

Civil Rights and Cold Warriors

Author: Tim Johnson, Chesapeake High School, Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Grade Level: High

Duration: One class period

Overview:

The end of World War II and the ensuing start of the Cold War brought the United States in direct competition with the Soviet Union. Each super power vied for authority and influence in many countries throughout the world. The United States championed freedom and democracy abroad, but on its own soil had to cope with the seemingly hypocritical way its African-American citizens were treated. How could a country purport to spread equality when its own schools were segregated until 1954? This was just one example of some of the arguments raised by civil rights activists. From 1945-1963, Presidents Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and John F. Kennedy Jr. dealt with this dichotomy.

Each president had their own convictions and in this lesson students will analyze each of the three administration's commitment to civil rights. They will examine primary source documents and make their own recommendations to each president. Finally, they will compare their suggestions to what actually happened.

Content Standards:

Era 9: Era 9 Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

Standard 2: How the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics.

Standard 4: The struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil liberties.

Historical Thinking Standards:

Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making

- A.** Identify issues and problems in the past.
- B.** Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances and contemporary factors contributing to problems and alternative courses of action.
- D.** Evaluate alternative courses of action.
- E.** Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.
- F.** Evaluate the implementation of a decision.

· Students will analyze the economic, political, and social changes within the United States during the period 1946-1968.

- Students will analyze the major developments, controversies, and consequences of the Civil Rights Movement between 1946-1968.

- Students will analyze the actions of three presidential administrations (Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy) during the Early Cold War period and will assess each administration's commitment to civil rights and determine what role the Cold War played in each chief executive's civil-rights initiatives.

The end of World War II brought about changes on the global front that indirectly placed civil rights for African Americans in an international context; as the foundation for the Cold War was laid in the aftermath of the Second World War, the United States and the Soviet Union began to compete for influence over Europe, Asia, and Africa. In fact, these “Third World,” or developing nations, witnessed both superpowers competing for the hearts and minds of their largely nonwhite populations throughout the Cold War period. With the U.S. acting as the “champion” of freedom and democracy abroad, America's poor treatment of blacks, particularly in the South, threatened to undermine its reputation on the world stage. This “reputation” was a major foreign-policy consideration for three sequential presidential administrations during the first two decades of the civil-rights movement.

From 1945 to 1963, Presidents Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and John F. Kennedy were forced to reckon with this dichotomy. While all three chief executives shared a common view that the federal government and the nation's capital had a symbolic significance with regards to civil rights initiatives and the international press, each of these presidents had very different convictions in response to civil rights for African Americans. Truman, the most supportive of civil rights among these three early cold warriors, favored a program that was years ahead of its time and thus, fell short of its passage through Congress. Eisenhower was reluctant to take a strong position in favor of civil rights because he felt, amid other factors, that the nation was not ready for desegregation. In addition, until the summer of 1963, Kennedy had been more

concerned with his reputation among the southern bloc of the Democratic Party, than with the black freedom struggle. (Only after the violence and media attention garnered by Martin Luther King's infamous March on Birmingham, as well as the fear of social upheaval with the rise of black activists such as Malcolm X, was Kennedy compelled to support a national civil rights bill.)¹ Furthermore and regardless of each head-of-state's personal convictions, all three presidents exploited the most nominal civil rights gains at home to fight the Soviet propaganda war abroad.

At first glance, President Harry S. Truman did not seem like the most probable advocate for civil rights reform. According to those close to him, he "had not entirely outgrown his background on racial matters as a southerner."² Yet, he did realize that while "social equality did not exist, rallying for, at the very least 'equality of opportunity' for all human beings" was second-to-none as a presidential responsibility.³ No other story forced Truman to reexamine his own personal philosophy in regards to the black freedom struggle than that of Isaac Woodward. Woodward, a veteran of World War II, was the victim of a brutal lynching in Batesburg, South Carolina. This atrocity "made an ever lasting impression on Truman, moving him in a way no statistics ever would have."⁴

Truman's sympathy towards black freedom led to his creation of a Civil Rights Commission, which produced *To Secure These Rights*, a rationale for civil rights reform in America. This document underscored a particular concern, shared by Truman as early as June 1945: "Propaganda seems to be our greatest foreign relations enemy. Russians distribute lies

¹ Paul Boyer, *Promises to Keep: The United States Since World War II*, 2nd edition (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 234-235.

² David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 588-589.

³ *Ibid.*, 588-589.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 589.

about us.”⁵ The mistreatment of blacks in America not only provided the Soviets with ample opportunities to challenge American democracy, but it was also heavily covered in the international press, outside of Moscow’s influence.⁶

As a result of international pressure, one of the first government agencies to move towards integration was the U.S. State Department. Department officials, “directly engaged with the world,” were moved to integrate the agency as concern “heightened” worldwide in regards to black civil rights.⁷ Secretary of State Dean Acheson argued that race discrimination “remains a source of constant embarrassment to this government” by harming our reputation; he was convinced that mistreatment of blacks jeopardized our conduct in foreign relations and questioned America’s moral leadership of the ‘free and democratic nations of the world.’”⁸

Influenced by lynchings at home, recommendations from his commission, and anxieties expressed from his foreign policy advisors, Truman moved to take a progressive stance on civil rights for African Americans. On June 29, 1947, Truman delivered the first-ever speech made by a president to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. His message was clear, but his proposals would prove to be controversial for the time period: “Full civil rights and freedom must be obtained and guaranteed for *all* Americans.”⁹ His civil rights message to Congress on February 2, 1948 would outline those proposals in detail: Truman advocated a federal anti-lynching law as well as a federal ban on the poll tax. He also pushed for measures to end discrimination in employment and unions, interstate travel, and the military services.¹⁰ Although Truman would lack political support for

⁵ John David Skrentny, *The Effect of the Cold War on African-American Civil-Rights: America and the World Audience, 1945-1968*, *Theory and Society* 27 (1998): 245.

⁶ Skrentny, 246.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 246.

⁸ Mary Dudziak, *Brown as a Cold War Case*, *Journal of American History* June (2004): 34.

⁹ McCullough, 569-570.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 586-587.

the bulk his civil rights package, his legacy to the movement would be solidified in July of 1948; Truman issued an executive order to end racial segregation in the military.¹¹ In addition to the domestic advantages of desegregation, the State Department argued that “integrated forces could make Soviet propaganda unconvincing.”¹² Furthermore, the Defense Department “considered integrated forces to be a symbol to the world of ‘Democracy in Action.’”¹³ The sincerity of the federal government’s commitment to civil rights and America’s treatment of *all* of its black Americans was questioned by the Soviets. In fact, Moscow countered civil rights gains in the U.S. military by exploiting prisoners-of-war; “the Soviets made an effort to force black prisoners to write articles condemning American racial practices.”¹⁴

Following the 1952 presidential race, president-elect Dwight D. “Ike” Eisenhower made his famed trip to Korea to negotiate an end to the conflict. With his inauguration in 1953, “Ike” brought a different perspective on civil rights into the White House. While his predecessor Truman demonstrated a capacity to depart from his southern roots, Eisenhower was more inclined to adhere to them. Eisenhower’s comments to the press, in response to the landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, revealed his southern sympathies. Eisenhower was not only more concerned with the effect of the Supreme Court’s ruling on *white* students, but he also resented the way the *Brown* decision strained his relationship with white southerners.¹⁵ White House observers noticed that President Eisenhower “felt weary in the presence of black people” and thus reversed a trend from the Truman administration, in which black leaders had enjoyed relatively easy access to an audience with the chief executive.¹⁶

¹¹ Boyer, 71.

¹² Skrentny, 249.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹⁵ Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), 2.

¹⁶ Von Eschen, 2.

While Eisenhower held strong reservations against *Brown*, his administration was quick to capitalize on the good publicity. The United States Information Service (USIS) “planned to show a film in 90 countries [which] depicted white and African-American students going to school together in Baltimore, Maryland” by the fall of 1954.¹⁷ Chief Justice Earl Warren, who personified the importance of the case to the international media, was sent abroad to promote American social progress. Warren “was received with great warmth and respect when he traveled to India in 1956 to give a speech at New Delhi University.”¹⁸

The *Brown* case itself was front-page news in daily newspapers throughout the world.¹⁹ West African writers editorialized *Brown* as the vehicle to which the U.S. could finally realize its role in the world, “setting an example for all other nations by taking the lead” [and influencing other nations to] remove “all signs and traces of racial intolerance, arrogance, or discrimination.”²⁰ Despite the optimistic coverage worldwide, “the Soviet press was quick to point out the delay in integration efforts within the United States.”²¹

In order to create more “positive press,” the State Department quickly moved to spotlight prominent African American jazz artists on state-sponsored goodwill tours throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia. While jazz had been “routinely associated with drugs and crime in the mass media,” the “prominence of African American jazz artists was critical to the music’s potential as a Cold War weapon.”²² Jazz allowed U.S. officials to pursue “a self-conscious campaign against worldwide criticism of U.S. racism, striving to build cordial relations with new African and Asian states.”²³ Although the federal government was complacent at this point on domestic race

¹⁷ Dudziak, 37.

¹⁸ Ibid., 38.

¹⁹ Ibid., 35-36.

²⁰ Ibid., 35.

²¹ Ibid., 37.

²² Von Eschen, 3.

²³ Von Eschen, 4.

relations, “even President Eisenhower was profoundly affected by the widely shared sense that race was America’s Achilles heel internationally.”²⁴

Exploiting black “jazz ambassadors” also had other benefits to America’s reputation worldwide. Jazz tours, led by such greats as Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, and Duke Ellington, would showcase the art-form as “uniquely American,” offsetting the “perceived European and Soviet superiority in classical music and ballet.”²⁵ These “jazz ambassadors” would also shield America’s “Achilles heel” by “demonstrating racial equality in action”—talented and successful minorities on the world stage would help to deflect America’s poor civil rights record at home.²⁶ The location of these tours was as strategic as the usage of prominent black musicians. Both Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and President Eisenhower agreed that the Cold War “would be played out in the non-aligned and newly independent nations of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.”²⁷

It was no accident that jazz became a tool to which the U.S. State Department could implement in its propaganda battle with Moscow. “African American soldiers who remained in Europe after [the First and Second World Wars] created the first European and international audiences for jazz.”²⁸ State-sponsored Voice of America (VoA) broadcasts, by disc jockeys Leonard Feather and Willis Conover, “helped to lay the groundwork for the emergence of the jazz ambassadors” around the world.²⁹ Conover’s comments in regards to jazz’s popularity connected with audiences worldwide that lived under oppression and looked towards America for moral leadership: “The musicians agree on tempo, key, and chord structure, but beyond this, everyone is free to express himself. It’s a musical reflection of the way things happen in

²⁴ Ibid., 5.

²⁵ Ibid., 6.

²⁶ Ibid., 6.

²⁷ Ibid., 7.

²⁸ Ibid., 7-8.

²⁹ Ibid., 13, 14.

America.”³⁰ To accelerate the popularity of this music, the USIS distributed thousands of transistor radios throughout Asia, Africa, and the Middle East—audiences would listen to both “defenses of U.S. foreign policy, along with [Willis] Conover’s Music USA show.”³¹

Other calculated measures were taken by the U.S. State Department to further the perception of social progress at home. By 1953, sixty African Americans were added to the department’s Foreign Service, including one ambassador; Eisenhower and Dulles also sought blacks for embassy appointments in predominantly non-white countries and sponsored trips for African Americans to speak on the “Negro Problem” abroad, in nations such as Nigeria.³² Even the “jazz ambassadors” themselves were utilized in a strategic fashion; the location of the “goodwill tours” often coincided with the sight of American covert actions. In fact, the first state-sponsored tours from 1956-1958, “sent musicians straight into the middle of Cold War hotspots and crises,”—Dizzy Gillespie to the Middle East, Benny Goodman to Southeast Asia, and Dave Brubeck to Poland and back to the Middle East.³³ Therefore, “sending musicians into the preludes and aftermaths of coups d’état” served as a sort of diplomatic “damage control.”³⁴

However, both Eisenhower and Dulles failed to anticipate the way in which these “jazz ambassadors” would use their newfound diplomatic influence. Most notorious of these musical dignitaries was Louis Armstrong, whose impact in the Third World was extraordinary. “During the spring of 1956, the second state-sponsored tour sent Louis Armstrong’s band to the Gold Coast (Ghana), which was the first sub-Saharan nation to gain independence.”³⁵ His visit “opened the tour for the eventual appearance of Vice President Richard Nixon” nine months

³⁰ Von Eschen, 16-17.

³¹ Ibid., 15-16.

³² Skrentny, 246.

³³ Von Eschen, 27.

³⁴ Ibid., 27.

³⁵ Bratton, 17.

later.³⁶

While Nixon's trip was beneficial to the Eisenhower's administration, Armstrong's poignant comments in regards to the *Little Rock* crisis in 1957, was not. Armstrong was vehemently opposed to what he perceived as Eisenhower's hesitation in taking measures to protect nine black students who were attempting to desegregate Central High School. Armstrong vented his frustration to the press, accusing Eisenhower of being "two-faced" and having "no guts;" Armstrong even remarked that "the government can go to hell" and refused to go on a subsequent state-sponsored tour to the Soviet Union.³⁷ The jazz legend later commented in regards to the crisis: "Its getting so bad, a colored man hasn't got any country."³⁸

Following the incident in Little Rock, Arkansas, the State Department began to reckon with the power and influence of the "jazz ambassadors." Between 1957 and 1963, "only four African-American led bands would be allowed to tour for the government."³⁹ The State Department utilized Duke Ellington in an effort to neutralize the influence of Louis Armstrong; Ellington's participation in the tours during that period seemed to placate the federal government. Ellington was very careful to defend the government while overseas; on one occasion he was quick to label the race problem in America as "economic, rather than a matter of color."⁴⁰

On another occasion, Ellington spun accounts of a church bombing in Alabama to the Indian press with his point of view that the mere knowledge of the story outside of the United States was evidence of "America's freedom of press and willingness to extend free speech

³⁶ Ibid., 17.

³⁷ Ibid., 17.

³⁸ Ibid., 17.

³⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁰ Bratton, 18.

beyond its borders.”⁴¹ He even went so far as to criticize the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., commenting that although Dr. King “is the representative of an oppressed race of people, he travels in a chauffeur-driven Cadillac and with a police escort.”⁴² Although Duke Ellington would go on to lead tours to Senegal, Latin America, and the Soviet Union, he “was better able to play the role of loyal subject and immunize himself from the rage of being an African American.”⁴³

The transition between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations coincided with both budget cuts in the cultural affairs fund as well as a reaction to freely-speaking black celebrities. With seventeen African nations gaining independence by 1960, both Eisenhower and Kennedy “appeared unwilling to alienate European allies who had once held African colonies, or southern congressmen at home, by seeming too supportive of the new [African] nations.”⁴⁴ However, Kennedy appeared to be more “eager to embrace African independence, siding with the United Nations” on threats to African sovereignty.⁴⁵ Kennedy was also just as concerned as Eisenhower in regards to “how American race problems were viewed in Africa.”⁴⁶

Kennedy had run on a campaign in 1960 which “praised the sit-in movement” and even “secured the release of Martin Luther King from jail.”⁴⁷ Nonetheless, once becoming president, Kennedy was more concerned with staying in power than demonstrating moral leadership; “Kennedy, who addressed [civil rights] only episodically, was above all a practical politician interested in securing and holding power, not an idealist.”⁴⁸

⁴¹ Ibid., 18.

⁴² Ibid., 18.

⁴³ Ibid., 18-19.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁵ Renee Romano, *No Diplomatic Immunity: African Diplomats, the State Department, and Civil Rights, 1961-1964*, *Journal of American History* 87 (2000): 550.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 550.

⁴⁷ Boyer, 225.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 225.

President John F. Kennedy entered the White House “largely uninterested in and ignorant of the problems of black Americans.”⁴⁹ Kennedy was also limited by his “own preference for foreign policy” as well as his own fears of “explosive confrontations” with civil rights groups.⁵⁰ After adopting a more conservative approach, as well as using the worldwide community’s symbolic perception of the federal government as a leader-by-example, Kennedy established the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee to “combat discrimination in the federal government and in the hiring practices of firms with government contracts.”⁵¹

Kennedy’s slim margin of victory over Richard Nixon in the 1960 Election “made him extremely sensitive to the Southern Democratic party.”⁵² And although the president would work closely with his brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, throughout those interim years to provide incidental protections to civil rights activists, it would be the plight of African diplomats visiting the United States, and not the brutality perpetrated upon African-Americans within the country, that would have the most influence on Kennedy’s policy on civil rights during that period.⁵³

While protests in the early 1950s had achieved legal segregation of most public accommodations in Washington D.C., “informal segregation remained a serious problem.”⁵⁴ African diplomats that moved their families to the nation’s capital often faced discrimination in housing, restaurants, businesses as well as hostile harassment.⁵⁵ The “mistreatment” of these African diplomats “not only damaged relations with the host nation but might also affect the power balance in the United Nations; Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev was quietly trying to

⁴⁹ Romano, 548.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 548.

⁵¹ Boyer, *Promises to Keep*, 225.

⁵² Ibid., 225-226.

⁵³ Ibid., 225.

⁵⁴ Romano, 551.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 551.

line-up African nations behind a proposal to have the United Nations moved out of the United States because of persistent racial discrimination.”⁵⁶

One particular account involving William Fitzjohn of Sierra Leone served as a mechanism for the desegregation of the route African dignitaries used to travel from New York to Washington. Fitzjohn was denied service at a Howard Johnson’s restaurant in Hagerstown, Maryland in March of 1961.⁵⁷ President Kennedy, moved by the notion that the African press might view this episode as a “catalyst for anti-American feelings,” met personally with the diplomat to apologize for the incident.⁵⁸ Subsequent incidents involving dozens of African diplomats, including the new ambassador from Chad, Adam Malik Sow, forced Kennedy to reconsider the “Washington-first” strategy (i.e. promoting civil rights gains made by the federal government abroad, while downplaying civil rights struggles and abuses at home).⁵⁹

While Kennedy’s first suggestion to these diplomats was to fly from New York to Washington instead of driving, he would eventually use the State Department’s Office of Protocol to pressure the Maryland legislature to pass a law outlawing segregated public facilities along Route 40.⁶⁰ “Thus began a campaign led by officials of the federal government to undermine segregation in Maryland.”⁶¹ Following a period of sit-ins and threats of freedom rides by the Congress of Racial Equality, as well as a two-year campaign from the Office of Protocol, the Maryland General Assembly finally passed a law that banned racial discrimination in restaurants and hotels in the areas surrounding Route 40 during a March session in 1963.⁶² Thus African Americans victimized by Jim Crow in the state of Maryland benefited from a

⁵⁶ Ibid., 552-554.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 553.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 554.

⁵⁹ Skrentny, 254-255.

⁶⁰ Skrentny, 254-255.

⁶¹ Romano, 569.

⁶² Ibid., 574.

multi-pronged attack to fight the discrimination of African diplomats. However, both the Soviet and Chinese press covered this story and other related incidents with their own pragmatic perspective.⁶³ The Soviets “accused the United States of trying to isolate the victims of discrimination rather than dealing with the discrimination itself.”⁶⁴

By 1963, President Kennedy was finally willing to support a national civil rights bill, rather than dealing with civil rights violations that garnered the most attention from the international press. Kennedy’s path to reconciling his allegiance to southern Democrats was paved with the brutality of white-supremacy in the Deep South, mainly through the plight of the Freedom Riders and the victims of the March on Birmingham. Yet, even during Kennedy’s monumental Civil Rights Address on June 11, 1963, his labeling of civil rights as a “moral issue” also coincided with an “appeal for racial justice in the context of Cold War necessities.”⁶⁵

This public accommodations bill of 1963 would eventually pass through Congress as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, following the assassination of Kennedy. Secretary of State Dean Rusk “testified that its passage was crucial to the nation’s ability to win the Cold War with the Soviet Union.”⁶⁶ Rusk used both the argument that Soviet propaganda sought to exploit American racism as well as the problems faced by “nonwhite diplomats” as chief concerns to warrant the bill’s passage.⁶⁷

All three of these Cold War presidents, Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy were forced to deal with the domestic issue of civil rights, due in part to the attention it received throughout the international community. Although each president brought with him to the White House his own set of personal convictions in regards to civil rights, only Truman (and to a lesser extent

⁶³ Ibid., 559.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 559.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 549.

⁶⁶ Romano, 546.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 546.

Kennedy) demonstrated a capacity to change, thus making civil rights an administrative priority. Regardless of the level of personal commitment each of these president's demonstrated towards civil rights, this generation of cold warrior heads-of-state recognized that the issue was important enough to exploit even the smallest of gains on the world stage, thus allowing the United States to "save face" as the moral leader of freedom and democracy in the post-World War II struggle versus the Soviet Union.

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"Double V" slogan-

this slogan was adopted by the African American community in the United States during World War II. The meaning was "Victory" over facism in abroad and "Victory" over racial discrimination at home.

lynching-

Lynching is the illegal execution of an accused person by a mob.

Brown vs. Board of Education- this was the famous court case in 1954 that overturned the *Plessey v. Fergusson (1896)* court case that allowed "Separate but Equal" facilities for different races in the United States.

Montgomery Bus Boycott- The Montgomery Bus Boycott officially started on December 1, 1955. That was the day when the blacks of Montgomery, Alabama, decided that they would boycott the city buses until they could sit anywhere they wanted, instead of being relegated to the back when a white boarded

Little Rock Nine- Three years after the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, which officially ended public-school segregation, a federal court ordered Little Rock Central High School to comply. On September 4, 1957, Governor Orval Faubus defied the court, calling in the Arkansas National Guard to prevent nine African American students--"The Little Rock Nine"--from entering the building.

Sit-ins- protesters usually seat themselves and remain seated until they are evicted, usually by force, or until their requests have been met.

SCLC- The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) is an American civil rights organization. . It played a prominent role in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. SCLC was closely associated with its first president, Martin Luther King, Jr.

SNCC- The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (or SNCC, pronounced "snick") was one of the principal organizations of the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. It emerged in April of 1960 from student meetings led by Ella Baker held at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina.

SNCC played a major role in the sit-ins and Freedom Rides, a leading role in the 1963 March on Washington, Mississippi Freedom Summer, and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party over the next few years. In the later part of the 1960s, led by fiery leaders such as Stokely Carmichael, SNCC focused on "black power", and then protesting against the Vietnam War. In 1969, SNCC officially changed its name to the Student National

Coordinating Committee to reflect the broadening of its strategies. It passed out of existence in the 1970s.

Motivation: What effect did the Cold War have on the Civil Rights Movement?

Procedures:

1. As a Warm-up Activity, give each student the list of terms and ask him or her to categorize the vocabulary into groups of their choosing. They need not use every term, but they must explain the basis for each of their categories (RS #4).
2. After discussing the Warm-Up Activity, divide students into groups of four (4). Each group will dissect a folder of primary sources and report out as “Presidential Action Committees”—weighing the evidence and making recommendations to each administration. Students will use the “Document Chart” to take notes and formulate possible solutions (RS #5). Each group will receive the following documents:

Truman

- From the President’s Committee on Civil Rights, *To Secure These Rights*, 1947 (RS #1).

Eisenhower

- “Louis Armstrong” (Correlation Summary), Federal Bureau of Investigation, August 8, 1962 (RS #2).

Kennedy

- *Its All Right to Seat Them, They’re Not Americans*, Washington Post, April 27, 1961 (RS #3).

Closure:

1. Groups will be asked at random to share their findings on a particular administration. During discussion, the class will come to some consensus as to what each president must do to address the problems uncovered from the activity. Record the groups’ recommendations on the board and refer back to those ideas once the class notes have been given.

Assessment:

1. Using the “Evaluation Chart” to record notes, students will be exposed to what actually happened and compare this history to their own findings (RS #6). Once the first two columns of the chart have been completed, students will then evaluate each president’s commitment to civil rights and assign a letter grade to each administration based on their own assessment.
2. Data Sheet (RS #7). This gives the answers to the Evaluation Chart that the students filled out in Closure Step #1. It is the key for teachers to grade the evaluation form.

From the President’s Committee on Civil Rights, *To Secure These Rights*, 1947.

<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/civilrights/srights4.htm#139>

Following a string of lynchings in 1946, President Truman appointed this committee to investigate race relations in the U.S. and make recommendations to his administration. This report divided its argument into moral, economic and international factors to consider. The third category revealed both the embarrassment the U.S. faced worldwide with its treatment of minorities at home, as well as the harm done to our reputation as a democratic influence. The selected section of the document will allow students to view each of the arguments. They will be able to identify the moral argument as dealing with minority suffrage and military segregation, as well as the question of who is hurt by our nation's moral decay. Students will recognize that the economic portion focuses on how discrimination weakens our economy. Students will also ascertain that the international section explains how discrimination impacts the view of the United States in the eyes of other nations.

***Louis Armstrong (Correlation Summary).* Federal Bureau of Investigation. August 8, 1962.**

<http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/armstrong.htm>

This document contains excerpts from a compilation, which summarized the FBI's files on musician Louis Armstrong, spanning from 1944 to 1960. It revealed how concerned the federal government was with Armstrong's image in the press as well as his travel schedule abroad, particularly in the Third World and behind the "Iron Curtain." Students will see the condition of the documents—"blacked out" text and the word "Secret" crossed out—and recognize that the FBI's documents on Armstrong were indeed significant in the era of civil rights and communism. If students read the documents carefully, they will determine that Armstrong's view of the government changed based on Eisenhower's actions pertaining to civil rights.

***It's All Right to Seat Them, They're Not Americans.* (cartoon) The Washington Post. April 27, 1961.**

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/images/s03475u.jpg>

Cartoonist Herb Lock penned his frustrations at both President Kennedy and southern governors with this sketch. President Kennedy pressured state governors to treat visiting diplomats from foreign nations with dignity and respect. The governor of Virginia responded to JFK with the suggestion that those diplomats identify themselves as such to assure "southern courtesy." Lock's cartoon revealed how he felt both parties missed the "big picture" in terms of mistreatment and discrimination of minorities, regardless of whether they were foreign or domestic. Students will easily be able to identify the two

Educational materials were developed through the Teaching American History in Anne Arundel County Program, a partnership between the Anne Arundel County Public School System and the Center for History Education at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

customers who are in line as minorities, as the rest of the restaurant customers are Caucasian. If the image is enlarged, students will be able to see the connection to the South; the maitre d' is holding a document—presumably a menu—that reads “Ye Olde Yankee Noodle Plantation Tea Roome.”