie Lou Hamer, and complete the document analysis form.

**I) Pivotal Question:** Is there anything about this registration form that you would have had trouble with?

Explain.

Elicit 3-4 student responses.

PowerPoint & mini-lecture on dangers inherent in applicants providing employer, home address, and difficulty of interpreting state constitutions.

**Sub question:** Do you think it is constitutional for a U.S. Citizen to have to demonstrate they are “moral upstanding” to the registrar?

**Content:** 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments, Force Act 1870, Later: Voting Rights Act 1965

**Assessment:** Students will analyze a section of the Mississippi State Constitution & fill out analysis sheet.

**II) Pivotal Question:**

Fanny Lou's small bus loads of registrants were fined by the police for being in a bus that was "too yellow." Upon returning home, her plantation owner threatened her with loss of her job and homelessness.

**Sub Questions:**

Why would the plantation owner be so threatened by a handful of African-Americans voting?

Fanny Lou responded: "I'm not registering for you; I'm registering for myself."

What possible consequences did she face?

Why do you think voting was so important to her?

After Fannie Lou Hamer was thrown off the plantation, she realized it was the "best day of her life, because now she could work for her people."

Would you have done the same? Why/why not?

Show video clip of Fannie Lou Hamer, televised address to the Democratic National Convention's Credentials Committee (1964) in Atlantic City.

**III) Pivotal Question:**

Why do you think Mrs. Hamer began her address by providing her home address?

**Sub Question:** How dangerous was it for Mrs. Hamer to reveal her address?

**Sub Question:** Why do you think President Johnson interrupted her speech with his own last minute televised speech?

(Why was he afraid to have the world hear what she had to say?)

**Content:** The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party offered 2 seats and refused to take them; an all white delegation was seated...the Democratic Platform was changed to prohibit a segregated delegation from being seated in the future.

**Summary:** Did Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Party "lose the battle but win the war?"

Prove/explain.