Organizations within the Civil Rights Movement

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Objectives
The purpose of this lesson is to compare and contrast five major organizations formed during the Civil Rights Movement during the twentieth century.

The five organizations that student will research:

• National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
• National Urban League
• Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)
• Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)
• Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)

Students will be giving the mission statements of each organization and websites to guide their research.

Links to Mission Statements:
• http://www.naacp.org/pages/our-mission
• http://www.nul.org/who-we-are/mission-and-history
• http://sclcnational.org/core/item/page.aspx?s=4682.3021.0.2607
• http://gatheringforjustice.ning.com/profiles/blogs/student-nonviolent
• http://www.congressofracialequality.org/Learn/AboutCORE/tabid/2304/Default.aspx

Procedures

Opening the Lesson—Mission Statements and Background Information

Copy the mission statements of the above organizations. As a class, read the mission statements aloud. Discuss the mission statements. What words are provoking, powerful? What images come to mind when you read the mission statements? What can you tell about the organization just by the mission statements alone? How are the missions similar, different? Which organization would you join?

If needed, give the students a little background information regarding each group.

Developing the Lesson—Research

Divide the class into five groups and assign an organization to become experts on the group. Provide the following sets of questions for the groups to answer pertaining to their assigned Civil Rights group.
• When was this group founded? Date, Place
• Who were the founding member(s)?
• What are the goals of the organization? What are they trying to accomplish? (Think Political, Social, Economic Issues)
• How did/does the organization achieve their goals? (tactics used)
• What has the organization achieved? (For example: Legislation, Court Cases)
• Other useful or interesting facts regarding the organization

**Concluding the Lesson**— Discussion/Report Card/Reflection

Give some time for each group to present their findings. Have the information recorded in some manner to allow time at the end for groups to come up with any similarities or differences they notice between the five organizations.

Allow students to “grade” (A-F) each of the five organizations based on the following criteria:

• Performance of Founding Member(s)
• Met Goals of Organization
• Tactics used by Organization
• Overall Public Opinion of Organization

Students should complete the report card on their own, making sure they given an explanation of the grade. This can be an informal writing or journal assignment that can be completed as homework, if necessary as long as the day after there is a chance to discuss the grades and rationale behind them. Have them include citations or examples found from their research to support the grades the assign. After they have graded the organizations open the floor for a discussion and have the class come up with an average grade each organization.

As a culminating writing assignment, have the students reflect on one organization of their choice. Which group do they view as most successful and why? What ideas or tactics do they see as most successful? How is the organization viewed today- what is its legacy?