LESSON: Children's Literature and the Fight for Justice

GRADE LEVEL: 6-8

SUBJECT:
History/Government/ELA

TIME REQUIRED: 45 mins

In this lesson students will read two different books and gain new perspectives on Martin Luther King Jr. and the Mendez family and their fights for civil rights in school

RATIONALE

This lesson will provide multiple examples of the use of the 1st amendment to help citizens protest unfair treatment of the government. It is also an opportunity to pair ELA and reading comprehension with government and history.

NOTE: This is a lesson specifically for middle schoolers and the reading does not scale up easily unless the highschoolers are less proficient readers.

This lesson plan and materials needed to teach it can be found at the Thurgood Marshall Institute: https://tminstituteldf.org/

OVERVIEW

This ELA/Social Studies lesson is a good lesson to both test reading ability and to look at the use of the 1st amendment by Dr. King and the Mendez family in their fights for justice.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do we get what we want?
- How do people earn respect?

OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

After the lesson students will be able discuss the Mendez case and March on Washington and their relationship with the first amendment. as well as will have practiced and developed reading skills.

PREPARING TO TEACH

Prior knowledge about the Civil Rights movement may help but are not needed.

SCAFFOLDS AND ACCOMMODATIONS TO SUPPORT LEARNERS
Reading support….

This reading is already appropriate for level, if support is needed, recommend reading together or out loud as a class.

Differentiation…

For differentiation, give the actual text for the first amendment to some students and summaries to others. Or give out both for students with some student assignment referencing unaltered text and some assignments referencing summary text.

Adjusting for high school grades…

Assignment may be too easy for highschoolers. For very low level readers, this may be a highschool activity.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES SEQUENCE

Begin the lesson with a review of the Civil Rights movement if you have covered it already. If not, begin by directing student attention to the essential questions by having them reflect and think about them to start class. Next provide March On! The Day My Brother Martin Changed the World by Christine King Farris and Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation by Duncan Tonatuih as well as the attached handout that checks both reading comprehension and historical understanding. If it is easier to read out loud or to have students read silently or in groups, that is the instructor's decision, but the students should read both books. Once the reading is done, provide time to finish the worksheets. Finally, have students split into groups and have them identify the use of the 1st amendment in each book and articulate how those protected rights helped them enact change. Provide either the 1st amendment or a summarized copy for reference.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be both the comprehension worksheet and the amendment analysis work the students do.

MATERIALS NEEDED AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ENRICHMENT

March On! The Day My Brother Martin Changed the World by Christine King Farris
Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation by Duncan Tonatuih

Questions	March On!	Separate is Never Equal
Who is the narrator of the book? Please give a full name.		
What is Martin or Sylvia fighting for? What are they trying to change?		
What are some of the actions they take to try and make change?		
What 1st amendment right are they using? (ex. They are using the right to _____ to try and enact change.)		

How do you think that Martin and Sylvia could have protested their unfair treatment in another way not mentioned in the book?		