

Black Historic Impressions
Fighting For Freedom: The Story of the United States
Colored Troops
Lesson and Curriculum Guide

Almost 200,000 African-American soldiers fought for the Union during the Civil War. Their story brings a unique chapter to the American conflict. A chapter filled with the struggles of freedom fighters that fought for emancipation and for full citizenship rights. This program is designed to help students understand the importance of citizenship, and see many details of a conflict that helped to define our great nation.

Content Standards

Grade Three

Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities

2. Describe the responsibilities of citizenship
 - a. Voting
 - b. Respecting the rights of others
 - c. Paying taxes

Grade Four

History

1. Construct time lines to show the order of significant events in Ohio History.

People in Societies

3. Explain the reasons people came to Ohio including:
 - a. Freedom from political and religious oppression.

Geography

2. Use cardinal and intermediate directions to describe the relative location of places.
3. Describe the location of Ohio relative to other states and countries.

Government

1. Explain major responsibilities of each of the three branches of government.
2. Explain why elections are used to select leaders and decide issues.

Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities

1. Describe the ways in which citizens can promote the common good and influence their government including:
 - a. Voting
 - b. Communicating with officials

- c. Participating in civic and service organizations
 - d. Performing voluntary service
2. Explain why personal responsibilities (e.g. taking advantage of the opportunity to be educated) and civic responsibilities (e.g. obeying the law and respecting the rights of others) are important.
 3. Explain the importance of leadership and public service.
 4. Explain why characteristics such as respect for the rights of others, fairness, reliability, honesty, wisdom, and courage are desirable qualities in the people citizens select as their leaders.

Grade Five

People in Societies

3. Describe the experiences of African-Americans under the institution of slavery.

Government

1. Explain major responsibilities of each of the three branches of the U.S. government.
 - a. The legislative branch, headed by Congress, passes laws.
 - b. The executive branch, headed by the president, carries out and enforces the laws made by congress.
 - c. The judicial branch, headed by the Supreme Court, interprets and applies the law.
2. Explain the essential characteristics of American democracy including:
 - a. The people are the source of the government's authority.
 - b. All citizens have the right and responsibility to vote and influence the decisions of the government.
 - c. The government is run directly by the people or through elected representatives.
 - d. The powers of government are limited by law.
 - e. Basic rights of individuals are guaranteed by the constitution.

Vocabulary

Union

Confederacy

Civil War

Slavery

citizenship

voting

Election

regiment

abolitionists

Emancipation Proclamation

battle

constitution

Amendment

petition

rebellion

Pre-Program Activities

1. Study vocabulary words.
2. Read suggested children's books below.

3. Have students read a children's biography or do research on Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, and/or Frederick Douglass.
4. Have small groups read a slave narrative then present their narrative to the class.

Post-Program Activities

1. Have students pretend to be a Union or Confederate soldier and write a few journal entries describing their experiences.
2. Have students write a pretend letter to their congressman, governor, or the President asking for his/her support for a particular issue (environment, education costs, rights as a minor, etc.).
3. Have students prepare an oral presentation, arguing for full citizenship rights.
4. Have students do some more research on the Civil War, then create a board game including principle people involved with the war, and the many issues surrounding it.
5. Review and discuss the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

Supplemental Reading

- Harness, Cheryl. *Ghosts of the Civil War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002.
- Hansen, Joyce. *Which Way Freedom?*. New York: Walker and Company, 1986.