Focus/Summary
The purpose of this lesson is for students to study the impact of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in the general context of the Civil Rights Movement. This act helped support the rights of the African American community in the Deep South. This act also helped support the true intent of the 14th and 15th Amendments, which was to insure full rights as citizens of the United States. Finally, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 made all of us aware how the right to vote was something we may take for granted and how people in the Deep South felt truly free as citizens of this nation.

Vital Themes and Narratives
Patterns of Social and Political Interaction
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
- An understanding of United States politics includes the study of the development of individual rights and liberties and their impact on citizens.

Values, Beliefs, Political Ideas, and Institutions
- The interplay among materials conditions, moral values, and leadership, especially in the evolution of democratic societies.

Habits of Mind
- perceive past events and issues as they were experienced by people at the time, to develop historical empathy as opposed to present-mindedness.
- Appreciate the often tentative nature of judgments of the past. And thereby avoid the temptation to seize on particular ‘lessons’ of history as cures for present ills.

Objectives
Students will discuss and analyze the importance of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its impact to improve the rights not just for African Americans but for all Americans

Procedures
Opening the Lesson: Comparing the Voter Registration Applications from the State of Mississippi in 1955 and the current Voter Registration Application for California.

Students will examine and discuss two voter registrations applications
- What do you see that shocks you about the Mississippi Voter Registration of 1995?
- What are some problems you can see for the black voter in doing filling out this application? Why?
- How different is the Mississippi Voter Registration from the current California voter registration application?
- In what other ways, do you think that the African American voters were prevented from voting in the South?
Developing the Lesson—Comparing Images of the fight to vote in the South
Student will analyze two different political cartoons dealing with voting rights using the Library of Congress political cartoon analysis guide
Cartoon 1-Dealing with the three Civil Rights Workers killed in Mississippi in 1964
Cartoon 2-Dealing with the KKK and the Voting Rights Act.
- What is the impact of the first cartoon in support for voting rights?
- What is the impact of the second cartoon with regards to voting rights in the present time?

Developing the Lesson-Part 2 Comparing Images of the fight to vote in the South
Students will analyze two different photographs dealing with voting and voter registration.
Students will use the SIGHT photo analysis guide
Photo#1- SNCC-Organized Mass Meeting on Voter Registration, Greenwood, Mississippi, April, 1963
Photo#2-Election Night, Lowndes County, Alabama, 1966
- What are some of the differences between the two pictures?
- Why do you think, in the Lowndes photo, is the African American man holding a gun on election night?
- Do you think that there is a need to use weapons to protect the right to vote?

Concluding the Lesson: The Voting Rights Act of 1965
Students will have a short power point discussion on the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
- How did the Voting Rights of 1965 help give the Federal Government more power to enforce the 14th and 15th Amendments?
- How did the Voting Rights of 1965 might improve the rights of African Americans? Or for all Americans?

Assessing Student Learning
Student after the lesson will understand how difficult the fight was for voting rights for African Americans during this period in American History. Plus, students will understand the process of how difficult the fight for rights can be for any groups, as one can take the idea of rights in general for granted. Students will be evaluated by writing a comparative response to a test on civil rights and civil liberties. Lastly, students will explore the complexities of the American government system and how it may help or hinder in the development of the principles of our American democratic system.

The following web site is the link to finding the political cartoon analysis.
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html
Primary Source Analysis Guide

1. Identify the Document

**Author(s) or source**

__________________________________________________________

**Title**

__________________________________________________________

**Date**

__________________________________________________________

**Type of document**

__________________________________________________________

2. Analyze the Document

**Main idea of the document**

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

**Preceding conditions that motivated the author**

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

**Intended audience and purpose**

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

**Biases of the author**

__________________________________________________________

How to Read a Historical Image

Scan for important details
I identify the conflict or tension
G guess the creator’s intent or message
H hear the voices
T talk about your observations

S.I.G.H.T. tm © 2008 Edward T. O’Donnell

The Modern Civil Rights Movement 1940s-1960s

First-Order Document
Voter Registration Applications from the State of Mississippi in 1955
AN ACT To enforce the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and for other purposes. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act shall be known as the "Voting Rights Act of 1965."

SEC. 2. No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.

SEC. 3. (a) Whenever the Attorney General institutes a proceeding under any statute to enforce the guarantees of the fifteenth amendment in any State or political subdivision the court shall authorize the appointment of Federal examiners by the United States Civil Service Commission in accordance with section 6 to serve for such period of time and for such political subdivisions as the court shall determine is appropriate to enforce the guarantees of the fifteenth amendment (1) as part of any interlocutory order if the court determines that the appointment of such examiners is necessary to enforce such guarantees or (2) as part of any final judgment if the court finds that violations of the fifteenth amendment justifying equitable relief have occurred in such State or subdivision: Provided, That the court need not authorize the appointment of examiners if any incidents of denial or abridgement of the right to vote on account of race or color (1) have been few in number and have been promptly and effectively corrected by State or local action, (2) the continuing effect of such incidents has been eliminated, and (3) there is no reasonable probability of their recurrence in the future.

(b) If in a proceeding instituted by the Attorney General under any statute to enforce the guarantees of the fifteenth amendment in any State or political subdivision the court finds that a test or device has been used for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color, it shall suspend the use of tests and devices in such State or political subdivisions as the court shall determine is appropriate and for such period as it deems necessary.

(c) If in any proceeding instituted by the Attorney General under any statute to enforce the guarantees of the fifteenth amendment in any State or political subdivision the court finds that violations of the fifteenth amendment justifying equitable relief have occurred within the territory of such State or political subdivision, the court, in addition to such relief as it may grant, shall retain jurisdiction for such period as it may deem appropriate and during such period no voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting different from that in force or effect at the time the proceeding was commenced shall be enforced unless and until the court finds that such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure does not have the purpose and will not have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color: Provided, That such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure may be enforced if the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure has been submitted by the chief legal officer or other appropriate official of such State or subdivision to the Attorney General and the Attorney General has not interposed an
objection within sixty days after such submission, except that neither the court's finding nor the Attorney General's failure to object shall bar a subsequent action to enjoin enforcement of such qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure.

Portions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

...now with your hand, pull the lever down.

Andrew Goodman
Michael Schwerner
James Chaney

Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) Flyer
The Modern Civil Rights Movement 1940s-1960s

Second-Order Document
You Too Can Register To Vote
Poster on the fight for the Voting Rights in Alabama
President Lyndon Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act of 1965