Lesson: Freedom Rides

Approx. Length: 50 minutes

Age or Grade Intended: U.S. History (11th Grade)

Academic (IN State) Standards: USH.7.1 Explain the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s by describing the ideas and actions of federal and state leaders, grassroots movements, and central organizations that were active in the movement.

Performance Objectives: The students will write a song verse about the freedom rides’ protests in the civil rights movement using the handout as a reference with 100% participation.

The students will perform their verses for the class and teacher with 100% participation.

The students will answer questions on an infographic in their textbook and be graded on completion grade.

Assessment: The students will turn in their song to the teacher where she will review it for participation. Next while the students are performing their verses the teacher will have a check sheet to mark off which students are participating. Lastly the teacher will have the students turn in their answers to the infographic where she will look at their answers and make sure that they have a given their best shot too try to answer them. If they have she will give them ten points for completion.

Advanced Preparation by Teacher: The teacher will need to create a PowerPoint about freedom rides so that the students will know a little more about freedom rides before they write their songs. Next the teacher will need to create the handout about the sample freedom songs. Lastly the teacher will need to have a check list to check off participation from students during the song.
Procedure:

**Introduction:** Hello class, yesterday we learned a little bit about sit-ins and the impact that they had in the Civil Rights Movement. Today we are going to learn about the freedom rides. Can someone tell me what freedom rides are? (Bloom: Knowledge) Very good! Right now we are going to watch a YouTube video on John Lewis (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU1AbhQGnrE). He was an African American who participated in freedom rides. Later on you are going have a chance to write a song verse that they might have sang on the freedom rides.

**Step-by-Step:**

1. At the beginning of the period the teacher will have the students put everything away and the students will watch a short two minute YouTube video on John Lewis, a man who participated in the freedom rides in 1961. (M.I. Visual-Spatial)
2. After the video the teacher will ask the students what they thought of the video clip and what they think the freedom ride meant to John Lewis. (M.I Verbal-Linguistic)
3. After the discussion the teacher will ask the students to get out their notes for the PowerPoint.
4. During the presentation I will ask question like “What did the people who participated in freedom rides hope to accomplish? (Bloom: Analysis) Why did the freedom rides lead to violence? (Bloom: Analysis) Do you think that you would have participated in a freedom ride during the Civil Rights Movement?” (Bloom: Evaluation)
5. During the presentation the students are expected to take notes. (M.I. Verbal/Linguistic)
6. After the PowerPoint, have the students put their notes away. At this time break the students into groups.
7. Once they are broken into groups, hand out the teacher-created handout on freedom rider songs examples.
8. When they have the handout explain, “Here is handout that has different verses of songs that people on the freedom rides use to sing. I want you to write your own freedom ride verse to a song. Everyone in your group needs to participate in writing the verse and afterwards everyone needs to present their verse to the class. I will have a check list to make sure you do participate. You can do it in any musical style that you want such as rap, country, rock or gospel. Have fun with this and just do your best.” (M.I. Musical) (M.I. Interpersonal)
9. After the explanation the students will work on writing their verse. During this time the teacher will walk around and be checking on the groups to make sure they are staying on task.
10. After the students are done writing their verse they will have some time to practice. At this time the teacher will walk around to see if the students have any questions.
11. After the students are done practicing, all the students will return to their seats and the teacher will choose one group to go first.
12. The first group will present their verse and the teacher will have her check list where she will check off the students who participated. (M.I. Musical)

13. After the first group goes the second group will go and so on until all the groups have gone.

14. Once all the students have gone the teacher will ask all the students to sit back down and get out their textbooks.

15. Tell the students, “You all did a really good job on all of your songs. Now on page 591 in your textbook you will see an infographic about Riding for Freedom. I want you to read it and do the two questions at the end. Be sure to think this through because you will be turning it in for a completion grade. So as long as your give it your best try you will get all ten points for completion.” The questions at the end are “Why do you think the freedom riders chose the route that they did?” (Bloom: Analysis) “Do you think they anticipated the opposition they encountered?” (Bloom: Evaluation) (M.I. Intrapersonal)

16. As they are reading and writing the answers they teacher can walk around to see if the students have any questions

17. If the students are done with it before the period they can turn it in, if not then they will need to turn it in next period.

**Closure:** Today we learned about freedom rides and how they helped led desegregation of interstate public transportation and related facilities in the South. You all got a chance to write and sing a verse that riders on the buses might have sang. Tomorrow we are going to look at more protests and confrontations; especially the *Letter from Birmingham Jail* by Martin Luther King Jr. You and a partner will look at different parts of the letter that Dr. King wrote and then we will discuss them in class.

**Adaptations/Enrichment:**

Gifted and talented students should be assigned different work, not more work. One modification I could make for gifted and talented in this lesson is to have these students act as the leaders in their groups for writing their verses. This would allow the students to practice their leadership skills and give them some more responsibility and challenge than the other students.

Also gifted and talented should be given the opportunity to explore a subject more. If I have a gifted and talented student who is really interested in this topic then I can tell them to read the book, “Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement”. This short story shares the lives of two men, one white and one black, who participate in the Freedom Rides together. I would want the student to pay attention to the similarities and differences between the two men and then I would have them report their findings back to the class. This gives the student to have a more in-depth study of the subject.
Some gifted and talented students are very creative and talented and need to be challenged more in their creativity. For this lesson instead of having these students just write one verse to a song I could have them write an entire song. This would make them really have to think and use their creativity. This enrichment would be really good for a student who is gifted and talented in music as well. The activity might even give the student a chance to bring in an instrument to help them perform their song for the class.

**Self Reflection:**
Was the entire class period taken up or did I have time left over?
Did the students like the song?
Were some students uncomfortable with singing in front of class or did they seem to think it was fun?
Did the groups work well with each other?
What should I change for next time?

Lesson Idea from:

FREEDOM RIDE SONGS

“Stand up and rejoice, a great day is here.
We’re fighting Jim Crow and the victr’y is near.
Hallelujah, I’m a-traveling, hallelujah, ain’t it fine?
Hallelujah, I’m a-traveling down freedom’s main line.”

“Ain’t gonna let segregation turn me around,
Turn me around, turn me around
Ain’t gonna let segregation turn me around,
Gonna keep on walkin’, keep on talkin’,
Gonna build a brand-new world.”

“If you miss me at the back of the bus, and you can’t find me nowhere,
Come on up to the front of the bus, I’ll be ridin’ up there.
I’ll be ridin’ up there, I’ll be ridin’ up there.
Come on up to the front of the bus, I’ll be ridin’ up there.”

“Only thing that we did right
Was to organize and fight.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on.
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on.”