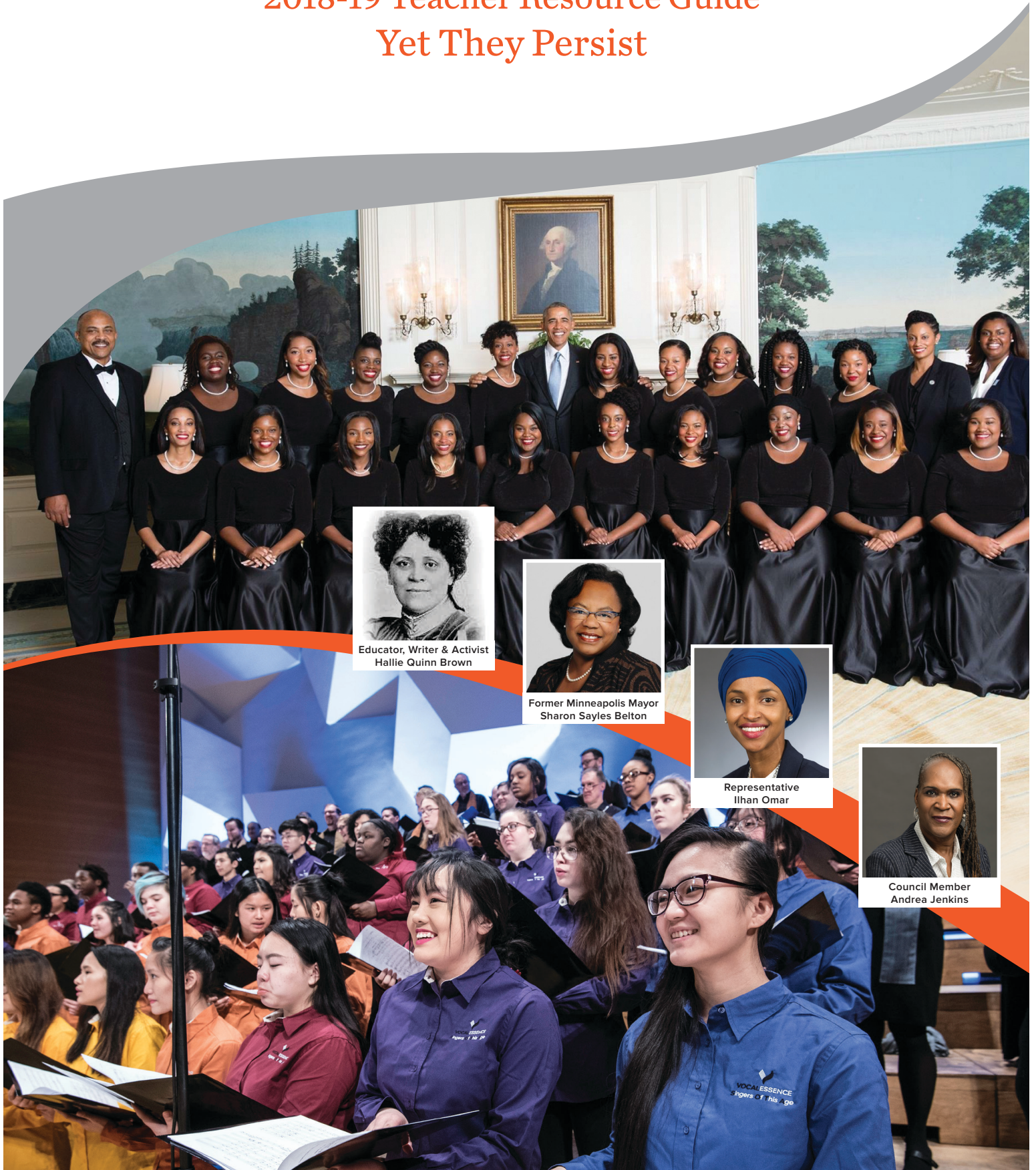


VOCALESSENCE WITNESS

2018-19 Teacher Resource Guide Yet They Persist



Educator, Writer & Activist
Hallie Quinn Brown



Former Minneapolis Mayor
Sharon Sayles Belton



Representative
Ilhan Omar



Council Member
Andrea Jenkins

2018-2019 WITNESS SCHOOL PROGRAM TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

VOCALESSENCE  WITNESS

YET THEY PERSIST

Prepared by Joanna Cortright and Dwight Scott
Edited by Robert Graham, G. Phillip Shoultz, III, and Amanda Timmer
Layout by Lora Joshi, Aajo Design

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Dr. Monica Devers
Roxane Wallace
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Visions, Inc.
JR Lundberg

ABOUT THE WITNESS TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Thank you for your interest and participation in the 2018-2019 VocalEssence WITNESS School Program, where we celebrate the contributions of African Americans to our shared American cultural heritage. Since 1991, the annual concert theme, repertoire and performers have provided the framework for the study of cultural movements and the opportunity to learn about respected African American icons both past and present.

2018-2019 WITNESS THEME

In 2018-2019, VocalEssence WITNESS: *Yet They Persist* honors past, present, and trailblazing women of African American and African descent who persist against all odds to change their communities and the world. Using songs of protest and progress as the guide, this theme focuses primarily on four trailblazing women in our Twin Cities community, beginning with the life and legacy of Hallie Quinn Brown and then moving to focus on former Minneapolis mayor Sharon Sayles Belton, Minneapolis City Council member Andrea Jenkins, and MN State Representative Ilhan Omar.

The WITNESS Young People's Concerts will feature the renowned Spelman College Glee Club, a dynamic choral ensemble from an historically black institution in Atlanta, Georgia known for the development of many prominent African-American female leaders. Spelman will perform alongside VocalEssence Teaching Artists, the VocalEssence Singers Of This Age, members of the VocalEssence Chorus, and other special guests, including video clips of interviews with Sharon Sayles Belton, Andrea Jenkins, and Ilhan Omar. VocalEssence WITNESS: *Yet They Persist* celebrates entrepreneurship, highlights the importance of education, and advocates for the equality of all.



WITNESS Artist Workshop with Timothy Berry,
Folwell School, Performing Arts Magnet, Minneapolis

PURPOSE OF THE TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Addressing social, historical and cultural contexts, this resource guide can be used primarily in arts, language arts or social studies classes for grades 4-12. In an effort to stay current with trends in arts education and infused curriculum, we have prepared these materials in a manner that is collaborative with you. This resource guide integrates Minnesota Academic Standards and offers you a myriad of ways you can prepare students for the teaching artist workshops and Young People's Concert. The activities in this guide are intended as a springboard for teachers—they can be altered for different age groups, be implemented before or after the WITNESS Young People's Concert or be a jumping off point to go deeper into a particular subject.

With this said, we strongly recommend that all WITNESS partner school teachers explore the lesson plans available included in this guide, which are organized to provide a common foundation of knowledge for students who are attending the concert. Lesson plans are organized in pairs, in which each "Set" begins with a biographical/historical-based lesson about a trailblazing woman, followed by complimentary music-based lesson(s) which focus around music that will be featured at the Young People's Concerts. We also encourage you to share the handout "What You Can Expect at the WITNESS Young People's Concert" on pp. 14-15 with your students one week prior to the concert so that they have appropriate expectations for what they will experience as well as behavior and concert etiquette.

As part of our mission at VocalEssence, not only do we "champion choral music of all genres, celebrating the vocal experience through innovative performances, commissioning of new music," we also strive to "engage with diverse constituencies." This collaboration between musicians, historians, artists, and teachers provides experiences that extend into lifelong learning. Thank you for your continued support and shared commitment to teaching and learning in our school communities.

—Robert J. Graham

VocalEssence Program Manager
Department of Learning, Engagement
and Community Programs



—G. Phillip Shoultz, III

VocalEssence Associate Conductor,
Director of Learning, Engagement
and Community Programs



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What You Can Expect at the WITNESS Young People's Concert



ABOUT VOCALESSENCE

VocalEssence champions choral music of all genres, celebrating the vocal experience through innovative concerts, commissions, and community engagement programs.

As a leading Minnesota arts organization, VocalEssence uses the power of choral music to enhance our community by producing innovative vocal music events that stir people's souls. We engage people of all ages and cultures through innovative, enticing choral music programming, such as performing ensembles, school curricula, elder learning initiatives and advocacy projects.

Called "one of the irreplaceable music ensembles of our time" by Dana Gioia, past chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, VocalEssence is renowned for its innovative exploration of music for voices and instruments under the enthusiastic direction of Artistic Director and Founder Philip Brunelle and Associate Conductor G. Phillip Shoultz, III. Each season, VocalEssence presents an eclectic series of concerts featuring the 130-voice VocalEssence Chorus, the 32-voice professional Ensemble Singers, the 50-voice VocalEssence Singers Of This Age, guest soloists and instrumentalists.



PHILIP BRUNELLE:

*Artistic Director and Founder,
VocalEssence*



Philip Brunelle, artistic director and founder of VocalEssence, is an internationally-renowned conductor, choral scholar, and visionary. Philip has conducted symphonies, choral

festivals, and operas on six continents. He is Vice President of IFCM (International Federation for Choral Music), holds five honorary degrees, and has been recognized for his commitment to choral music by the governments of Norway, Hungary, Sweden, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.
www.vocalescence.org/staff/philip-brunelle

G. PHILLIP SHOULTZ, III:

*Associate Conductor and Director
of Learning, Engagement, and
Community Programs, VocalEssence*



Known for his innovative pedagogy and ability to inspire singers, G. Phillip Shoultz, III, is the Associate Conductor and Director of Learning, Engagement, and Community

Programs at VocalEssence. Phillip completed doctoral studies at the University of Minnesota and has prepared choirs for performances in Canada, England, Finland, France Estonia, Russia and Germany. His work in the public schools garnered multiple Teacher of the Year honors. The winner of the 2015 ACDA Graduate Conducting Competition winner and an International Conductors' Exchange Program Participant, Phillip believes in the transformative power of shared singing experiences.
www.vocalescence.org/staff/g-phillip-shoultz-iii

PROGRAM TIMELINE

We hope you will use this timeline as a calendar for your lesson planning. Everything below is organized so that you know what is expected of you in advance of the concert. Wherever possible, we have suggested possible date ranges for the activities. You will, however, need to choose when to do other lessons based on your own classroom schedule.

Saturday, September 29, 2018	Teacher Orientation Seminar, Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis
October 1, 2018-February 18, 2019	Introduce the VocalEssence WITNESS School Program to your students through various lesson plans included in this Teacher Resource Guide
October-November 2018	Select Teaching Artist; Schedule Planning Meeting and Artist Workshops; Determine which activities from Teacher Resource Guide you would like to do with your students and the timeline for doing so
October 2018-April 2019	WITNESS Planning Meetings & Artist Workshops
October 2018-April 2019	All participating teachers and administrators complete workshop evaluation efforts following your final Artist Workshop (note: <i>this is different from the Young People's Concert evaluation</i>)
Wednesday, February 20, 2019	Distribute the student handout "What You Can Expect at the VocalEssence WITNESS Young People's Concert," p. 14-15.
Sunday, February 24, 2019 4pm	VocalEssence WITNESS: <i>Yet They Persist</i> Subscription Concert, Orchestra Hall (Teachers receive a 50% discount—for tickets, call 612.371.5656)
Monday, February 25, 10am, 11:35am, 1:15pm	VocalEssence WITNESS Young People's Concerts, Orchestra Hall
February 26-29, 2019	All participating teachers and administrators complete Young People's Concert Evaluation and submit bus reimbursement forms (note: this is different from the Artist Workshop evaluation)
May 1, 2019	Final day to turn in Bus Reimbursement Forms to VocalEssence



WITNESS Artist Workshop with Patricia Brown, Nativity of Our Lord Catholic School, Saint Paul, MN



WITNESS Artist Workshops with Ginger Commodore, Columbia Heights High School



Artist, Ta-coumba Aiken

VOCALESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM: A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1991, we created WITNESS to celebrate the artistic contributions of African Americans to the fine arts and to our common cultural heritage. By commissioning new works and programming rarely heard works by African American composers, we help broaden ideas about African American musical expression and introduce important new voices to our audiences through concerts, recordings and radio broadcasts. Michael Abels, David Baker, Ysaye Barnwell, William Banfield, Larry Farrow, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Joseph Jennings, Bobby McFerrin, Rosephanye Powell, Patrice Rushen, Evelyn Simpson-Curenton and Alvin Singleton are some of the people who have written new works and arrangements especially for the WITNESS program. The first commission—David Baker’s WITNESS: Six Original Compositions in a Spiritual Style—inspired the name for our program.

Our WITNESS concert artists have included James Earl Jones, Rita Dove, Billy Taylor, Melanie DeMore, Anthony Elliott, Patrice Rushen, Paul Shaw, Marietta Simpson and Yolanda Williams, and vocal ensembles Moore by Four, The Steele Family, Sounds of Blackness, The Fairfield Four, the Leigh Morris Chorale, the Morehouse College Glee Club and the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Many of the featured artists have made return appearances on other VocalEssence concerts. WITNESS has made it possible to initiate collaborations with African American artists in many disciplines. A Minnesota State Arts Board Cultural Collaborations Grant supported our partnership with St. Paul visual artist Ta-coumba Aiken whose art has become the visual representation of WITNESS on all ads and publications. Aiken’s large colorful banners provide a stunning visual backdrop for WITNESS concerts, and his artwork adorns our WITNESS Companion CD covers.

VocalEssence WITNESS is critical for many of the students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to attend a professional event at a major concert hall. We believe an education and performance experience like WITNESS gives students an opportunity to learn from exceptional role models, increasing their self-esteem and creating a desire to continue exploring their own ways to express themselves through the arts.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT AT THE WITNESS YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT



WHAT WILL I HEAR?

- o Poetry and words, set to music, that celebrate many trailblazing women in our community of African American and African descent, presented through a variety of artistic expressions:
 - Choral Singing
 - Dance and Movement
- o A variety of songs in different musical styles, such as gospel, spirituals, and contemporary classical. Listen for...
 - ... choral arrangements of spirituals and freedom songs, such as “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round”.
 - ... original choral compositions by contemporary, female, African American composers such as Ysaÿe Barnwell’s “No Mirrors In My Nana’s House”, Rosephanye Powell’s “Still I Rise”.
 - ... A new song written by Spelman College Glee Club director Dr. Kevin Johnson and Glee Club member Sarah Stevens, titled “A Choice to Change the World”.
- o The sound of your own voice as you sing with the performers on stage!

WHO WILL I SEE?

Spelman College Glee Club with Conductor Dr. Kevin Johnson



The Spelman College Glee Club is the top performing ensemble of Spelman College, from Atlanta, Georgia. They have performed throughout the United States as well as in other countries such as Brazil and Canada. A highlight for the Glee Club took place in 2016, when they performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama. The success of the Glee Club is also a reflection of the college's mission for all its students: "Spelman College, a historically Black college and a global leader in the education of women of African descent, is dedicated to academic excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and the intellectual, creative, ethical, and leadership development of its students. Spelman empowers the whole person to engage the many cultures of the world and inspires a commitment to positive social change."

VocalEssence Chorus with Associate Conductor G. Phillip Shoultz, III

The **VocalEssence Chorus** is an exceptional group of talented, committed singers from many walks of life. The Chorus is well known around the world. People recognize them for their great voices as well as their performances of new and rarely heard songs. With help from the community, they sponsor the workshops you had or will have by VocalEssence Teaching Artists. They are happy that you get to hear them perform.

VocalEssence Singers Of This Age

The VocalEssence Singers Of This Age, also known as SOTA, are a dynamic group of young people from Minneapolis and Saint Paul high schools who sing, dance, write their own music, rap, and—most importantly—reflect the diversity of our community in its membership. They have worked hard to prepare for today's concert, and they encourage **you** to join your school's choir!



VocalEssence Teaching Artists

Our roster of talented Teaching Artists, who are well known locally, nationally and even internationally, are delighted to share their artistic gifts with you as they collaborate with the VocalEssence Chorus, the VocalEssence Singers Of This Age, and the Spelman College Glee Club.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- Music can express things that people cannot put into words alone.
- All people have music in their lives, no matter where they grew up.
- Singing brings people together.
- Learning about people who create and perform music can help us better understand our differences and similarities.

WHERE WILL IT BE?



This year's concert will be held at Orchestra Hall in downtown Minneapolis, one of the leading performing arts centers in the United States.

HOW SHOULD I ACT?

When you go to the concert, concentrate on listening to the music...

- Feel the rhythms and follow the tunes.
- Listen for changes in the music—sometimes it will be very powerful and loud, and other times very soft and delicate.

...also, don't forget to watch the performers on stage...

- Which instrument or voice has the main tune?
- What can you tell about the music by how the performers interact with one another?

...and reflect on what you hear.

- How does it make you feel?
- Does it bring back certain memories?
- Could you sing these songs?

If you feel a little nervous because this is your first concert, that's okay. You are not alone. Other students feel the same way, even though they may not show it. The main thing to remember is that although performers like to hear your applause, they are also grateful for your quiet attention.

The following rules will help make the experience more enjoyable for everyone.

Refrain from talking.

The first and greatest rule. It also includes whispering during the music. If you like, tap your toes quietly inside your shoes— it's a good exercise to reduce toe fat.

Please have nothing in your mouth, besides your teeth and tongue.
Gum and candy are not allowed.

Do not ring or text.

Leave cell phones, video games, iPods, cameras and other electronic devices at school or on the bus.

Do not sigh with boredom.

If you are really bored, keep it to yourself. Your neighbor just may be having a good time!

Do not embarrass your teacher or your school.

Remember that you are representing your school and want to be on your best behavior. There are many eyes looking at you. Show respect to the students and teachers around you, and to the artists performing on stage.

Do not compete.

Cheering, screaming and trying to chant a little louder than your neighbor is allowed at a basketball game, but not at the Orchestra Hall. Applause is the best way to show you have enjoyed something.

(Adapted from "The Ten Rules of Concert Etiquette for Students," by the National Association for Music Education.)

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ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES



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LESSON PLAN: SHOSHOLOZA

Traditional Nguni Song

INTRODUCTION

African American music is deeply rooted in African music, rituals, and traditions. The 2019 WITNESS Young People's Concert will honor this history by opening with "Shosholoza," a song most often sung during national celebrations and in sports events when South Africans communicate solidarity for the home teams. Its message is that the citizens of **South Africa** are not alone; they are part of a community.

In his biography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and president, Nelson Mandela, described how he sang "Shosholoza" as he worked during his 27-year imprisonment. He described it as "a song that compares the apartheid struggle to the motion of an on-coming train" and went on to explain that "the singing made the work lighter."

Students will sing the song and learn how the song made its way from **Zimbabwe** to South Africa, and why it is an important part of South African life. At the VocalEssence WITNESS concert, "Shosholoza" will celebrate music as it surrounds the audience with its energy.

KEY TERMS

South Africa:	a country on the southernmost tip of the African continent
Ndebele:	name for a group living in Zimbabwe and their language
Zulu:	largest ethnic group of Southern Africa and the name for their language
Zimbabwe:	a landlocked country in southern Africa known for its dramatic landscape and diverse wildlife
Ostinato:	short, constantly repeated rhythmic pattern
Call and Response:	musical pattern in which a melody sung by one singer or group is responded to or echoed by another



Zimbabwe is north of South Africa

LEARNING GOALS

Students will sing the song's melody after learning it through oral tradition. They will improvise a simple instrumental accompaniment consisting of the beat and basic rhythm patterns.

MATERIALS [included with WITNESS Online Resources]

- PowerPoint [SLIDES 2-4]
- Recording of "Shosholoza"
- Brief History of "Shosholoza"
- Song notation, unison, and four-part arrangement
- Simple percussion instruments: drums, claves, and shakers (African instruments if you have them, but not required)
- "Shosholoza" song videos

PROCESS

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

Slides 2 through 4 from the VocalEssence WITNESS Online Resources Power Point can accompany this lesson. Decide if you will use the **Ndebele** or English lyrics. For younger students, provide some details of the song's origins from the *Brief History of "Shosholoza" on p. 22.*

ACTIVITY #1

1. Listen to the recording before the title or any hints are mentioned. Students will describe what they notice and make inferences:
 - Describe who you think is singing?
 - What do you think they are singing about?
 - Where do you think this song is from; what part of the world?
2. Learn about the song's content and countries of origin [SLIDE 2 & 3]. Ask students to read the Brief History of "Shosholoza," on p. 22, or provide the background information in your own words.
3. Read the song's lyrics in English and Ndebele [SLIDE 4]. Practice speaking the song lyrics in rhythm with students as they pat the beat.
 - Echo speak the four syllables of the first word, *sho-sho-lo-za*. Repeat until students can easily speak it in rhythm.
 - Continue to the next words, *ku-le-zon ta-ba* using the same process. Add words as students catch on.
 - Return to the beginning to speak all the words and phrases with the steady pulse.
 - o Sing the text with the recording. Sing it without the recording. Notice that a leader calls out the first phrase. Remind students that this song form is known as **call and response**.
 - o Ask for volunteers to take turns calling out the first phrase of the song.

ACTIVITY #2

When the students are singing with confidence, improvise an accompaniment using instruments or body percussion.

- Keep the steady beat (pulse) with wood sounds (claves, sticks, etc.) throughout the song.
- Improvise a syncopated **ostinato** pattern on the drum. Play throughout the song.
- Add shakers to improvise short repeated patterns (ostinatos).
- Practice until the voices and instruments fit together.
- Sing it for someone else; another classroom, parents, your VocalEssence Teaching Artist, etc.

INVICTUS

Invictus is a 2009 American-South African biographical sports drama film directed by Clint Eastwood featuring Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon. The story is based on the John Carlin book *Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Made a Nation* about the events in South Africa before and during the 1995 Rugby World Cup. The Springboks were not expected to perform well, only recently returning to high level international competition following the dismantling of apartheid – the country was hosting the World Cup, thus earning an automatic entry. Freeman and Damon play, respectively, South African President Nelson Mandela and François Pienaar, the captain of the South Africa rugby union team, the Springboks.

Invictus was released in the United States on December 11, 2009. The title refers to the Roman divine epithet *Invictus* and may be translated from the Latin as "undefeated" or "unconquered". "Invictus" is also the title of a poem by British poet William Ernest Henley (1849–1903). The film was met with positive critical reviews and earned Academy Award nominations for Freeman (Best Actor) and Damon (Best Supporting Actor). (Wikipedia)

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Document student performances via audio and video recordings. Apply existing grade level rubrics to student performances of the song and the improvised accompaniment.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Search for and listen to South Africa's actual national anthem. Begin with this performance at a 2014 Rugby game with New Zealand: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdG7pEgzV5Q>
- Assign partners to select another African country and do a search for that country's national anthem.
- Share findings with the class. Include the national anthem of Zimbabwe.
- Pose a question for discussion about the reasons for a country to have a national anthem. What is the value of a national anthem?
- How well does the "Star Spangled Banner" serve our country as its national anthem?
- Read an article about Nelson Mandela and his role in South Africa.

Learning Activities for Older Students:

1. If the students are part of a music ensemble, learn to sing "Shosholozza" in four parts.
2. Improvise accompaniments in smaller groups, each creating their own version of a percussion score for the song.
3. View a clip of the end of the movie, *Invictus*. This climactic scene shows a rousing Rugby World Cup game between South Africa and New Zealand. The film score weaves the melody of "Shosholozza" throughout the action of the final scene. Once students are familiar with the song, provide a story summary, and watch the scene. In partners, ask students to **discuss how the song impacts the overall mood and drama of the film**, then discuss their thoughts with the class. Start at the beginning; "Shosholozza" appears at 1:40 and continues to the end. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VmiKTsQg0w).

SOURCES

WEBSITES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=keerMIYpyAw>

Good teaching video for learning the song in four parts, "Learning Shosholozza," created by the Drakensberg Boys Choir. Four boys sing each of the parts as a solo line, then the full choir sings. Wonderful energy. The Drakensberg Boys Choir is unique S. African boarding school that uses choral music as a significant vehicle for holistic education.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VmiKTsQg0w

Final 5 minutes of *Invictus*, the movie about the World Cup rugby game won by S. African team, with a film score that features "Shosholozza."

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invictus_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invictus_(film))

This site includes the full plot of *Invictus*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dt1X_gAx0CM

Ladysmith Black Mambazo recording includes several photographs of Nelson Mandela https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klkD9sRR_BI

Pete Seeger singing "Tshotsholozza" from his album, *We Shall Overcome*

<https://www.africaguide.com/afmap.htm>, a great site for maps of Africa, including the elevations showing the mountains in South Africa.

<http://www.joythroughmusic.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Shosholozza.pdf>

Four-part choral arrangement

“Shosholoza”

<u>call</u>	<u>response</u>
 <p>Sho - sho-lo - za</p>	 <p>Sho - sho-lo - za ku le-zon-ta - ba stim-e-la si-phum-e South A -</p>
 <p>- fri - ca</p>	 <p>Wen u(y)a-ba-le - ka Ku le-zon ta ba Stim-e-la si-phum-e South A - fri-ca</p>

Song Lyrics

Shosholoza
Kulezon taba
Stimela siphume South Africa

Wen' uyabaleka
Kulezon taba
Stimela siphume South Africa

Translation

Move fast,
On those mountains
Train from South Africa

You are running away
On those mountains
Train from South Africa

Song as sung by the Drakenburg Boys Choir

SOPRANO	 <p>Sho - sho-lo - za ku le-zon-ta - ba stim-e-la si-phum-e South A -</p>
ALTO	 <p>Sho - sho-lo - za ku le-zon-ta - ba stim-e-la si-phum-e South A -</p>
TENOR	 <p>Sho - sho-lo - za ku le - zon ta ba stim-e-la</p>
BASS	 <p>A-ley in ch m A-ley in ch m a-leay m ch m a - ley</p>
5 S.	 <p>- fri - ca Wen u(y)a-ba-le - ka Ku le-zon ta ba Stim-e-la si-phum-e South A - fri-ca</p>
A.	 <p>- fri - ca Wen u(y)a-ba-le - ka Ku le-zon ta ba Stim-e-la si-phum-e South A - fri-ca</p>
T.	 <p>Wen' u(y)a ba le -ka ku le zon ta ba stim-e-la Sho - sho-lo za</p>
B.	 <p>m ch m a-ley m ch m a-ley m ch m a-ley m ch m a - ley m ch m a-ley</p>

BRIEF HISTORY OF “SHOSHOLOZA”



South African Steam Train

In his biography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Nelson Mandela, anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and president, described how he sang “Shosholoza” as he worked during his 27-year imprisonment. He described it as “a song that compares the apartheid struggle to the motion of an oncoming train” and went on to explain that “the singing made the work lighter.”

SOURCES:

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THE STORY OF “SHOSHOLOZA”

In 1867, diamonds were discovered outside of the town Kimberly to the northeast of Cape Province. Just twenty years later, in 1886, gold was discovered near Johannesburg. When mine owners needed more workers beyond those living in South Africa, they hired men from bordering countries. The men left their homes in **Zimbabwe** for jobs in the gold and diamond mines. Living near the border between Zimbabwe and South Africa, they traveled by train to reach the mines – and to return home. The song originated in **Zimbabwe**; the lyrics are a combination of Ndebele and **Zulu** words.

Researchers Booth and Nauright, write that Zulu miners sang “Shosholoza” as they worked to synchronize digging with shovels and swinging axes – but also to generate positive spirits amongst the workers. The call and response pattern with a lead singer answered by the group encouraged unity in a work group. It was also sung on the train between Zimbabwe and the mines. There is disagreement about whether the song describes the journey to the mines from Zimbabwe to South Africa, or the return home. It was also sung in prisons, including the one where Nelson Mandela was held for 27 years.

Today, “Shosholoza” is most often sung during national celebrations and in sports events when South Africans communicate solidarity for the home teams. Its message is that the citizens of South Africa are not alone; they are part of a community.

MESSAGE AND THE MEANING OF THE LYRICS

In the past, the song was sung to express the hardship of working in the mines and heartache of being so far from home. The word *Shosholoza* (or *Tshotsholoza!*) means go forward or make way for the next man, in Ndebele. It was a term of encouragement, support, solidarity, and hope.

The sound “sho” imitates the sound made by a train. *Stimela* is Nguni for steam train. *Kulezo ntaba!* means “At those far away mountains” and *Stimela Siphume e Zimbabwe* announces “the train come from Zimbabwe.” *Wen’ uya baleka* translated is “because you’re running away/hurrying.” In contemporary times, its meaning is to show support for any struggle.

In 2009, “Shosholoza” was the music used in the stirring ending of the movie, *Invictus*. The South African a cappella group, Overtone, recorded the song for the film.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

MUSIC: Foundations

Standard 1: Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic works

MUSIC: Create

Standard 2: Create artistic works

Standard 4: Revise and complete original artistic work

MUSIC: Perform

Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for performance

MUSIC: Respond

Standard 7: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work

MUSIC: Connect

Standard 10: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts...

LESSON PLAN: HALLIE QUINN BROWN

INTRODUCTION

To “find one’s voice” means to muster up the courage to say something after being too nervous to speak. The phrase is also used to describe how writers, musicians, politicians, etc. express their views, art, ideas, etc. in the way they want to. In this lesson, students will learn about Hallie Quinn Brown – the educator, public speaker, writer, and activist, who saw the voice and spoken word as powerful instruments for affecting positive change. Students will also learn about the community center that bears her name and the ways in which it is making a difference in the lives of Twin Cities area citizens. This lesson will challenge your students to think about what it means for them to “find their voice”.



LEARNING GOALS

Students will learn about Hallie Q. Brown – the person and the community center. As they do so, they will consider how they can use their life experiences, education, voice, and good works to bring about positive change (in their neighborhood, school, and beyond).

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS Online Resources]

- Power Point: “Hallie Quinn Brown”
- POWER OF VOICE Worksheet
- “LIFTING AS WE CLIMB” Worksheet
- MISSION POSSIBLE Worksheet

KEY TERMS

Trailblazer:	one who is first or among the earliest in any field of research, work, or progress
Legacy:	anything handed down from the past, as from a person, group of people, or event
Rhetoric:	the study of the effective use of language
Elocution:	the study and practice of public speaking
Salutatorian:	the student ranking second highest in a school's graduating class
Lecture:	a speech that is read or delivered to an audience especially for teaching
Transform:	to change in form, appearance, or condition
Chautauqua:	an educational meeting, originating in the village on Lake Chautauqua in 1874, providing public lectures, concerts, and dramatic performances during the summer months, usually in an outdoor setting
Persuade:	to convince others to do something or think a certain way
Rhythm:	movement or sound that has a certain pattern, beat, accent, etc.
Harmony:	a pleasing and unified arrangement of the different parts within a whole
Style:	a particular, distinctive, or characteristic action, appearance, sound, etc.
Sympathy:	the ability to understand and share the feelings of others
Conviction:	a strong, fixed, firm belief
Activist:	an especially active, energetic, and forceful supporter of a cause
Temperance:	total avoidance of alcoholic beverages
Metaphor:	a figure of speech that describes one thing as being another thing, which can be a more powerful way of saying that the one thing is like the other thing
Mission:	a specific task or goal that is set for you or that you set for yourself
Relevant:	connected to whatever is being considered
Illuminate:	to brighten with light; to make clear
Prism:	an object used to spread or reflect light; the act of making an idea clear through a particular viewpoint

HALLIE Q. BROWN TIMELINE

1873	1880	1894	1896	1897	1920	1929
Graduated from Wilberforce University in Ohio	Published <i>Bits and Odds: A Choice Selection of Recitations</i>	Began career as a traveling lecturer and public speaker	Helped found the National Association of Colored Women (NACW)	The first of two presentations to Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle	Published <i>First Lessons in Public Speaking</i>	Hallie Q. Brown Community Center founded in St. Paul, Minnesota

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

This lesson is designed to alternate between INFORMATION that you provide to your students (accompanied by Power Point slides) and ACTIVITIES for them to complete. Feel free to simplify both aspects – bringing out only one or two points in each INFORMATION section and considering one or two questions in each ACTIVITY.

PROCESS

PART ONE: HALLIE Q. BROWN – THE TRAILBLAZER

1. INTRODUCTION

- **[SLIDE 1]** Ask students if they have heard of Hallie Q. Brown and, if so, what they know about the name.
- Tell students that Hallie Q. Brown refers to both a person and a place. First, they will be learning about Hallie Q. Brown – the **trailblazer** who lived over 100 years ago. Encourage them to learn as many lessons they can from her life and **legacy**.

2. INFORMATION

- **[SLIDE 2]** Hallie Quinn Brown was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1845. She was the daughter of two former slaves, who had gained their freedom. Her parents were well educated. They owned various real estate properties and their house was a station of the Underground Railroad.
- **[SLIDE 3]** In 1864, Brown's parents moved Hallie and her five siblings to a farm near Chatham, Ontario, Canada. Her father earned a living as a farmer, and the children attended the local school.

- One of Hallie's favorite things to do was to spend time with the cows, sheep, and birds on the family farm. She would deliver speeches to them about the important issues happening in the community and in the country.
- **[SLIDE 4]** One day, Hallie's family traveled to town to celebrate the birthday of England's Queen Victoria. Bands played and soldiers marched through the streets, which were decorated with flags and banners. As Hallie stared at the Queen's image on the banners and thought about all the attention given to her, Hallie realized that women could have positions of great influence.
- Hallie decided then and there that she would one day meet Queen Victoria!
- Her realization that a woman could rise above challenging circumstances and people's low expectations sparked a determination to inspire others to also set goals beyond their present situation. But instead of ascending a throne and wielding

royal power, Hallie would inspire people by ascending a podium and using the power of her voice.

- In 1866, tragedy struck the Brown family. Their house was destroyed by fire, killing Hallie's sister Mary in the process. Determined to reclaim their lives and their home, Hallie's parents sold property that they still owned in Pittsburgh and the family worked extra hard on their farm. Soon, they were able to rebuild their family home.

3. DISCUSSION

- How do you think the different events and activities in her childhood will affect her thinking and actions when she becomes an adult?
- Who are the people – those you know and those you know about – that have had an effect on your thinking and actions? In what way?
- What goal or dream do you have that might seem to be impossible?

4. INFORMATION

- The Brown family returned to the United States in 1870 and settled in Wilberforce, Ohio.
- **[SLIDE 5]** Hallie enrolled as a student at Wilberforce University, where she began to learn the art of **rhetoric** and **elocution**. She was a good student and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1873.
- She delivered her first public speech (in front of people instead of farm animals!) on the day of her graduation, as the **salutatorian** of her class.
- During the summers, Hallie attended the American Chautauqua **Lecture** School, which fueled her drive to become an effective public speaker.



- In 1887, Hallie became the first woman to receive the Master of Science degree from her alma mater, Wilberforce University.
- **[SLIDE 6]** After completing her studies, Hallie taught various farm workers – helping older men and women learn how to read and write. In 1892, Hallie was hired as the dean of women students at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. She was offered other teaching positions; however, her career as a traveling public lecturer was growing. And she devoted her time and energy to this endeavor.
- Hallie believed and taught that public speaking had **transforming** power. She felt that any person with motivation and proper instruction in elocution could have significant and positive influence on society.

5. ACTIVITY: PERSUASIVE SPEECH

- Distribute the POWER OF VOICE Worksheet to each student
- Explain that Hallie Q. Brown believed that the aim of elocution is to convey ideas to an audience, to evoke emotion, and motivate to action.



- **[SLIDE 7]** Discuss the meaning of what Brown considered to be a public speaker's seven responsibilities [adapted from her book *Bits and Odds*]:
 1. Cause your audience to laugh, cry, gasp, or want to go do something about what they hear.
 2. Make sure your presentation has **rhythm** and is **harmonious** (every part connected together).
 3. Work on the **style** of delivery (using a variety of pace, pitch, volume, and tone that matches your topic).
 4. Make sure your speech encourages listeners to think and do something that is right and positive.
 5. Speak and gesture naturally.
 6. Add emotion and drama, but without being out of control.
 7. Make sure that the main point or lesson of your speech is absolutely clear to your audience.
- Help students complete the worksheet
- Encourage students to practice their short speeches, which they will present to each other during another class period.

6. INFORMATION

- Ask student if they remember Hallie's childhood goal when she was living in Canada. Ask if they think she ever got to meet Queen Victoria. Explain that Hallie became one of the most famous public speakers of her day – traveling throughout the United States and to other countries.
- **[SLIDE 8]** Hallie was presented to Queen Victoria on two occasions (in 1897 and 1899) as both guest and speaker.
- While on her trips to Great Britain, she was also asked to help establish a **Chautauqua** in Wales.

- Hallie came to realize that while a single person could have a good influence on society, an organized group could have even more influence.
- **[SLIDE 9]** Hallie's strong **convictions** motivated her to become an activist and organizer for women's suffrage and the women's Christian **temperance** movement. She was invited to speak at the World's Congress of Representative Women. And, in 1894, Hallie helped establish the Colored Woman's League of Washington, D.C.
- **[SLIDE 10]** The Colored Woman's league later joined with other organizations to form the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) in 1896. The NACW became the first and oldest national Black organization in the country and still exists today as the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs.
- Explain that the large number of women's clubs that began to be formed in the late 1800s sprang from the American women's social movement, which encouraged women to pursue educational, economic, social, and political advancement.
- The clubs that women formed from the late 1800s into the 1900s furthered this advancement and helped usher in many social reforms for woman, children, and families, as well as establishing and improving social services in their communities.

THE CHAUTAUQUA MOVEMENT

The Iroquois word “Chautauqua” means “a bag tied in the middle” or “two moccasins tied together”. The word describes the shape of Chautauqua Lake, located in southwest New York, where, in 1874, John Heyl Vincent and Lewis Miller rented a Methodist camp meeting site to use as a summer school for Sunday school teachers.

This summer school became known as the Chautauqua Institution. Soon thereafter, the scope expanded to include adult education of all kinds, as well as concerts and social activities. By the 1890s, the Chautauqua Institution was nationally known for its contribution to intellectual and moral self-improvement and civic involvement.

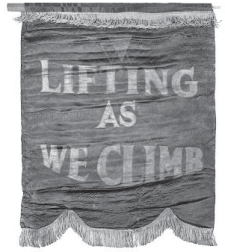
The Chautauqua Movement grew as members spread the concept of the Chautauqua to towns around the country, especially in rural areas where opportunities for secondary education were limited. After 1900, instead of holding events in one location, the “circuit chautauqua” (consisting of groups of traveling lecturers and performers) became more popular. At the height of the Chautauqua Movement (about 1915) some 12,000 communities had hosted a chautauqua.

By the mid-1930s, the Chautauqua Movement had died out, for various reasons – the growing popularity of cars, radio, and movies, the increased professional and educational opportunities for women, and, finally, the Great Depression, during which it became economically impossible to sustain Chautauqua events.

Today, with the growing interest in adult education and lifelong learning, the Chautauqua idea is experiencing a renaissance, as communities and assemblies are being organized throughout North America. To find out where Chautauquas are currently in operation, check out www.chautauquatrail.com.

7. DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

- **[SLIDE 11]** The NACW’s founding principle was “Lifting As We Climb”. Ask students what they think that means.
- The members of the NACW believed that by elevating their own status and influence, they could improve the condition of their entire community.
- Ask students why they think the club’s founders felt that way.
- Divide students into groups of 3 and give each group a “LIFTING AS WE CLIMB” Worksheet. Each group will be tasked with creating a club that will solve some social problem.
- Help groups complete the following tasks:
 - o Create an organization that would help solve a problem in your school, neighborhood, city, state, the country, or even the world.
 - o What would your organization do?
 - o What would you call your organization?
 - o And what would its founding principle be?
 - o Design a banner that represents your organization.
- Have each group present their organization to the rest of the class.



8. CONCLUSION

- [SLIDE 12] During the late 1890s, Hallie returned from her travels to Ohio, where she served as a professor at Wilberforce University. She continued her reform efforts and authored several books.
- Hallie remained active as a lecturer, writer, educator, and social **activist** until her death in 1945.
- [SLIDE 13] She left a rich and powerful legacy in the form of the books she wrote, the memory of those who had the privilege of hearing her speak or being her student, the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, and two buildings named in her honor – the Hallie Q. Brown Memorial Library at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio and the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center in Saint Paul, Minnesota.
- Ask students to summarize some of the lessons they learned from considering the life of Hallie Q. Brown.

“LIFTING AS WE CLIMB”

Mary Church Terrell was a well-known African American **activist**, who focused her energy on combatting racial injustice and helping others of her race to make advancement in education, work, and social equality. She, along with Hallie Q. Brown and others, founded the National Association of Colored Women, of which she was President from its founding in 1896 until 1901. The organization's motto: “Lifting As We Climb” was taken from her stirring words:

“And so, lifting as we climb, onward and upward we go, struggling and striving, and hoping that the buds and blossoms of our desires will burst into glorious fruition ere long. With courage, born of success achieved in the past, with a keen sense of the responsibility which we shall continue to assume, we look forward to a future large with promise and hope. Seeking no favors because of our color, nor patronage because of our needs, we knock at the bar of justice, asking an equal chance.”

– Mary Church Terrell

PART TWO: HALLIE Q. BROWN – THE COMMUNITY CENTER

1. INFORMATION



- [SLIDE 14] In 1929, a committee of members of the Saint Paul Urban League met to discuss plans for a community center that would occupy the form Central Avenue branch of the Y.M.C.A.
- In choosing a name for the new center, it was decided to hold an essay contest in which each person entering the contest had to write about the life of an outstanding leader.
- Herbert Howell, a student at Hamline University in Saint Paul, wrote the winning essay about Hallie Q. Brown, who by that time was a famous and highly respected public speaker, educator, writer, and social activist. Thus, the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center was established.
- [SLIDE 15] Soon afterward, the center was moved to the Masonic Hall at Aurora and Mackubin.
- [SLIDE 16] In 1972, the center was relocated to its current location in the Martin Luther King Center at 270 North Kent Street.

2. DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

- [SLIDE 17] On the Home Page of the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, you will see that the center is described as “the Lighthouse of the Community.” Ask students what they think that means.
- Explain that the phrase is a **metaphor**.

- On the “Our Legacy” page of the website, there is this quotation from the poet Anne Lamott: “Lighthouses don’t go running all over an island looking for boats to save; they just stand there shining.” Ask students how this relates to a community center’s role in the community.
- Give each student a MISSION POSSIBLE Worksheet. They will complete Part One, in which they will consider the following questions:
 - What would you consider to be your most outstanding quality or characteristic?
 - What metaphor best describes you? [eg. “I am a/an _____”]
 - Write a sentence or two that explains how the metaphor relates to you.
- Have students present their personal metaphors to the rest of the class.
- Students can extend the sentence(s) into a poem or song.

3. INFORMATION

- [SLIDE 18] The Hallie Q. Brown Community Center began as a settlement house for African Americans who were denied services from other agencies.



- The center has continued its good work as a nonprofit social service agency, which operates a variety of programs to

help the community's residents of all ages, races, cultures, and economic levels.

- **[SLIDE 19]** Its programs include Early Childhood Education, the Youth Enrichment Program, Basic Needs Program (providing food, clothing, and household items to those in need), and Senior Programs, which provide services and activities for older residents.
- The Hallie Q. Brown Community Center also partners with other organizations to provide such services as an economical food purchasing program, a financial and tax preparation program, and free music instruction.

4. ACTIVITY

- **[SLIDE 20]** The website home page also displays its mission statement: “The **Mission** of Hallie Q. Brown is to improve the quality of life in our community by providing access to critical human services, fostering and promoting personal growth, and developing community leadership.”

- Discuss what the various aspects of the center's mission—or goals—are, and how those goals contribute to improving individual, families, and neighborhoods.
- Give each student a MISSION POSSIBLE Worksheet.
- Have each student complete Part Two of the Worksheet, considering the following questions:
 - o What are your personal goals for self-advancement?
 - o If you had the ability and resources to solve some of the problems that your school, neighborhood, or city face, what problems would you focus on?
 - o Write a personal “Mission Statement” that consists of at least three goals you want to pursue to make a positive change in the world.

MARTIN LUTHER KING CENTER

The Martin Luther King Center, which houses the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, provides spaces for meetings, training programs, and cultural events. It is also the home of other community organizations, such as the Penumbra Theatre.

PENUMBRA THEATRE

Penumbra Theatre was founded in 1976 by Lou Bellamy to create a place where African American playwrights could “find their voice” and be heard.

As the theatre's website states, its mission is to “create professional productions that are artistically excellent, thought provoking, and relevant” and to “illuminate the human condition through the prism of the African American experience.”

To achieve that mission, one of the theatre's goals are: “to encourage a culturally diverse and all-inclusive America by using theatre to teach, criticize, comment, and model”.



ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Students will actively participate in the discussions.
- Students will complete the worksheets and participate in the associated activities.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- After students have experienced all parts of the Hallie Q. Brown lesson, you and the students can choose from among the persuasive speeches, poems, songs, and plays that have been produced to create a “Chautauqua” performance that includes all the students in some way – in individual and group presentations. The students can, in the tradition of the chautauquas of late 19th and early 20th centuries, travel from classroom to classroom, presenting their variety show to the rest of the school.
- Invite an employee or volunteer from the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center or Penumbra Theatre to visit your classroom and talk to your students. Prepare the students to have well thought out questions to ask.
- Divide students into groups of four. Give each group the goal of creating a short play that strives to achieve the goal mentioned above – to teach a lesson, criticize an injustice, comment on a situation that the students currently face, and/or model how things should be. The plays can be serious or humorous or a combination of both. When completed, have each group practice and present its play to the rest of the class.

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MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS:

SOCIAL STUDIES: History (Historical Thinking Skills)

Standard 1: Historians generally construct chronological narratives to characterize eras and explain past events and change over time.

SOCIAL STUDIES: History

Standard 20: As the United States shifted from its agrarian roots into an industrial and global power, the rise of big business, urbanization and immigration led to institutionalized racism, ethnic and class conflict and new efforts at reform. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920)

SOCIAL STUDIES: Peoples, Cultures and Change Over Time

Standard 5: History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively to address problems in their communities, state, nation and world.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Craft and Structure)

Standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Text Types and Purposes)

Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Production and Distribution of Writing)

Standard 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy (Comprehension and Collaboration)

Standard 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

THE POWER OF VOICE

Hallie Q. Brown believed that the human voice is a powerful tool that can be used to educate, entertain, change the way people think, and motivate them to do action.

Note this description of Hallie's performances:



"Miss Brown possesses a voice of wonderful magnetism and great compass. At times, she thrills by its intensity; at times, it is mellow and soothing. She seems to have perfect control of the muscles on her throat, and can vary her voice as successfully as a mocking-bird." (African Methodist Episcopal Church Review, 1890)

Now, imagine you are in Hallie's class, and she has given you the assignment to deliver a short speech.

TASK #1: DECIDE ON A TOPIC YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT

- Will you tell a story about something interesting that happened to you and the lesson you learned?
- Will you talk about a situation that is not right and why something needs to be done to fix it?
- Will you encourage your listeners to keep doing some good work even though it's difficult?

TASK #2: WRITE AN ATTENTION-GRABBING INTRODUCTION

- Tell a brief story that is funny or dramatic.
- Share an interesting statistic, quotation, poem, or line from a song.
- Now say how the above statement relates to the theme of what you will talk about.

TASK #3: WRITE A PARAGRAPH OR TWO THAT ADDS MORE INFORMATION TO YOUR THEME

- Why is your message important? Why do your listeners need to hear this?
- If you are telling a story, make sure that every detail is important and helps with teaching a lesson.
- Think about your listeners – What do they already know about your topic? What do they think they know? What new facts do they need to know?

TASK #4: WRITE A MOTIVATING CONCLUSION

- Make the ending of the story surprising. Use it to teach a lesson.
- Encourage your listeners to think in a new way or act in a new way.
- Send your audience away feeling good about themselves and about the things they are doing.

TASK #5: PRACTICE WHAT YOU WILL SAY AND, EQUALLY IMPORTANT, HOW YOU WILL SAY IT

- One of the books was Bits and odds. In it, she wrote about seven ways to make your speech powerful.
- Look at your speech. Would Hallie see that you are following each of her seven points?
 - 1) Cause your audience to laugh, cry, gasp, or want to go do something about what they hear.
 - 2) Make sure your presentation has rhythm and is harmonious (every part connected together).
 - 3) Work on the style of delivery (using a variety of pace, pitch, volume, and tone that matches your topic).
 - 4) Make sure your speech encourages listeners to think and do something that is right and positive.
 - 5) Speak and gesture naturally.
 - 6) Add emotion and drama, but without being out of control.
 - 7) Make sure that the main point or lesson of your speech is absolutely clear to your audience.

TASK #6: GIVE YOUR SPEECH!

“LIFTING AS WE CLIMB”

Many organizations and clubs were formed by women in the late 1800s. These clubs encouraged women to improve themselves in education, business, social issues, and political power.

Hallie Q. Brown helped found the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) in 1896. It is the first and oldest national Black organization in the country and still exists today as the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs.

The NACW’s founding principle was “Lifting As We Climb”. The members of the NACW believed that by improving their own lives, they would also be able to improving the entire community.

TASK #1: DECIDE ON A PROBLEM THAT NEEDS TO BE SOLVED

(in the school, neighborhood, city, state, country, world)

- Everyone in your group should come up with one or two ideas. (They can be very general or very specific.)
- Discuss all the ideas.
- Pick one problem that everyone in the group feels is the most important.

TASK #2: THINK ABOUT HOW YOUR CLUB WILL HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM

- What can you, the members of your new club, do?
- How can you get others (people, politicians, courts, organizations, etc.) to help you solve the problem?

TASK #3: PICK A NAME FOR YOUR CLUB

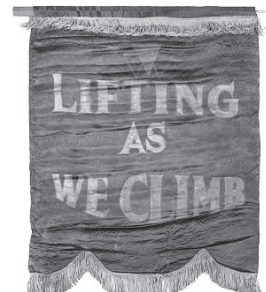
- Think about who will be in the club (Only girls? Only boys? Only a certain age group? Kids from a certain location – school, neighborhood, city, etc.? Kids that have a certain interest – science, environment, sports, justice, etc.?)
- Think about the main focus of your club (What is the problem you are focusing on?)
- Try to keep the name within about 2 to 7 words (not including such words as “the”, “for”, and “of”).

TASK #4: CHOOSE YOUR CLUB’S FOUNDING PRINCIPLE

- Think about what your club’s main goal is and how you will achieve it.
- Think about how the NACW’s founding principle “Lifting As We Climb”, is a short phrase made up of a few powerful and descriptive action words. You can form an image in your mind of their goal.
- Have everyone in the group come up with action words, then decide which ones form a powerful phrase that describes your club’s main goal.

TASK #5: DESIGN A BANNER THAT REPRESENTS YOUR CLUB

- Look at the NACW’s banner for inspiration.
- Your banner can simply have your founding principle.
- Or it can just have an image that shows your founding principle in action.
- Or it can have the name of your club (or its initials, such as “NACW” instead of “National Association of Colored Women”).
- Or it can have a combination of the above.
- CAUTION: Don’t make it too crowded with words and images; *less is more!*



TASK #6: PRESENT YOUR CLUB

- Describe your club to the rest of your class.
- Talk about the problem you want to solve and how you want to solve it.
- Show your banner.
- Tell the name of your club and why you chose it.
- Explain your club’s founding principle.

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | HALLIE Q. BROWN

MISSION POSSIBLE!

PART ONE

On the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center's website Home Page, you will see that the center is described as ***"the Lighthouse of the Community"***.

And on the website's "Our Legacy" page, there is this quotation from the poet Anne Lamott: ***"Lighthouses don't go running all over an island looking for boats to save; they just stand there shining."***



*Since 1929, the lighthouse
of the community*

270 North Kent Street • St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

When the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center describes itself as "the lighthouse", it is using a metaphor.

- A metaphor is a figure of speech that describes one thing as **being** another thing, which can be a more powerful way of saying that the one thing is **like** the other thing.
- Here is another metaphor: ***"My life is an open book"*** [This phrase makes you think about a book left open for anyone to look through and read. Then it makes you think about a person who lets everyone know anything about them – their background, their thoughts, their feelings, the positive and negative parts of their life, etc.]

CREATE YOUR OWN PERSONAL METAPHOR

- What would you consider to be your most outstanding quality or characteristic?
- What **thing** best describes you? [It can be anything – something in nature, something mechanical, something printed, something hand-made, something else ... *anything!*]
- Write your metaphor sentence: **"I am a/an _____"**.
- Write a sentence or two that explains how the metaphor relates to you.

PART TWO

The Hallie Q. Brown Community Center's website Home Page also displays its Mission Statement:

The Mission of Hallie Q. Brown is to improve the quality of life in our community by providing access to critical human services, fostering and promoting personal growth, and developing community leadership.

CREATE YOUR OWN MISSION STATEMENT

- A "mission" is a specific task or goal that is set for you or that you set for yourself.
- Read the Mission Statement above, which the Center set for itself. The first part states the Center's main goal ("improve the quality of life in our community"). Then it adds *how* the Center will accomplish that goal.
- Now, think about yourself.
 - o What is your main personal goal in life?
 - o What are three different steps or sub-goals that you will do to achieve your main goal?
- Write your personal "Mission Statement": **My mission is to _____**

_____ by _____ ,
_____, and _____ .

VOCALESENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | HALLIE Q. BROWN

NAME: _____

LESSON PLAN: AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME 'ROUND

Traditional Spiritual & Freedom Song

INTRODUCTION

Hallie Q. Brown was a persistent and powerful educator, organizer, and speaker. She dedicated her life to helping people “find their voice” just as she had found her own. She freely used that voice to express her ideas, opinions, and points of view. Brown was a strong woman who would never let “nobody turn her ‘round.”

Civil Rights supporters and activists also used their voices to express deeply held beliefs of equal rights for all. And using their voices included singing Freedom songs such as “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round.” The song was first sung as a spiritual in the 19th century but became a Freedom song during the Civil Rights Movement. Its persistent message kept many demonstrators and Freedom Riders energized and comforted during the struggle.



The Freedom Riders, college student activists, sang when they were stopped by the police (1964)

Freedom songs gave a voice to those fighting during the most significant social justice crusade in the history of the United States. They generated energy at marches, rallies, peaceful demonstrations, and during inspiring speeches, and united citizens in their persistence for their cause. The songs communicated the message, stirred emotions, and inspired people when they gathered together. People sang during protest marches, sit-ins, and jail time. In his book *Why We Can't Wait* (1964) Dr. Martin Luther King wrote that music was “*the soul of the movement.*”

“Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round” was transformed into a Freedom song by Reverend Ralph Abernathy in Albany, Georgia, summer of 1962. During a upsurge of demonstrations and arrests, Abernathy sang the song during a mass meeting of African Americans at Mount Zion Baptist Church. It immediately caught on as one and was sung all over the south.

In this lesson, students will recall prior knowledge, then learn more about Freedom songs and their place in the struggle for Civil Rights in the United States, sing the song, and find the key word that transforms an old song into a new one.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Contribute prior knowledge, read/listen/view new sources, and discuss Freedom songs to comprehend their significance during the Civil Rights Movement
- Learn to sing “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round” through oral tradition
- Locate the key word that changes the spiritual into a Freedom song

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS Online Resources]

- Copies of the article, “Freedom Songs and the Civil Right Movement” p. 43
- Song recording (Boston Children’s Choir)
- Video clip from Let Freedom Sing: How Music Inspired the Civil Rights Movement (View the excerpt from 20:00 to 28:00)
- Power Point Slides
- Chart paper
- For the Carousel strategy:
- Six sheets of chart paper
- Markers in six colors
- Whistle or bell for signaling

KEY TERMS

Spiritual:	a type of religious song originating among enslaved Africans in the American South
Freedom Song:	songs sung by participants in the Civil Rights Movement
Civil Rights Movement:	a struggle for social justice that took place mainly during the 1950s and 1960s for blacks to gain equal rights under the law in the United States
Demonstration:	a public meeting or march protesting against something or expressing views on political or social issues
Procession:	a group of persons, vehicles, or objects moving along in an orderly, formal manner
Carousel Strategy:	a cooperative learning strategy that involves movement, discussion, and reflection
Choreography:	creating, planning, and arranging the movements, steps, actions, and patterns of dancers, actors, or others in active movement sequences

PROCESS

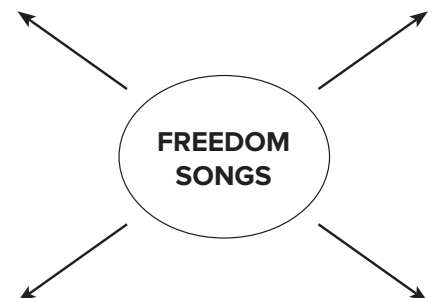
FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS

ACTIVITY #1

1. Write this prompt on the board or at the center of a large sheet of chart paper.

What do we know about FREEDOM SONGS?

2. As students respond to the prompt, summarize their comments on chart paper set up as a mind map or concept map.
3. Read the article about Freedom songs in class. Tell students to notice new information to prepare for group discussions.
4. Move into small groups to share information and discuss the questions at the end of the reading:
 - Who sang Freedom songs?
 - When and where did they sing these songs?
 - Why did they sing Freedom songs?
 - What were some of the songs they sang?
 - How did the songs help the singers?
5. Reconvene and asked groups to share what they learned. Add new information to the map.



ACTIVITY #2

Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around,
Turn me around, turn me around,
Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around,
I'm gonna keep on a-walkin', keep on a-talkin'
Marching up to Freedom Land.

Learn “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round” the way the civil rights supporters did – by listening to each other.

- Sing the original lyrics of the spiritual.
- Or listen to the recording by the Boston Children’s Choir. It is pitched appropriately for treble voices.
- Repeat the song several times. Sing energetically. Encourage hand clapping, foot stomping, swaying or other movements.

ACTIVITY #3

Civil rights demonstrators changed the lyrics to target the issues and problems they were protesting.

1. Ask students to find the places where changing the lyrics transforms the spiritual into a Freedom Song. The place is the word “no-body.”
 - Here are some of the word substitutes for “nobody” used in the Civil Rights Movement’s demonstrations and protests: segregation, hatred, Jim Crow, racism.
 - Sing the song again with the some of the protest lyrics.
2. Make up new lyrics about situations or conditions that urgently need addressing in our communities, country, and the world. Brainstorm new phrases for the song and sing new words instead of “nobody.”

ACTIVITY #4

1. Interpret the song’s lyrics through movement. Students will create a movement sequence inspired by lyrics that suggest movement: turn me around, walking, talking, marching.

- Divide into groups of four-ten students depending on class size.
- Direct groups to brainstorm movement ideas to choreograph a procession that travels across classroom space together. They can sing as they invent and practice their choreography.
- Regroup and share each group’s movement sequence while all sing the song.
- After groups perform, discuss what it felt like to move and sing as they processed.
- Ask students to identify other times and situations when people move and sing together. List their responses. (Parades, marching bands at football games, singing games, on television, filing into the auditorium for an assembly, etc.).
- Reflect on what they know about marches and protest movements today and those from the Civil Rights Movement.
- Ask for their thoughts and ideas about how moving and singing together may have an impact on those doing the moving and singing, as well as on those watching.

2. Perform the procession as a large group movement, combining two or more groups and their different ideas into one.

NOTE: All will sing the song in unison, but each group will keep the choreography they created in the small group as the larger group moves from the start point to the finish point. The movements of the various groups happen inside of this larger group structure.

Video record the larger event, then watch it together.

- Notice and discuss how the larger structure includes variations but all are still moving forward together, going towards the same goal.
- Ask students how moving in the large group with the song was different than moving in their smaller groups?

- Ask students to reflect on the different and various means of social activism happening now compare to movements in the past. Also reflect on how the physical presence of body and sound impact the activist and/or activism?

FOR OLDER STUDENTS:

In addition to singing the song, locating the key word to change the spiritual into a Freedom song, or moving to the song, older students can engage in the following learning activities.

1. Students will listen/view/read resources about the Freedom songs during the Civil Rights Movement. They will take notes about ideas and information that surface to expand their knowledge and understanding of the role of Freedom songs in the era of Civil Rights.
 - Assign students to read/view/listen to one or more resource from this list:
 - An Neil Conan interview with Bernice Johnson Reagon (one of the founders of Sweet Honey in the Rock) about her recollections as a Freedom Rider. Site includes both the audio and a print version. <https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=123599617>
 - An interview with Pete Seeger and Jamilla Jones about “We Shall Overcome,” the song that became the anthem of the Civil Rights Movement. Jamilla created one of the famous verses of the song when she was 13 years old. <https://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2014/02/tracing-the-long-journey-of-we-shall-overcome/>
 - Video clip from Let Freedom Sing: How Music Inspired the Civil Rights Movement, available from the WITNESS Online Resources

NOTE: The assigned media can be listened to/ viewed at home so that class time can focus on learning activities.

CAROUSEL QUESTIONS

1. Who sang Freedom songs during the Civil Rights Movement?
2. When and where did they sing such songs?
3. Why do you think they sang Freedom songs?
4. What feelings were singers expressing? What do you think the songs meant to them?
5. How do you think singing helped the demonstrators?
6. Name some of the songs they sang

1. After reading/viewing, engage students in the Carousel strategy to efficiently summarize what they learned. The Carousel is a cooperative learning strategy that involves movement, discussion, and reflection. The critical questions are listed in the side bar. Begin with an explanation of the process.

Using the Carousel strategy:

- o Write one question/topic and its number at the top of six large sheet of paper. Post them on the walls around the classroom.
- o Divide students into six groups, one for each question/topic.
- o Assign a color to each group and give them 2 or 3 markers in that color. This is the color they will use to write their responses.
- o Assign each group one of the questions as their “home chart.”
- o Send each group to their “home chart” question. Allow a few minutes for them to discuss what they know or think about the topic and to write comments and information on the chart using their designated color. Less time spent at each chart is better than more.

- o Signal when it is time to move on. Groups rotate clockwise to the next chart and read the question/topic, AND the comments from the prior group. They discuss their thoughts and add new information. If they agree with a comment written by a prior group, no need to write again; just add a check in their color. This is an important step as it provides information and level of agreement as well as trends in the group's thinking. In addition to information, they can also write questions they have about the posted question/topic as well as questions about prior comments.
 - Continue the Carousel until all groups are back to their home chart.
 - Wrap up the Carousel session by having each group read the question on their "home" chart out loud, then a summary of the comments on the chart.
3. Congratulate students on their persistence in thinking through the questions and following the Carousel directions. Leave the charts in a visible location as you continue preparing for the WITNESS concert.

RESOURCES

BOOKS FOR TEACHERS

We Shall Overcome: Essays on a Great American Song (2015). ed. Victor Bobetsky

A collection of essays that explores the origins, history and impact of the song. Includes one very pertinent chapter, "Beyond 'We Shall Overcome': The Lasting Legacy of Freedom Songs" by Patricia Woodard.

Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement through its songs (2007). Guy and Candie Carawan, editors, NewSouth Books. Reprints of two older books merged into a single edition which includes a major new introduction, words and music to songs, important documentary photographs, and scores of firsthand accounts by participants in the Civil Rights Movement.

BOOK FOR STUDENTS

Freedom Song: Young Voices and the Struggle for Civil Rights (2009). Mary C. Turck.

The author weaves together a story about the movement, the songs, and the experiences of groups such as the SNCC Freedom Singers. Turck also highlights the Chicago Children's Choir throughout the book. Many pictures and other graphic images. Best for middle school.

WEBSITES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ6mhRZ8LjM> contemporary performance of the song with historic photos and filming from demonstrations

<https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/99315652/songs-of-the-civil-rights-movement?ps=rs>

Jazz and jazz/blues versions of some of the songs that sustained the civil-rights movement

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/freedom-rides-and-role-popular-music-civil-rights-movement#sect-activities> There is much here to read and consider for a lesson on Freedom Songs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPuBGcng6Tw>

Sweet Honey in the Rock video with photos from the Civil Rights Era. Good photos and easy to hear the lyrics and improvisations. Credits at the end.

<http://www.stephengriffith.com/folksongindex/aint-gonna-let-nobody-turn-me-around/>

PPT with many photos <http://www.southwestcenter.org/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/520d0e7e03e81/Tools%20of%20the%20Trade%20Songs%20of%20the%20Civil%20Rights%20Movement%20Glenn%20Oney.pdf>

<https://ap.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/civil-rights-movement/essays/%E2%80%9Cpeople-get-ready%E2%80%9D-music-and-civil-rights-movement-1950s>

Essay at the Gilder Lehrman Institution of American History

MEDIA

Let Freedom Sing: How Music Inspired the Civil Rights Movement (2009) Time Life Film 24189-X. 1 hr. 45 min.

<http://amhistory.si.edu/thinkfinity/podcast/FreedomSongs.mp3>
Podcast about Freedom Songs, 19 min.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- The collective class responses used to develop the web provides and feedback from the article provides evidence of the groups' knowledge and understanding of Freedom songs. Assess individual or paired students after the WITNESS concert, by asking them to make a similar web with a partner drawing on their personal knowledge.
- The Carousel Strategy charts provide group evidence of older students' knowledge and understanding of Freedom songs and their impact on the Civil Rights Movement. Assess individual students after the WITNESS concert by asking them to write short essays about the topic of Freedom Songs.
- The song "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round" can be used to measure students' ability to sing with accurate pitch and rhythm using existing protocols to assess individual and/or group singing. Best if the starting pitch is move up a 3rd (to CM) from the printed version of the song.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Locate and sing other Freedom song from the Civil Rights era. Examine their history and content. Sing the songs in class.
- Combine the songs students sing, the movement they've choreographed and the mind maps and other written evidence of learning into a presentation for a school gathering.
- Have your students read the article "Freedom Songs & the Civil Rights Movement" and think about these questions with a partner. You will add your ideas to a class discussion.
 1. Who sang Freedom songs during the Civil Rights Movement?
 2. Why do we think they sang?
 3. What feelings do we think the singers were expressing?
 4. How do you think the songs helped? Do you think they made a difference?

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

MUSIC: Foundations

Standard 3: Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic works

MUSIC: Perform

Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for a performance.

Standard 6: Make artistic choices to convey meaning through performance.

MUSIC: Connect

Standard 10: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts...

DANCE: Create

Standard 1: Generate and develop original artistic ideas

Standard 2: Create original artistic work

DANCE: Perform

Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for a performance.

Standard 6: Make artistic choices to convey meaning through performance.

FREEDOM SONGS & THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

“The Civil Rights movement was the singingest movement I’ve ever known.” – Pete Seeger



The Freedom Riders, college student activists, sang when they were stopped by the police (1964)

Freedom songs were sung before the Civil Rights Movement. But in the 1950s and 1960s, they became a part of every event.

People protesting the difficult conditions of racism in the United States, especially in the south, sang Freedom songs. They worked hard for justice and racial equality for all people. And they sang. They sang when they demonstrated, at meetings, rallies, and marches, and even when they sat in jail.

WHY WERE SONGS IMPORTANT?

Singing together helped people feel close to each other. They knew they were not alone and it gave them strength and courage to keep on working for the cause. Songs communicated feelings when words were not enough. Some of the songs sounded sad, but many were happy and joyful. They lifted the spirits.

The songs were not new. They were old songs people already

knew. During a meeting, a leader might begin a song such as “This Little Light of Mine.” After everyone was singing, the leader would change a few words that connected it to the struggle for freedom. It was now a Freedom song.

A FAMOUS FREEDOM SONG

The most loved Freedom song was “We Shall Overcome.” This song grew out of several older songs. An old slave song, a work song, and a gospel hymn were part of its past. The version sung by Civil Rights demonstrators came from a labor union strike shortly after World War II. Women working in a tobacco factory in Charleston S.C. started a strike. They were asking for higher wages and better working conditions. One rainy day, a striker began singing the gospel song, “I’ll Overcome Some Day.” She changed the first word to “**We’ll** Overcome Some Day.” Then she sang a new verse, “We will win our rights.”



Martin Luther King with Civil Rights Marchers in the Selma to Montgomery March in 1965

The women taught the song to people at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. The Highlander School taught people how to organize others

to work for justice. Civil Rights leaders liked the song and started singing it at events back home.

“We are not afraid” were words made up by Jamilla Jones. She was 13 years old when she came to a Highlander workshop. She sang it the first time while hiding under a table during a police raid.

In addition to “We Shall Overcome,” some of the other famous Freedom songs are “Keep Your Eyes on the Prize (Hold On),” “This Little Light of Mine,” “Oh, Freedom,” and “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round.”



Pete Seeger on the left with activists in Greenwood, Miss., 1963

Freedom songs work. They work because they are easy to learn and easy to sing. They have a clear and direct message. There is no confusion about what a listener or singer needs to do. They are easy to pass on. They got the attention of people living all over the United States and helped them understand some of the problems of segregation and racial inequality. In the end, they helped to make a difference in the fight for Civil Rights and racial equality.

2. Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round

African-American Spiritual; arr. J. David Moore
Minneapolis, MN | 2017

With resolve (♩ = 88)

Leader

E Am E7

1. Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me 'round, turn me 'round,

SA

Turn me 'round, turn me 'round,

B

Am E7

turn me 'round. Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me 'round, I'm gon-na keep on a-walk-in',

turn me 'round. Turn me 'round, keep on a-walk-in',

keep on, keep on a-

Am/E On repeat Am Last time Am

keep on a-talk-in', march-ing up to free-dom land. 2. Ain't gon-na

keep on a-talk-in', march-ing up to free-dom land.

walk-in', keep on a-march-ing up to free-dom land.

Lyric Suggestions: 2. Ain't gonna let **segregation** (turn me 'round...)
(or make up your own) 3. Ain't gonna let **racism** (turn me 'round...)
4. Ain't gonna let **no hatred** (turn me 'round...)
5. Ain't gonna let **nobody** (turn me 'round...)

Always include arranger's name when sharing. PDF: Songs.Justicechoir.org/AintGonna

creative commons



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JUSTICE CHOIR.ORG

LESSON PLAN: SHARON SAYLES BELTON

INTRODUCTION

There are many ways to make positive changes. A person can go on a mission, striving single handedly, to make a difference. But with so many differing voices and opinions, it seems increasingly challenging for people who don't agree with each other to actually work together in a productive manner. Sharon Sayles Belton has, through her life of public service, set an example as a consensus builder. Students will learn about Sayles Belton's life and work, through which they will be motivated to solve problems they see around them and to do so in a spirit of openness, reasonableness, respect, and cooperation.

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

This lesson is designed to alternate between **INFORMATION** that you provide to your students (accompanied by Power Point slides) and **ACTIVITIES** for them to complete. Feel free to simplify both aspects – bringing out only one or two points in each **INFORMATION** section and considering one or two questions in each **ACTIVITY**.



LESSON GOALS

Students will learn about Sayles Belton's life and work. As they do this, they will glean lessons from her example and learn strategies to make positive changes in their world.

MATERIALS

[included in the **WITNESS Online Resources**]

- Power Point: "Sharon Sayles Belton"
- WHINE OR DO SOMETHING Worksheet
- WHAT'S YOUR POINT? Worksheet
- BUILDING BRIDGES Worksheet

KEY TERMS

Isolated:	Separated from other persons or things; alone
Justice:	The quality of being right, fair, and according the law
Whine:	To complain in an irritated way, feeling sorry for oneself
Parole Officer:	An official who monitors the conditional release of a person from prison before the end of the maximum sentence imposed.
City Council:	A group of people that makes decisions about a city's finances and laws
Candidate:	A person who seeks to be elected or chosen to a certain position
Mayor:	A person elected to the highest position of authority over a town or city
Campaign:	An organized effort to get elected to a government position
Opponent:	A person who is on the opposite side in a competition, game, argument, etc.
Swear in:	To have a person say an oath (a promise to perform required duties) before taking on the responsibilities of a job
Values:	The goals, customs, institutions, etc., of a society, which the people consider to be important
Transcend:	To rise above or go beyond
Economics:	the science that deals with the production, distribution, and use of goods and services
Ambition:	An great desire for some type of achievement, such as power, honor, fame, or wealth
Respect:	A sense of the worth or excellence of a person, a personal quality or ability
Responsibility:	The fact of having to answer for something within one's power, control, or management
Consensus:	General agreement
Catalyst:	A person or thing that causes a change in others or events
Unique:	Having no equal
Perspective:	Ideas and beliefs, based on the facts one knows, one's background, experiences, etc.
Color-blind:	(Literal) unable to distinguish one or several colors; (figurative) showing no racial prejudice
Diversity:	Variety, difference
Compromise:	A settlement of differences, when opposing sides of a conflict adjust their demands to reach an agreement

TIMELINE						
1973	1974-83	1976-83	1983-89	1989-93	1994-2001	2017
Graduated from Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN	Worked as a parole officer for the State of Minnesota Corrections Department	Founded the Harriet Tubman Shelter for victims of sexual abuse	Member the City Council of Minneapolis	President of the City Council of Minneapolis	Elected as the first female and first African American Mayor of Minneapolis	Honored by having a bronze bust of her likeness created for display in the Minneapolis City Hall

PROCESS

1. INTRODUCTION

- **[SLIDES 1 & 2]** Sharon Sayles was born in 1951. She, her parents, and three sisters lived in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Sharon describes her neighborhood as the kind of place where families knew one another, and adults looked out for each other's children.
- **[SLIDE 3]** As a young girl, Sharon's parents divorced. She first lived for one year with her mother in Richfield, Minnesota. She was the school's only African American student. As she once stated in an interview for the St. Paul Pioneer Press, "I was the first person of color they'd ever had, and it was icky."
- She recalled that in science class, one day, the teacher asked the students to hold hands in a demonstration of how a jolt of electricity can pass from person to person. Her partner did not want to touch her. She remembers that she felt "terrible, isolated, and alone."



2. DISCUSSION

- Are there aspects of Sharon's childhood that you can identify with?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you felt isolated and alone? How did you handle the situation?
- If you were Sharon in that science class, what are ways to respond to the situation that would teach a positive lesson?

3. INFORMATION

- **[SLIDE 4]** When Sharon's mother moved to Cleveland, she refused to go. Instead, Sharon moved to Minneapolis to live with her father and stepmother. She attended Minneapolis' Central High School, where she worked hard and graduated in 1969. She was so admired by her peers, that she was chosen to deliver the graduation speech.
- Along with studying and being a cheerleader in school, Sharon did volunteer work at Mount Sinai Hospital.
- **[SLIDE 5]** Sharon was accepted to attend Macalester College in Saint Paul, where she began to develop an interest in politics.
- **[SLIDE 6]** As a college student, she traveled with others to Mississippi to register African Americans to vote. She was so shocked by the terrible living conditions and social injustices that she found there. She came back to Minnesota determined to work at making her life as good as she could and to help others do the same.
- Sharon got pregnant during her senior year of college and decided she should stop her studies to take care of her baby.
- Little did she know just how much care would be involved. There were complications during the delivery. Her daughter Kilayna was born with permanent brain damage. Sharon became a single parent navigating this situation.
- **[SLIDE 7]** Regarding this time in her life, Sharon said in an interview: "For a moment, I thought I would become a mess, but then I thought, 'If I fall apart here, what's going to happen to my daughter?' [And My stepmother] told me, 'You can whine about things or you can do something about them.' I decided to do something."
- Sharon found work as a parole officer for the State Corrections Department and was able to buy a small home in South Minneapolis.

4. ACTIVITY

- Give each student a WHINE OR DO SOMETHING Worksheet.
- The worksheet is in two parts. First, students will write down two or three events that they remember from Belton's life that could be considered negative – things she could “whine” about. Then next to each negative situation, they will write down what positive thing Belton did about it.
- In the second part, students will write two or three negative events that they have or are experiencing – something they could “whine” about. Then, next to each negative situation, they will write what positive thing they did about it, could have done about it, or will do about it.

5. DISCUSSION

- While working as a parole officer, Sharon realized that greater effort needed to be made by the people of influence in the community [parents, teachers, police, social service agencies, etc.] to keep people from going down a path that leads to jail.
- **[SLIDE 8]** She founded and helped operate the Harriet Tubman Shelter, which provides a safe place for women who have been victims of sexual or physical violence.
- In 1981, Sharon married Steven Belton, who was a lawyer, and they had three children. Although Sharon's disabled daughter lived in a facility that could care for her needs, Sharon brought her home on the weekends so that she could be with her family.
- Sharon's interest in politics increased, and, in 1983, she ran for Minneapolis City Council and won a seat. She served for six years and, in 1989, was promoted to President of the City Council.



- Then, in 1993, Sharon set her sights on an even higher goal. She announced that she was a candidate for the position of Mayor of Minneapolis.
- **[SLIDE 9]** During her campaign to become Mayor, her opponent claimed that she would not be tough enough to reduce crime in the city. Sharon responded by telling people about what she learned from being a Parole Officer. She said: “We are talking about our own children – children who are born to us ... full of potential.... They are not born angry and violent. But somehow they absorbed the wrong ideas about what is important in life and how to obtain what they need. They do not seek – because they do not know – the excitement of learning, the satisfaction of accomplishment, the joy of beauty, the comfort of love.”

6. ACTIVITY

- Tell students that they are going to hold a debate.
- Have students come up with statements that they do not all agree on. Use your knowledge of your students to lead them toward topics you think will be effective. The topics can range from such ideas as: “Recess should be longer” or “We need more vegetables in our lunch” to “Bathrooms should be gender neutral” or “The grading system should be changed”. The topics can also be non-school related.
- Help students narrow the list of topics to three or four. Divide students into two groups of three or four for each topic selected based on their initial reactions

to those topics. Give each group a WHAT'S YOUR POINT? Worksheet.

- Each group will come up with statements and can even do some research to support their point of view.
- Hold the debates

7. INFORMATION



- **[SLIDE 10]** When the election was held, Sharon won and was sworn in as Mayor on January 4, 1994. She became the first female and first black Mayor of Minneapolis.
- Using Belton's quotations, which will be on the following slides, help students understand her convictions and goals.
- In her first speech as Mayor, Sharon said: "Some people say we don't know what our values are.... I disagree. I believe we do share community values, values that transcend race, economic status, individual need and ambition, values.... Our values are work, education, respect, and responsibility."

HARRIET TUBMAN WOMEN'S SHELTER

In 2016, Sharon Sayles Belton wrote an article for the Minneapolis Star Tribune to mark the 40th anniversary of the Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter's founding:

"In 1976 — together with fellow founders Ellen Pence, Sharon Rice Vaughn, Kenyari Bellfield and Mary Pat Brygger — we opened the third battered-women's shelter in the country, the Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter, right here in Minneapolis. I was working as a probation and parole officer at the time, and I talked to many women who were victims of domestic violence, lived in fear and had nowhere to go. I couldn't believe that this would not have an impact on their lives. Something needed to be done. The time was right, and Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad was the inspiration for us to act."

<http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-shelter-named-after-harriet-tubman-marks-40-years-of-progress/377044101/>

And the Tubman website provides this historical development and current operations:

In 2001, Tubman Family Alliance formed through the merger of Harriet Tubman Center in Minneapolis and Family Violence Network, founded in the East Metro in 1982. Then in 2007, Chrysalis, A Center for Women, founded in 1974, joined Tubman Family Alliance, and the unified organization became Tubman. In July 2011, ElderCare Rights Alliance, a statewide organization founded in 1972, joined Tubman.

Each year, we help an estimated 25,000 people in Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties and the surrounding area get the services, support, and information they need after experiencing trauma—including relationship violence, sexual assault and exploitation, trafficking, addiction, mental health issues and more. We serve people of all ages and genders and offer a broad continuum of services to help people find the support and information they need.

The Tubman of today is a multi-service organization with more than 40 years of experience serving individuals and families. Formed from the union of four separate organizations, Tubman continues the work of our namesake, Harriet Tubman, by leading the way to hope and honoring Harriet's personal motto to "Keep going."

<https://tubman.org/who-we-are/mission.html>

- **[SLIDE 11]** Sharon described herself as being a consensus builder. She told the St. Paul Pioneer Press: “I’m one of those ‘change people’. I am a catalyst for change who can help people achieve their vision.... As a woman and an African American, I have had experiences that give me a unique perspective that makes me a good mayor... I’m better able to get along with other people. No one is going to solve the problems of Minneapolis by themselves.”
- As Mayor, she was – and still is – committed to strengthening neighborhood unity, educating children, seeking proper role models for teenagers, and reducing crime.
- **[SLIDE 12]** In one of her speeches, she told her audience that Minneapolis must be a color-blind city, with its citizens “living peacefully and creatively with diversity.... We are a multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual city.... Diversity fuels our creativity, makes us stronger..., and [can become the spark that ignites] the virtues of humility, generosity and peacemaking.”

8. ACTIVITY

- **[SLIDE 13]** Have students look back at the debate topics they chose and review the arguments made on both sides of those issues.
- Explain that the goal of this activity is to emulate Belton’s example as a consensus builder – “building bridges” between opposing viewpoints.
- Give each large group a BUILDING BRIDGES Worksheet, and have the opposing groups for each topic work together to come up with a workable compromise, a solution that takes both perspectives into consideration.
- Each pair of groups then will present their proposed solution to the rest of the class.

9. CONCLUSION

- In 2001, Sharon sought to continue as a Minneapolis’ Mayor, but was defeated by R. T. Rybak for her political party’s support to campaign in the next election.
- After her terms as Mayor ended, Sharon worked in the Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice.
- Then, in 2010, she joined Thomson Reuters (based in Eagan, Minnesota) as its Vice President of Community Relations and Government Affairs.
- In 2013, the Third Avenue South Bridge over Interstate 94 was renamed in Sharon’s honor. R.T. Rybak, who became Minneapolis’ next Mayor after Sharon, said: “Rededicating this iconic Minneapolis landmark the SHARON SAYLES BELTON BRIDGE is a fitting tribute to our former mayor, who was, and continues to be, a bridge builder.” Also, on the plaza at the north end of the bridge, a new public sculpture called “Beacon” was officially lit to honor Sayles Belton’s historic accomplishments.
- **[SLIDE 14]** On May 16, 2017, Sharon and a group of over 300 guests were invited the Minneapolis City Hall for the unveiling of a bronze statue of the former Mayor.
- In connection with this honor, the Governor of Minnesota – Mark Dayton – named May 16, 2017 as Sharon Sayles Belton Day.
- Have students reflect on details that they learned about Sharon Sayles Belton. Lead a discussion about what ways she serves as a role model for them.



ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Students will actively participate in the discussions.
- Students will complete the worksheets and participate in the associated activities.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Students can discuss who they would honor with a statue and having a day named after them.
- Students can write a letter to Belton, expressing their appreciation for her personal example and efforts to improve the lives of all people living in her community, city, and state.
- Invite Belton to visit your classroom and talk to your students. Prepare the students to have well thought out questions to ask.

ED DWIGHT, SCULPTOR

Ed Dwight, a famous African American bronze sculptor from Denver, Colorado, designed the bust for Sharon Sayles Belton.

The following is taken from his website:

Former Air Force Test Pilot, America's First African American Astronaut Candidate, IBM Computer Systems Engineer, Aviation Consultant, Restaurateur, Real Estate Developer and Construction Entrepreneur. Ed Dwight has succeeded in all these varied careers. However, for the last 40 years, Ed has focused his direction on the Fine Arts – Gallery Paintings & Sculptures, Large-scale Memorials and Public Art projects. Since his art career began in 1978, after attaining his MFA in Sculpture from the University of Denver, Dwight has become one of the most prolific and insightful sculptors in America.

<https://www.eddwright.com/about>

RESOURCES

Martin, Susan, "Former Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton Honored with Bridge Dedication"; Legal Current; <http://www.legalcurrent.com/former-minneapolis-mayor-sharon-sayles-belton-honored-with-bridge-dedication/>; accessed 8/12/18

Boros, Karen, "Minneapolis to rename bridge in honor of former Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton"; MinnPost, <https://www.minnpost.com/two-cities/2013/02/minneapolis-rename-bridge-honor-former-mayor-sharon-sayles-belton>; accessed 8/12/18

Sharon Sayles Belton, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharon_Sayles_Belton

Gitaa, Tom, Sharon Sayles Belton bronze bust unveiled at Minneapolis City Hall; Mshale; <https://mshale.com/2017/05/19/sharon-sayles-belton-bronze-bust-unveiled-minneapolis-city-hall/print/> accessed 7/30/18

Johnson, Anne Janette; Sharon Sayles Belton: Part One; Encyclopedia.com; accessed 20/Jul./2018

Lesinski, Jeanne; Sharon Sayles Belton: Part Two; Encyclopedia.com; accessed 20/Jul./2018

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

SOCIAL STUDIES: History (Historical Thinking Skills)

Standard 1: Historians generally construct chronological narratives to characterize eras and explain past events and change over time.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Civic Values and Principles of Democracy)

Standard 3: The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Rights and Responsibilities)

Standard 4: Individuals in a republic have rights, duties, and responsibilities.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Governmental Institutions and Political Processes)

Standard 8: Public policy is shaped by governmental and non-governmental institutions and political processes.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Peoples, Cultures and Change Over Time

Standard 5: History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively to address problems in their communities, state, nation and world.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Key Ideas and Details)

Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Standard 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Craft and Structure)

Standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Text Types and Purposes)

Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Production and Distribution of Writing)

Standard 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Research to Build and Present Knowledge)

Standard 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy (Comprehension and Collaboration)

Standard 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

WHINE OR DO SOMETHING

Remembering one very difficult time in her life, Sharon said in an interview:

*“For a moment, I thought I would become a mess. . . . [My stepmother] told me,
‘You can whine about things or you can do something about them.’
I decided to do something.”*

PART ONE

- Write down two or three events that you remember from Belton’s life that could be considered negative – things she could “whine” about.
- Then next to each negative situation, write down the positive thing Belton did about it.

WHINE?	DO SOMETHING

PART TWO

- Write two or three negative events that you have experienced or are now experiencing – something you could “whine” about.
- Then, next to each negative situation, write what positive thing you did about it, could have done about it (if you could go back in time), or will do about it.

WHINE?	DO SOMETHING

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SHARON SAYLES BELTON

NAME: _____

WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

During her campaign to become Mayor of Minneapolis, Sharon often had to express her point of view to show why people should vote for her instead of her opponent. When we talk with others about different topics, we may not agree with others' viewpoints. How can we express ourselves in a polite manner when we disagree?

TASK #1: WRITE THE TOPIC STATEMENT THAT YOUR WILL BE DEBATING.

TOPIC STATEMENT: _____

TASK #2: WHAT IS YOUR POINT OF VIEW ABOUT THE STATEMENT?

- Does your team agree with the topic statement, or does it disagree?
- _____

TASK #3: DO RESEARCH

- Use books, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, and even ask others (like, students in other classes, teachers, school staff, the Principal, neighbors) how they feel about the topic statement and why.
- Write down what you learned from your research that supports your point of view.

TASK #4: THINK ABOUT "WHAT", "WHO", AND "HOW"

- WHAT will you present from all the research that you did? [You won't have time to present everything; so decide which points are the most persuasive.]
- WHO in your team will talk about each point of research?
- HOW will you present your research in a persuasive way? [Will you include statistics, share quotations from people you talked to or from statements you read, show a chart or graph that you made, ask a question then use a fact that you learned to answer it?]

TASK #5: HOLD THE DEBATE

- The group that AGREES with the topic statement will present its research for 2 minutes.
- The group that DISAGREES with the topic statement will present its research for 2 minutes.
- Both groups will take 2 minutes to discuss how they will respond to the other side's statements.[Share other points from your research that you think will disprove what the other team said.]
- The group that DISAGREES with the topic statement will talk for 2 minutes
 - o Take one minute to respond to what the other team said.
 - o Take one minute to summarize your point of view in a persuasive conclusion.
- The group that AGREES with the topic statement will talk for 2 minutes
 - o Take one minute to respond to what the other team said.
 - o Take one minute to summarize your point of view in a persuasive conclusion.
- The rest of the class will decide which team presented their point of view in the most convincing way.

VOCALESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SHARON SAYLES BELTON

NAME: _____

BUILDING BRIDGES

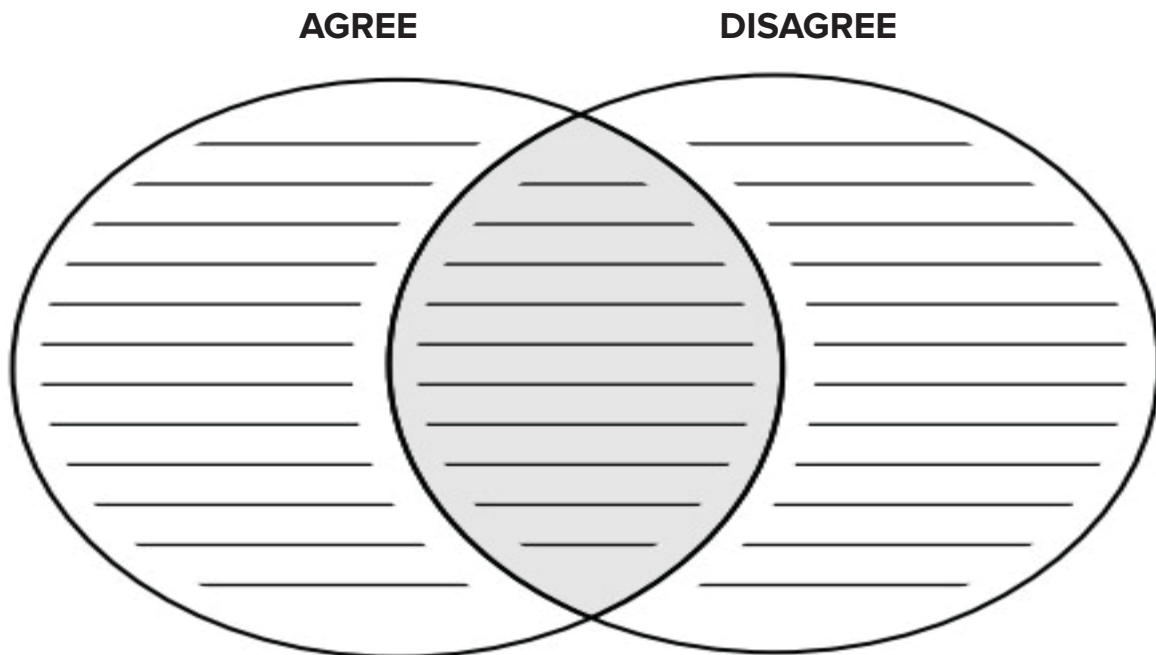
In 2013, the Third Avenue South Bridge over Interstate 94 was renamed in Sharon's honor. R.T. Rybak, who became Minneapolis' next Mayor after Sharon, said: ***"Rededicating this iconic Minneapolis landmark the SHARON SAYLES BELTON BRIDGE is a fitting tribute to our former mayor, who was, and continues to be, a bridge builder."***

Being a bridge builder means that Sharon works hard to get people and groups who do not agree with each other to come together and work out solutions to problems that use both sides' points of view.

TASK #1: TALK WITH THE OPPOSING TEAM IN YOUR DEBATE.

- Share your main reasons for agreeing with or disagreeing with the topic statement of the debate.
- In the middle section, write down the concerns and goals that both teams have in common.

TOPIC STATEMENT: _____



TASK #2: SOLVE THE PROBLEM TOGETHER

- Use the viewpoints that you have in common to come up with a solution.
- At first, it may not seem that you can think of a solution together because you might be on completely opposite sides. But work hard at figuring out how to make both sides come together.
- Be creative – “think outside the box”.

TASK #3: PRESENT YOUR “BRIDGED” SOLUTION TO THE CLASS

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SHARON SAYLES BELTON

NAME: _____

LESSON PLAN: STILL I RISE

Rosephanye Powell



Gospel Choir from the
Voice Council Magazine

LEARNING GOALS

Students will describe the music and text of “Still I Rise,” and locate connecting threads between the Maya Angelou’s poem and Powell’s song.

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS
Online Resources]

- Recording of “Still I Rise” by the Boston Children’s Choir
- Visual Resources PowerPoint [slides 5, 6, and 7]
- Song lyrics from the PowerPoint or copies as a handout
- Chart paper or chalkboard for Descriptive Review protocol
- Video of Maya Angelou reading the poem, “Still I Rise”

INTRODUCTION

Sharon Sayles Belton’s life story highlights her upbeat, positive, problem solving and consensus building personality. Her “don’t whine, do something” approach helped her to rise-up over adversity every time. “Still I Rise” by Rosephanye Powell portrays the same drive to overcome adversity through personal effort.

Powell describes “Still I Rise” as “... a women’s anthem, saluting the strength of women to persevere through life’s difficulties—low self-esteem, physical and emotional abuse, rape, incest, prejudice, abandonment, and such like. In summary, though a woman’s life or past may be filled with tears and heartaches, with each day that she finds herself still living, she finds that she has grown stronger and risen a little higher because her circumstances have not overcome her. Thus, every new day can be one of hope and joy because regardless of the past, today, “still I rise”!”

Students can hold Belton’s life story in mind as they hear and engage with a song that embodies the feminine voice of gospel music.

KEY TERMS

Gospel Song:	songs written to express a personal or a communal belief regarding African American Christian life; a genre of African American music
Protocol:	an organized set of procedures to be followed
Descriptive Review:	a protocol for examining a work grounded in pure description
Speculate:	forming opinions about something without having all the information or facts; to make educated guesses; to infer meaning

PROCESS

ACTIVITY # 1

Students will listen and describe what they hear in the music using a collaborative protocol called **Descriptive Review**. The protocol involves reflection and responses to key questions to generate a group description.

1. Introduce the process: students will **DESCRIBE** the music by **LISTENING** and **THINKING** about what they hear, then answering key questions. They will do this **without judging** the music. Facts – not opinions are important. Remind them of prior brainstorming activities which also required listening and responding without judgment.
2. Post and present three key questions:
 - **DESCRIBE: *What do you notice? (What's going on in the music?)***
 - **QUESTION: *What questions do you have about this music?*** (I wonder...?)
 - **SPECULATE: *What meaning, or understanding is intended or conveyed by this music?*** (Speculate about what the composer and/or performer(s) want you to know, feel, and understand.)
3. Read the first question aloud, then play the complete recording. Ask them to **DESCRIBE** it in words.
 - Write responses on the board/charts. **Do not explain** the music but ask clarifying questions. If you rephrase their words when writing a response, check your version with the responder. If a student repeats a comment, add a check to the first iteration.
 - Pose the second question and listen again. When asking **QUESTIONS**, they can also add more descriptive words. Review together what students have generated and ask if there are any additions. Students may mention the term Gospel song in connection with “Still I Rise.”

SPECULATING ABOUT THE MEANING OF THE MUSIC

Speculate: to form opinions about something without having all the information or facts; to make educated guesses; to infer meaning

4. Go to the 3rd question, **SPECULATING** about the meaning intended by the composer and/or performer.
 - If speculating is a new concept, take time to define it and listen to the song once more. See the definition to the right.
 - Divide into partners/small groups for discussion. Pose **ONE** speculative question. For example:
 - o What message does Rosephanye Powell want to convey in this song? Speculate about her intentions.
 - o Speculate about how listeners will respond to this piece at the **WITNESS** concerts; what might you see and hear around you in the audience?
 - o Speculate about the links between Sharon Sayles Belton and the spirit and message of “Still I Rise.” What connections can you make?
 - Reconvene and listen to the speculations and the reasons for drawing those conclusions.
5. Post the song lyrics electronically **[SLIDE 7]** or on the board. Ask students to read the lyrics out loud as though reading a poem. Focus on expressive voices, clear and strong pronunciation.

ACTIVITY #2

Rosephanye Powell was inspired by a poem written by the author, Maya Angelou. The song and the poem share a similar title and the same powerful message. Examine the lyrics of Powell's song and Angelou's poem side by side and draw conclusions about connections. What similar themes and messages are Powell and Angelou communicating?

Students can view a video of Maya Angelou reciting her poem, "Still I Rise," to an audience at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qviM_GnJbOM and share their reactions.

Read a short biography of Rosephanye Powell on the Visual Resources PowerPoint, [SLIDES 5 & 6].

AND STILL I RISE

And Still I Rise, published in 1978, is author Maya Angelou's third volume of poetry. Angelou was experiencing a very productive period in her career at the time. Though she thought of herself as a poet and playwright, it was her autobiographies, especially *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* that made her famous. *And Still I Rise* includes 32 short poems including two of her best-known works, "Phenomenal Woman" and "Still I Rise." Her themes focus on a hopeful determination to rise above difficulty and discouragement, and on many of the same topics as Angelou's autobiographies and previous volumes of poetry. She speaks for her race and gender in many of the poems and emphasizes the strength and resiliency of her community. Like her previous volumes of poetry, the reviews of *And Still I Rise* were mixed. (Wikipedia)

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Informally assess the group's ability to apply musical vocabulary when they describe and analyze the song.
- Use the Descriptive Review protocol with other music. Consider asking students to respond individually in writing to formally assess each student's ability to analyze the piece using foundational knowledge and musical vocabulary.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Students can search for more Gospel songs or songs influenced by Gospel. The songs they find can be analyzed for evidence of Gospel characteristics.
- Apply the Descriptive Review approach to other pieces of music that students study or are preparing to sing. The protocol also works with visual art, poetry, dance, and theater.

RESOURCES

BOOKS FOR TEACHERS

The Teaching Artist Handbook Volume I (2013), Jaffe, Nick, Becca Barniskis, and Barbara Hackett Cox, Columbia College Press. Provides more information about Descriptive Review and Critical Response.

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

I See the Rhythm of Gospel (2010), Michele Wood and Toyomi Igus. The same partnership that created *I See the Rhythm* collaborated on this story about the emergence of Gospel music in the 20th century; includes many illustrations and a highly useful timeline of African American music related to the development of Gospel.

WEBSITES

https://vsainternational.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/descriptive_review_overview.pdf
Very Special Arts website pages that provide a detailed summary of Reflective Protocols such as Descriptive Review and Critical Response.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

Music: Foundations

Standard 4: Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic works

Music: Respond

Standard 7: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work

Music: Connect

Standard 9: Integrate knowledge and personal experiences while responding to, creating, and presenting artist work.

Standard 10: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts...

“Still I Rise”

(Rosephanye Powell)

Though I have been wounded, aching heart full of pain.
Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Jus’ like a budding rose, my bloom is nourished by rain.
Haven’t time to wonder why, though fearful I strive.
My pray’r and faith uphold me ‘til my courage arrives.
Still I rise as an eagle, soaring above ev’ry fear.
With each day I succeed, I grow strong an’ believe
That it’s all within my reach; I’m reaching for the skies,
Bolstered by courage, yes, still I rise.

Yes, it’s all within my reach; I’m reaching for the skies,
Yes, still I rise.
Gentle as a woman; tender sweet are my sighs. Still I
rise, yes, still I rise.

Strength is in my tears and healing rains in my cries.
Plunging depths of anguish, I determine to strive.
My pray’r and faith uphold me ‘til my courage arrives.

Though you see me slump with heartache;
Heart so heavy that it breaks.
Be not deceived I fly on bird’s wings, rising sun,
its healing rays.
Look at me, you see a woman; Gentle as a butterfly.
But don’t you think, not for one moment, that I’m not
strong because I cry.

“Still I Rise”

(Maya Angelou)

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt

But still, like dust, I’ll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
‘Cause I walk like I’ve got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I’ll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don’t you take it awful hard
‘Cause I laugh like I’ve got gold mines
Diggin’ in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I’ll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I’ve got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history’s shame
I rise
Up from a past that’s rooted in pain
I rise
I’m a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that’s wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.



LESSON PLAN: ILHAN OMAR



LESSON GOALS

Students will discover the dramatic and inspiring life story of Ilhan Omar. As they do so, they will consider what life lessons they can apply from her experience to their own lives.

MATERIALS [INCLUDED IN THE WITNESS ONLINE RESOURCES]

- Power Point: “Ilhan Omar”
- SOMALIA Worksheet
- WORDS TO LIVE BY Worksheet
- WHAT’S YOUR VISION? Worksheet

INTRODUCTION

How we start out in life can be vastly different from where we end up. The decisions we make, the decisions others make for us, and the many other twists and turns that our life takes due to situations that simply happen or that are beyond our control, all make us stop, look back, and say, “If you had asked me years ago what my life would be like in the future, I never would have imagined it as it is today.” As students consider the life and work of Ilhan Omar, they will get a sense of the unexpected course that a person’s life can take. At the same time, they will see, from the way she was raised, that how her life has turned out so far is not surprising at all.

KEY TERMS

Marine:	Having to do with the sea, the directing of ships, and transporting on ships
Civil War:	A war between political groups or regions within the same country
Refugee:	A person who flees for safety, especially to a foreign country, as in time of political conflict, war, etc.
Caucus:	The meeting of a political group to select candidates, members to go to conventions, etc.
Majority:	More than half the total number
Interpreter:	A person who provides an oral translation for people who speak different languages
Democracy:	A form of government in which ultimate power is in the hands of the citizens and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free election system
Politics:	The science and methods of directing government
Nutrition:	The science, study, and process of taking in and using food material
Advice:	An opinion or recommendation offered as a guide to action, conduct, etc.
Vision:	The hopes and goals that a person or organization has for the future
District:	A section of territory within a country, state, or county, divided off for political or other purposes

TIMELINE					
1990	1995	1997	2005	2012-2015	2016
Fled with family from Somalia at the age of 8 when Civil War erupted	Arrived in the United States after living in a refugee camp in Kenya	Served as her Grandfather's translator at a political caucus at the age of 14	Graduated from North Dakota State University	Worked as campaign manager and policy aide for Minnesota politicians	Elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives, becoming the country's first Somali-American, Muslim lawmaker

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

This lesson is designed to alternate between INFORMATION that you provide to your students (accompanied by PowerPoint slides) and ACTIVITIES for them to complete. Feel free to simplify both aspects – bringing out only one or two points in each INFORMATION section and considering one or two questions in each ACTIVITY.

PROCESS

1. INTRODUCTION

- **[SLIDES 1 & 2]** Ilhan Omar was born in 1982 in Mogadishu, Somalia. She was the youngest of seven siblings. Her mother died when Ilhan was very young, leaving her to be raised by her father and grandfather.
- She comes from a family of men and women who had careers in public service. Her father was a teacher trainer, her grandfather was the director of Somalia's National Marine Transport, and her uncles and aunts were educators and government workers.
- Omar had a comfortable life, like many other kids her age throughout the world. But her life changed forever when Somalia was divided by a violent civil war in 1990.
- **[SLIDE 3]** She and her family had to flee for their lives. They went to Kenya and spent four years in a refugee camp there.
- This is how Ilhan described her new life: "I no longer had a bed of my own, the privacy of a shower in my own bathroom – we were essentially homeless. I would fetch water, and my family would reward me with a shilling at the end of the day, so I would go see a movie in the village next door in a makeshift theater – a hut."



2. DISCUSSION and ACTIVITY

- **[SLIDE 4]** Divide students into small groups, and give each group a SOMALIA Worksheet.
- Have each group look up Somalia in an encyclopedia or online. [You can also copy and/or print out different articles about Somalia ahead of time and pass them out.] Have each group find Somalia on a world map and report on one or two details about Somalia that they found interesting to the rest of the class.

- Ask students if they were to guess what kind of jobs Ilhan would end up doing when she became an adult, what would they guess? Why?
- Discuss what it means to be a refugee and how that is different from being an immigrant.
- Ask student if they have ever had something happen that completely changed their life – for a while, life seemed to be heading in a certain direction; then something happened and things were never the same after that?

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

Many people use the terms “immigrant” and “refugee” interchangeably. However, it is important to understand how they are different. Immigrants and refugees can be considered “migrants” in that they both “move” from one country to another. The difference has to do with the circumstances under which they move.

Immigrants are people who choose to leave their country of origin and resettle in another country. Many choose to move to improve the future prospects for themselves and their families. The countries where they desire to settle have legal processes for them to seek residency and eventually citizenship.

A refugee, on the other hand, is someone who has been forced to flee his or her home country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says. “Refugees have to move if they are to save their lives or preserve their freedom.”

As such, refugees can apply for asylum (protection) in the country to which they flee, a process that is not easy and can take years, as applicants must prove that if they return to their home country, they will suffer serious harm because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or their political opinion.

3. INFORMATION

- In 1995, Ilhan and her family arrived in the United States. They first lived in Arlington Virginia, then two years later, moved to Minneapolis.
- **[SLIDE 5]** Ilhan remembers how difficult her first year of middle school was, knowing only two words in English – “hello” and “shut up”, and having to adjust from being part of the racial majority in Somalia to being in a country where she was constantly reminded how separate she was from the majority.
- One day she came home from middle school and complained to her father that her life in America was not what he had promised her. He told her that it was up to her to change her reality, that she needed to work harder to learn English, and that she also needed to work harder at building relationships with her classmates so that they would see beyond her “otherness”.
- Ask students what they think it means to “change your reality”. [Help them appreciate that, in many ways, they have the power to control the situations they find themselves in and to direct the course that their life takes.]
- Ilhan took his advice to heart. She and her sisters learned English by watching TV with the captions on, reading, and trying to repeat words back and forth to each other. She learned her new language well enough to act as her Grandfather’s interpreter when he brought her to a political caucus meeting.
- **[SLIDE 6]** Remembering that event, Ilhan says: “I got my start in politics at age 14, interpreting

for my grandfather at community meetings. I learned then that if you want a certain world, you need to organize for it.”

- From early in her childhood, Ilhan’s father and grandfather taught her the importance of democracy and that she had an obligation to be part of the political process.
- After graduating from high school, Ilhan was accepted to attend North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota. She graduated from there in 2005 with degrees in political science and international studies.

4. DISCUSSION and ACTIVITY

- Ask students to guess, based on what Ilhan studied in college, what kind of job they think she would pursue after graduating.
- Tell them that she became a community nutrition educator at the University of Minnesota, and worked there from 2006 to 2009. Ask students if they think her job has any connection to the jobs her family had in Somalia. In what ways?
- Give each student a WORDS TO LIVE BY Worksheet, which will encourage them to consider the following questions:
 - o What was one piece of advice that Ilhan remembers receiving?
 - o How would following that advice benefit her?
 - o Can you remember a piece of advice that someone gave you?
 - o What was the situation that led to this person giving you that advice?
 - o Did you follow it?
 - o How have you benefitted from following it?

5. INFORMATION

- In 2016, Ilhan decided to become part of the political process, just as her father

and grandfather advised her – not simply as a voter, but as a lawmaker. She became a candidate for the Minnesota House of Representatives for district 60B.



- **[SLIDE 7]** In November 2016, Ilhan won the election and became the first Somali American Muslim lawmaker in the United States.
- As a lawmaker, this is part of Ilhan’s vision for Minnesota:
 - o Raise pay for workers
 - o Provide health care access for everyone
 - o Make medications cheaper
 - o Helping more people get jobs
 - o Improve the quality of education for students from Kindergarten through college
- **[SLIDE 8]** And in an interview for People magazine, Ilhan voiced her optimistic view of the future: “I find hope in knowing that I belong to a state that has a lot of people who are champions of change and progress; that we will rise up and fight for justice and equality; that ultimately love will trump hate.”

6. ACTIVITY

- Give each student a WHAT'S YOUR VISION? Worksheet
- Have students complete the worksheet by considering the following:
 - o Your Vision for your Yourself
 - What are your goals for the future?
 - Imagine you are 70 years old. What will people be saying about your life and accomplishments?
 - o Your Vision for the World
 - What problems in the world would you like to see fixed?
 - If you had the power to do so, how would you fix those problems?
 - Use your imagination – but also think realistically – to describe what you think the world will be like when you are 70 years old.

7. CONCLUSION

- **[SLIDE 9]** In an interview for Elle magazine, Ilhan stated, “Whenever you’re the first, that comes with its own challenges and needs.”
- Ask students what challenges come with being the first person to do something special.
- Ask what they imagine they could be the first at doing? [Remind them that it’s not only something that no one has ever done before, but also – like Ilhan – the first person of a particular race, religion, gender, age group, or in your family, to achieve a certain goal.]
- Ask students to reflect on what lessons they learned from considering Ilhan’s story.



ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Students will actively participate in the discussions.
- Students will complete the worksheets and participate in the associated activities.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Students can write a letter to Omar, expressing their appreciation for her personal example and efforts to improve the lives of all people living in her community, city, and state.
- Invite Omar to visit your classroom. Prepare the students to have well thought out questions to ask.

RESOURCES

Ilhan Omar, Wikipedia,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilhan_Omar

Ilhan for Congress website; <https://www.ilhanomar.com/>

Kahn, Mattie, Ilhan Omar Is Still Waiting for the America She Was Promised, Elle Magazine, Hearst Magazines Division, Hearst Communications, Inc., 3/31/2017, <https://www.elle.com/culture/career-politics/news/a43955/ilhan-omar-interview/>

Ilhan Omar, The Black Past: Remembered and Reclaimed; <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/omar-ilhan-1982>; accessed 7/30/18

Nelson, Jeff, Meet Ilhan Omar, the First Somali-American US Legislator: My Win ‘Offers a Counter-Narrative to the Bigotry in the World’, People Magazine, <https://people.com/politics/ilhan-omar-first-somali-american-legislator-counter-narrative-to-bigotry/>

Castillo, Monica, Somali American state Rep. Ilhan Omar wants to see more women like her in politics, The Lilly; <https://www.thelilly.com/somali-american-state-rep-ilhan-omar-wants-to-see-more-women-like-her-in-politics/>

Ilhan Omar: First Somali-American Muslim person to become a legislator; Time Magazine; September 18, 2017

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Geography (Geospatial Skills)

Standard 1: People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.

Standard 5: The characteristics, distribution and migration of human populations on the earth's surface influence human systems (cultural, economic and political).

SOCIAL STUDIES: History (Historical Thinking Skills)

Standard 1: Historians generally construct chronological narratives to characterize eras and explain past events and change over time.

SOCIAL STUDIES: History

Standard 4: The differences and similarities of cultures around the world are attributable to their diverse origins and histories, and interactions with other cultures throughout time.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Civic Values and Principles of Democracy)

Standard 3: The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Citizenship and Government (Rights and Responsibilities)

Standard 4: Individuals in a republic have rights, duties, and responsibilities.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Citizenship and Government (Governmental Institutions and Political Processes)

Standard 8: Public policy is shaped by governmental and non-governmental institutions and political processes.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Peoples, Cultures and Change Over Time

Standard 5: History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively to address problems in their communities, state, nation and world.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Key Ideas and Details)

Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Craft and Structure)

Standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Writing (Text Types and Purposes)

Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Production and Distribution of Writing)

Standard 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Research to Build and Present Knowledge)

Standard 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy (Comprehension and Collaboration)

Standard 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SOMALIA

Ilhan Omar was born in 1982 in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Use an encyclopedia, book, magazine, or newspaper article [in print form or online] to learn about her home.

TASK #1: RESEARCH GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

- Find Somalia on a map.
- What continent is it on?

- Which ocean is it near?

- What is Somalia's Capital city?



TASK #2: RESEARCH HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- Find 2 interesting facts about Somalia's history before 1990.

1. _____

2. _____

- What event happened in 1991?

- What did many Somali people have to do?

TASK #3: RESEARCH CULTURAL INFORMATION

- Find an interesting fact about Somalia's culture [food, music, literature, sports, architecture, etc.]

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | ILHAN OMAR

NAME: _____

WORDS TO LIVE BY

The phrase “words to live by” describes wise sayings which you can use to guide your actions in life.



WORDS FOR ILHAN

- What was one piece of advice that Ilhan remembers receiving?

- How would following that advice benefit her?

WORDS FOR YOU

- Can you remember a piece of advice that some gave you?

- What was the situation that led to this person giving you that advice?

- Did you follow it? _____

- How have you benefitted from following it?

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | ILHAN OMAR

NAME: _____

WHAT'S YOUR VISION?

On Ilhan's website, you can find a page that lists her *vision* [that is, her hopes and goals for the future] for Minnesota.

In an interview for *People* magazine, Ilhan said:

"I find hope in knowing that I belong to a state that has a lot of people who are champions of change and progress; that we will rise up and fight for justice and equality; that ultimately love will trump hate."



YOUR VISION FOR YOURSELF

- What are your goals for your future?

- Imagine you are 70 years old. What will people be saying about your life and accomplishments?

YOUR VISION FOR THE WORLD

- What problems in the world would you like to see fixed?

- If you had the power to do so, how would you fix those problems?

- Use your imagination – but also think realistically – to describe what you think the world will be like when you are 70 years old.

LESSON PLAN: ELLA'S SONG

Bernice Johnson Reagon

INTRODUCTION

The lyrics of “Ella’s Song” are words to live by, affirming the work of those who strive for equality and freedom for all people. They honor an activist from an earlier era, Ella Baker. Ilhan Omar, like Ella Baker, is living an activist’s life with its unexpected twists and turns. And like Baker, Omar has made the most of the surprises along the way. And Omar, like Baker, was inspired by the stories of her father and grandfather.

Ella Baker was one of the guiding lights of the long struggle towards equality during the Civil Rights era. A great organizer for the movement, Ella Baker said: “Until the killing of black men, black mothers’ sons, becomes as important to the rest of the country as the killing of a white mother’s sons, we who believe in freedom cannot rest.” These are the very words that Bernice Johnson Reagon transforms into “Ella’s Song,” a musical tribute to Baker.

Composer, musician, and educator Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon is one of the founding members of the famous heritage vocal group, Sweet Honey in the Rock. The song is an anthem and meditation about the lessons Ella Baker passed on to future generations about persistence in the fight for equal rights and freedom for all people.

PROCESS

ACTIVITY #1

1. Introduce the song’s title, writing/displaying it for students. Listen to the song and help focus attention on the music by asking questions about what your students hear.
 - o What’s going on in the music? Describe what you notice about the song.
 - o Who is performing?
 - o What do you think the title means?
 - o Do you have any questions about the song?
2. As students respond, write their comments on the board. Ask students if anything is missing. Listen again and add their additional comments to expand the description.
3. Write the words from the refrain on the board:

We who believe in freedom cannot rest.

Sing each time it comes around on the audio recording.



The Young Ella Baker

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- understand that the song is a tribute to a real person who was an important Civil Rights hero
- determine why it is a fitting tribute for Ella Baker
- learn to freely sing the refrain

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS Online Resources]

- Student reading about Ella Baker and how the song was created
- Electronic display of the song refrain
- Visual Resources PowerPoint [**SLIDES 8 & 9**], composer’s bio
- Audio & video recording of “Still I Rise”

ACTIVITY #2

Ask students for their definitions and ideas about the term, tribute. Are there any visible tributes in their neighborhood, school or their city? (Consider the plaques, statues, memorial fountains, buildings, etc., even impromptu tributes along the road where someone has died – flowers, balloons, pictures.)

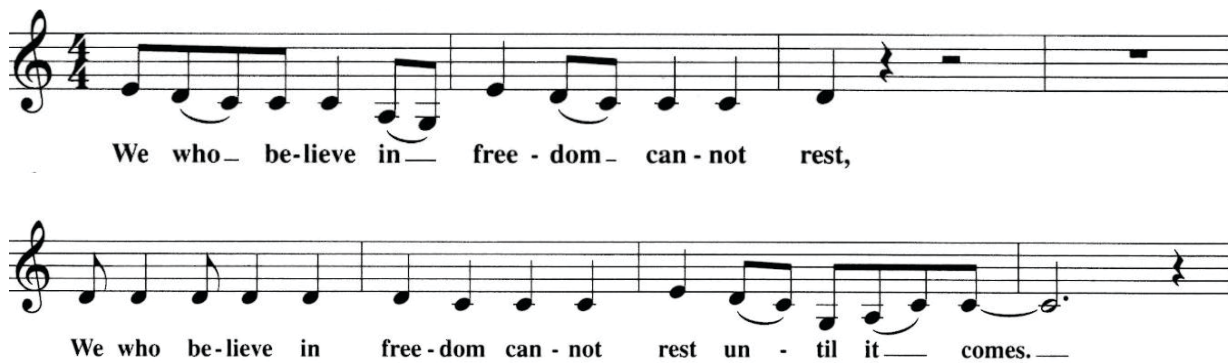
DEFINITION OF TRIBUTE

An act, statement, or gift that is intended to show gratitude, respect, or admiration.

1. Bernice Johnson Reagon wrote this song as a tribute to Ella Baker, a brave woman and one of the heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. Read an article about Ella Baker, then connect some of Reagon's song lyrics to the events and experiences of Baker's life. Here are questions to ask after reading:
 - o Who was Ella Baker?
 - o Can a song be a tribute to someone's life and work?
 - o How is this song a tribute to Ella Baker?
 - o How do the lyrics connect with what she did and what she stood for?
 - o What message(s) do you think the composer is expressing in the song?
2. Think about the meaning of the lyrics.
3. In pairs or small groups, ask students to reflect on what Ella Baker is telling current and future generations about freedom, then write a short response to what the words mean to them. Younger students can reflect and express their thoughts as a class as the teacher records their responses.

ACTIVITY #3

1. Learn to sing the refrain. The audience will be invited to join the music at the WITNESS concert.



2. When students can sing with confidence, plan an accompaniment using body percussion and/or instruments. Students can improvise:

- o An ongoing steady beat to hold things together
- o An ostinato (repeating pattern) on claves, woodblock, or other mid-range instrument
- o Another ostinato on maracas or other shakers
- o Accented beats using higher pitched instruments

Read a short biography of on the Visual Resources PowerPoint, [SLIDES 8 & 9].

- Rehearse the song with the accompaniment until it holds together.
- Decide if the instruments should play an introduction.
- Decide how many times to repeat the song, and how to end it.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Informally assess the students' responses when describing the music's content and meaning for evidence of musical thinking and ability to make connections.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Learn more about **Sweet Honey in the Rock**, a women's vocal group founded by the composer. They also perform on the audio and video tracks from the WITNESS Online Resources. There is a group bio included on page 96 in the lesson for "There are No Mirrors in My Nana's House."
- Watch the YouTube video of this song's performance at the 2011 VocalEssence WITNESS concert featuring Sweet Honey in the Rock. The link is the first resource below.
- Find more of Sweet Honey in the Rock's music and play it for the class.

RESOURCES

WEBSITES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGQJmUsEE2I>

Recording of the song by Sweet Honey in the Rock with many pertinent photos taken during Civil Rights demonstrations.

<https://ellabakercenter.org/about/who-was-ella-baker>

Biographic information about Ella Baker from the Ella Baker Center

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-dreier/ella-baker-ferguson-and-b_b_6368394.html

"Ella Baker, Ferguson, and 'Black Mothers' Sons'"

Huffington Post blog tells the story of Ella Baker's life, work and the ideals she promoted throughout the years of the Civil Rights struggles. Opens with Ella's words, the lyrics of "Ella's Song." It offers an engaging biography of the Civil Rights Hero.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoPofPzkJ4U&feature=youtu.be>

Performances at WITNESS concert – 2011, featured the song as sung by Sweet Honey in the Rock.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGQJmUsEE2I>

This video of the song has a world-wide collection of images across time – from early feminists to Black Livers Matter, labor movements, China, Tiananmen Square, South Africa, etc. Also, a nice straight up performance. Good photo credits at the end.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

MUSIC: Foundations

Standard 5: Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic works.

MUSIC: Create

Standard 6: Create artistic work.

MUSIC: Perform

Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for performance.

MUSIC: Respond

Standard 7: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work.

MUSIC: Connect

Standard 10: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts...

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading & Literature Strand

Standard 1: Students will actively engage in the reading process and read, understand, respond to analyze, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate a wide variety...of texts.

WHO WAS ELLA BAKER?



Ella Baker 1964 - photo by Danny Lyon

“The major job was getting people to understand that they had something within their power that they could use, and it could only be used if they understood what was happening and how group action could counter violence...” - Ella Jo Baker

Born in Norfolk, Virginia in 1903, Baker grew up in North Carolina listening to her grandmother’s stories about life during slavery. These stories led her to develop a sense of social justice while she was still a child. Her grandmother’s pride and resiliency inspired Baker throughout her life.

Baker attended Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. She often challenged Shaw’s unfair school policies. After graduating in 1927 as the class valedictorian, she moved to New York City and began her life of social activism. She joined the NAACP in 1940 and worked as a field secretary, then branch director. In 1957, Baker moved to Atlanta to help organize Martin Luther King’s new organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

The 1960 Greensboro, NC sit-ins at the Woolworth’s lunch counter by black college students drew her to her next activist position. She moved to Greensboro and organized the students into what became the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC. Baker embraced Mahatma Gandhi’s theory of nonviolent direct action and taught this approach to the students she organized – the 1961 Freedom Riders. With Ella Baker’s guidance and encouragement, SNCC became one of the foremost advocates for human rights in the country. Ella Baker once said, “This may only be a dream of mine, but I think it can be made real.”



She was a forceful speaker

Her influence was reflected in the nickname she acquired: “Fundii,” a Swahili word meaning a person who teaches a craft to the next generation. Baker continued to be a respected and influential leader in the fight for human and civil rights until her death on December 13, 1986, her 83rd birthday.

The founders of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights chose their name to celebrate Baker as an unsung hero of racial and economic justice and to honor her legacy of leadership and movement building. Her audacity to dream big is a cornerstone of their philosophy.

Source: Paraphrased from the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights Website,
<https://ellabakercenter.org/about/who-was-ella-baker>

LYRICS TO “ELLA’S SONG”

Refrain:

We who believe in freedom cannot rest
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes

Verses

Until the killing of Black men, Black mothers’ sons
Is as important as the killing of White men, White mothers’ sons

And that which touches me most is that I had a chance to work with people
Passing on to others that which was passed on to me

To me young people come first, they have the courage where we fail
And if I can shed some light as they carry us through the gale

The older I get the better I know that the secret of my going on
Is when the reins are in the hand of the young who dare to run against the storm

Not needing to clutch for power, not needing the light just to shine on me
I need to be just one in the number as we stand against tyranny

Struggling myself don’t mean a whole lot I come to realize
That teaching others to stand up and fight is the only way my struggle survives

I’m a woman who speaks in a voice and I must be heard
At time I can be quite difficult, I’ll bow to no man’s word

“Ella’s Song” is an a cappella piece written by Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon and performed by the famous heritage group, **Sweet Honey in the Rock**

LESSON PLAN: ANDREA JENKINS



LESSON GOALS

Students will learn about Andrea Jenkins' journey from a kid in Chicago, through challenges and road blocks to making history. As students explore Jenkins' story, they will also discuss overcoming challenges and the power of poetry and visual art.

MATERIALS

[included in the WITNESS Online Resources]

- PowerPoint: "Andrea Jenkins"
- ROAD BLOCK Worksheet
- ORAL HISTORY Worksheet
- ART CHANGES EVERYTHING Worksheet

INTRODUCTION

How do you deal with conflict – within yourself or from outside forces? How do you set goals and go about achieving those goals? When faced with potential barriers, do you let them stop you in your tracks, or do you find a way around them? These are questions that your students will see highlighted in the life story of Andrea Jenkins, the first African American openly transgender woman to be elected to political office in the United States. Besides being a social activist, Andrea is a writer, poet, and artist. Are words and images as powerful as laws and government? Students will consider this as well.

Based on your knowledge of your students, their parents, school polices, your own comfort level, etc., you can decide how detailed you want to be in terms of the information you provide, the questions you answer, and the discussions you initiate regarding sexuality and LGBTQ topics.

KEY TERMS

Unbearable:	Not able to be endured or tolerated
Triplex:	A building containing three separate apartments
Gay:	Having to do with the sexual desire or behavior directed toward a person or persons of one's own sex
Transgender:	A person whose identity differs from the sex the person was identified as having at birth and who may undergo medical procedures to attain the physical characteristics of the opposite sex
Policy:	A course of action or law enacted by a local or national government
Politics:	The science and methods of directing government
Economics:	The science that deals with the production, distribution, and use of goods and services
Bachelor's Degree:	A degree awarded by a college or university to a person who has completed undergraduate studies (typically four years)

TIMELINE						
1979	1999	2001	2014	2015	2016	2017
Moved from Chicago to Minneapolis	Graduated from Metropolitan State University	Policy aide in the Minneapolis City Council	Helped establish the Transgender Issues Work Group	Became the curator of the U of M's Transgender Oral History Project	Published <i>The T Is Not Silent: New and Selected Poems</i>	FIRST openly transgender black woman elected to public office in the United States

Master's Degree:	A degree awarded by a graduate school, usually to a person who has completed at least one year of graduate study after receiving a Bachelor's Degree
Campaign:	An organized effort to get elected to a government position
City Council:	A group of people that makes decisions about a city's finances and laws
Curator:	The person in charge of a museum or a collection, such as of art, recordings, literature, etc.
Oral History:	Information obtained usually by recorded interviews with persons whose lives, experiences, and memories have special significance
Ward:	A division or district of a city or town
Gratitude:	the quality or feeling of being thankful
Journal:	A daily record of occurrences, experiences, or observations
Manifesto:	A public declaration of opinions and goals, as one issued by a an individual, government, or organization
Agency:	A way of gaining power or influence
Dignity:	Conduct, speech, or appearance showing self-respect
Collage:	A work of art produced by pasting various materials on a single surface

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

This lesson is designed to alternate between INFORMATION that you provide to your students (accompanied by PowerPoint slides) and ACTIVITIES for them to complete. Feel free to simplify both aspects – bringing out only one or two points in each INFORMATION section and considering one or two questions in each ACTIVITY.

PROCESS

1. INFORMATION

- **[SLIDES 1 & 2]** Andrea was born in 1961 and was raised in Chicago, Illinois. Like a lot of children, Andrea participated in the Cub Scouts and played football.
- Andrea's mother was always looking out for her children's safety and future. In a speech Andrea gave in 2017, she remembers that "whenever our neighborhood would get really unbearable or before it would become completely unbearable, [my mother] would always move us to a better neighborhood and to a better public school."
- Andrea also appreciates her grandmother's efforts to help African American families who moved from the Southern United States to the North to get a new start. She owned a triplex and would let newcomers stay in her home until they were able to find jobs and eventually buy their own homes.

2. DISCUSSION

- What concerns and goals did Andrea's mother and grandmother have for their community, for their family, and for other families?
- How would you describe your neighborhood?
- Maybe your family is not able to move away from your neighborhood when bad things happen. But what things *can you and your family do to make things more "bearable"*?

3. INFORMATION

- **[SLIDE 3]** In 1979, at the age of 18, Andrea moved to Minneapolis and enrolled as a student at the University of Minnesota. However, other schoolmates discovered that Andrea was gay, and made life difficult for her. So, she left school before completing her studies there.
- At the age of thirty, Andrea finally "came out" – that is, revealed openly to others – as being transgender.
- She was working as a vocational counselor with Hennepin County at the time, and she wanted to keep her job. She feared that she might lose her job because of presenting herself no longer as a man but now as a woman.
- But Minnesota was the first state in the country to put policies in place to protect the rights of transgender people as regards employment and other matters. So, she did not lose her job.
- **[SLIDE 4]** Seeing that policies and laws have power was one thing that motivated Andrea to want to get involved in politics. As she stated in a speech: "I understand that policies matter and who is shaping those policies matters even more."
- Andrea attended Metropolitan State University, continued her studies there, and graduated in 1999 with a Bachelor's degree in Human Services and Interpersonal Communication. She went on to further her education even more and received two Masters degrees – one in Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University, and another in Creative Writing from Hamline University in Saint Paul.

“I TRIED TO HIDE FROM MYSELF”

On May 27, 2017, The Humanist Institute hosted an all-day symposium at the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis titled “Social Justice: Addressing the Narrative of Fear”. Andrea Jenkins was among the invited speakers. The following is adapted from her remarks:

“I moved to Minneapolis in 1979 to go to the University of Minnesota. I had three solid years as a pretty decent student. I was engaged in a Greek fraternal organization, which shall remain nameless, and I eventually became president of that fraternity. But there were some internal struggles I was dealing with around my gender identity, and those issues led to my being discovered and outed by my fraternity brothers, forcing me to leave school. For the next ten years I tried to hide from myself. I thought, maybe I’m gay, and so I lived a so-called “gay lifestyle.” But that didn’t really fit. Then I got married and realized that that wasn’t the answer either. It’s so funny how you can run from yourself. But no matter how hard you try, you’re always there, right?”

At the age of thirty I came to terms with the identity I knew existed since I was four years old—that I am a woman. I began going to therapy at the Program in Human Sexuality over at the University of Minnesota, and I finally came out to my family and friends. I was sure that they would abandon me and that I would lose my job as a vocational counselor for Hennepin County. But the thing is, I didn’t lose my job because Minnesota was the first state in the Union to include specific protections for transgender people in its amendment to the Human Rights Act in 1993. So policies matter, my friend, and that’s why I’m running for office because I understand that policies matter and who is shaping those policies matters even more.”

4. ACTIVITY

- Give each student a ROAD BLOCK Worksheet.
- Help students complete the worksheet by considering the following questions:
 - o What goals did Andrea have?
 - o What were some “road blocks” (situations that could potentially stop you from reaching your goal) that Andrea faced or thought she might face?
 - o What did she do, or what happened, that kept her from being “stopped her in her tracks”?
 - o Have you ever had a goal, but then were faced with a “road block”? What was the goal? What was the “road block”?
 - o What did you do, or what happened that allowed you to keep moving forward to achieve your goal?

5. DISCUSSION

- Andrea began her political career in 2001, when she helped out on Robert Lilligren’s campaign to get elected to the Minneapolis City Council. After getting elected, Lilligren hired Andrea as his policy aide.



- **[SLIDE 5]** After twelve years of working in the City Council, Andrea began curating the Transgender Oral History Project at the University of Minnesota's Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies.
- Andrea has recorded about 200 oral histories for the project.
- **[SLIDE 6]** In 2016, Andrea announced that she was going to campaign to get elected to the Minneapolis City Council representing the 8th Ward.
- She won the race a year later, becoming the first African American openly transgender woman to be elected to political office in the United States.

THE TRANSGENDER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT



The following is from the project's University of Minnesota web page:

The Tretter Transgender Oral History Project is part of the Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection in GLBT Studies at the University of Minnesota Libraries. Transgender voices and experiences are often missing in contemporary documentation and the historic record. The goal of this Project is to empower individuals to tell their story, while

providing students, historians, and the public with a richer foundation of primary source material about the Transgender community. Materials are housed within the Tretter Collection.

Phase 1 of this Project (2015-2018) focused on documenting the experience of transgender and gender queer people in the Upper Midwest. Oral Historian Andrea Jenkins conducted 200 interviews covering identity, family, love and experiences. These oral histories are posted online. There is also an online exhibit about Phase 1.

Phase 2 of the Project (late 2018-2020) will shift focus. Given the focus on transgender issues, both locally and nationally, Phase 2 will examine community organizing, policy development and political activism around the country.

6. ACTIVITY

- Before being elected to political office, Andrea worked hard to record the stories of people who might never have otherwise had those stories preserved for future generations.
- Divide students into pairs, and give each group an ORAL HISTORY Worksheet.
- Students will use the worksheet to practice conducting oral histories, guided by the following directions:
 - o Before asking each other any questions, take a few minutes to think about what you already know about your partner.
 - o Next, think about what you would like to know more about your partner. Also think about one or two questions that might seem a little silly but that will reveal something new about their personality. [eg. "If you could transform into a type of transportation – bicycle, car, boat, airplane, spacecraft, etc. – what would you want to be?"] Write down your questions.
 - o Now, ask your questions. If, while your partner is answering a question, you want to understand more, ask an additional question.

- o [NOTE TO TEACHER: You can have students actually record each other with an audio recorder. Or, the interviewer can write down their partner's answer.]
- o Now, think of someone you know – a grandparent, a neighbor, a local store owner, etc. – who you think has an interesting life story. Then, go through the same process that you just practiced, prepare several more questions than you did in class, have a recording device ready, and go do an oral history!

7. DISCUSSION

- Besides politics, Andrea is also a respected poet and artist.
- **[SLIDE 7]** She has been a part of the local poetry community for several years, earning several awards during that time.
- She is the author of “Tributaries: Poems Celebrating Black History”, “Pieces of A Scream”, “The T is Not Silent: New and Selected Poems”, and “The Price We Pay: How Race and Gender Identity Converge”.
- Andrea stated this in a recent speech: “I express gratitude every single morning when I awake. I journal every day.... I take long walks in nature, around bodies of water.... I try to see the humanity in every person that I encounter and recognize that we are part of a universe. As a poet, a universe is one line in a poem: Uni-Verse. So ..., we are all part of the exact same verse.”
- **[SLIDE 8]** Her artwork has been displayed in various galleries and at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. One of her shows was titled: “Bag Lady Manifesto” made up of collages and bags that she collected from all around the country for some 15 years.
- Andrea feels this way about the power of art: “Art serves many purposes; it can heal, educate, entertain, and challenge. Art is a tool for speaking out because it has the ability to transform people. I try to use my art to give agency and dignity to Transgender people and Black people all over the world.”



8. ACTIVITY

- Give each student an ART CHANGES EVERYTHING Worksheet.
- They will be tasked with using poetry and/or visual art to express their feelings:
 - o List five things you are especially grateful for.
 - o Andrea likes to take long walks in nature, around bodies of water. What do you like to do that helps you reduce stress and think deeply.
 - o Collect words and images (from magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, junk mail, etc.) and place them together in an artistic way.



- o As you create your artwork, think of what your goal is: to make people feel better, to educate, to entertain, to challenge an injustice, to honor an individual or group.
- o After creating your artwork, write a poem to accompany it.

9. CONCLUSION

- Andrea has faced many struggles – those within herself and those from outside forces. But instead of letting these struggles bring her down, they motivate her to help others in their struggles.
- **[SLIDE 9]** As she mentioned in a speech: “The struggle for transgender rights is the struggle for human rights.... It means seeing the intersections of my struggle with your struggle and figuring out ways to work together for all of humanity.”
- Ask students what they think Andrea means by this.
- **[SLIDE 10]** Ask students to reflect on what lessons they learned from considering Andrea’s story.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

In her acceptance speech after being elected to the Minneapolis City Council, Andrea said: “As an African American trans-identified woman, I know firsthand the feeling of being marginalized, left out, thrown under the bus. Those days are over. We don’t just want a seat at the table, we want to set the table.”

She touched on the idea of having “a seat at the table” again in one of her recent poems.

“The Price We Pay”

Still stuck in a black and white paradigm
that sees race as a tug of war of two extremes,
where other cultures are not allowed to play
and mixed race isn’t even invited to the party.

I step up to be a part of the diversity feast,
but I am not invited to the table,
still stuck in the kiddy corner of the cultural discussion.

–from ***A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota***

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do you think the “table” symbolizes?
- What does it mean to “have a seat at the table”?

RESOURCES

About Andrea Jenkins, Minneapolismn.gov;
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ward8/about-andrea>

Andrea Jenkins website; <https://andreajenkins.webs.com/>

Maglott, Stephen, Andrea Jenkins; The Ubuntu Biography Project,
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Rauschenbush, Paul Brandeis; Andrea Jenkins Brings Poetry to the Political – And It Is Beautiful; accessed 7/26/2018; <https://auburnseminary.org/andrea-jenkins-brings-poetry-political-beautiful/>

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Herrera, Allison, Corina Bernstein; Andrea Jenkins, Grand Marshal of 2015 Twin Cities Pride Uplifts Trans Voices; Twin Cities Daily Planet, June 26, 2015; <https://www.tcdailyplanet.net/andrea-jenkins-grand-marshal-of-2015-twin-cities-pride-uplifts-trans-voices-photos/>

Bruch, Michelle, Building an Archive of Transgender History; Southwest Journal; Updated May 11, 2015; <http://www.southwestjournal.com/news/2015/05/building-an-archive-of-transgender-history/>

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role on Minneapolis City Council; Minnesota Daily; 1/15/2018; <http://www.mndaily.com/article/2018/01/n-former-umn-oral-historian-steps-into-leadership-role-on-minneapolis-city-council>

University of Minnesota Women's Center; ICYMI: AHA! Gallery Spring Opening with Andrea Jenkins; February 10, 2017; <https://mnwomenscenter.wordpress.com/2017/02/10/icymi-aha-gallery-spring-opening-with-andrea-jenkins/>

Ettagouri, Marwa; Meet Andrea Jenkins, the first openly transgender black woman elected to public office in the U.S.; Washington Post; November 8, 2017; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/11/08/meet-andrea-jenkins-the-openly-transgender-black-woman-elected-to-public-office-in-the-u-s/>

Potter, Kyle; Minneapolis Elects 2 Black Transgender City Council Members; Twin Cities Pioneer Press; <https://www.twincities.com/2017/11/08/andrea-jenkins-minneapolis-city-council-nations-first-openly-transgender-black-woman-elected-to-public-office/>

Jenkins, Andrea; On Policies and Purple; TheHumanist.com; December 20, 2017; <https://thehumanist.com/magazine/january-february-2018/up-front/on-policies-and-purple>

Verges, Josh; UMN Oral History Project Captures Range of Transgender Experiences; Twin Cities Pioneer Press; updated December 19, 2016; <https://www.twincities.com/2016/12/18/umn-oral-history-project-captures-range-of-transgender-experiences/>

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Students will actively participate in the discussions.
- Students will complete the worksheets and participate in the associated activities.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Students can write a letter to Andrea, expressing their appreciation for her personal example and efforts to improve the lives of all people living in her community, city, and state.
- Invite Andrea to visit your classroom. Prepare the students to have well thought out questions to ask.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

SOCIAL STUDIES: History (Historical Thinking Skills)

Standard 1: Historians generally construct chronological narratives to characterize eras and explain past events and change over time.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Civic Values and Principles of Democracy)

Standard 3: The United States is based on democratic values and principles that include liberty, individual rights, justice, equality, the rule of law, limited government, common good, popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Rights and Responsibilities)

Standard 4: Individuals in a republic have rights, duties, and responsibilities.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Citizenship and Government (Governmental Institutions and Political Processes)

Standard 8: Public policy is shaped by governmental and non-governmental institutions and political processes.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Peoples, Cultures and Change Over Time

Standard 5: History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively to address problems in their communities, state, nation and world.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Key Ideas and Details)

Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Standard 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Craft and Structure)

Standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Text Types and Purposes)

Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Production and Distribution of Writing)

Standard 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Writing (Research to Build and Present Knowledge)

Standard 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy (Comprehension and Collaboration)

Standard 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ROAD BLOCKS

As is true of all of us, Andrea had certain goals for her life, a particular path that she decided to take. But situations happened that threatened to “stop her in her tracks”.
How did she deal with these “road blocks”?

How do you deal with the
“road blocks” in your path?



ANDREA'S PATH

- What goals did Andrea have?

- What were some “road blocks” (situations that could potentially stop you from reaching your goal) that Andrea faced or thought she might face?

- What did she do, or what happened, that kept her from being “stopped her in her tracks”?

YOUR PATH

- Have you ever had a goal, but then were faced with a “road block”? What was the goal?
What was the “road block”?

- What did you do, or what happened that allowed you to keep moving forward to achieve your goal?

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | ANDREA JENKINS

NAME: _____

ORAL HISTORIES

Before being elected to political office, Andrea worked hard to record the stories of people who might never have otherwise had those stories preserved for future generations.



Now, it's your turn to do an oral history!

[Your teacher may have you record your oral histories; or you will write down what your partners says.]

TASK #1: PREPARE

- Partner with another student.
- Before asking each other any questions, take a few minutes to think about what you already know about your partner.
- Next, think about what you would like to know more about your partner.
- Also think about one or two questions that might seem a little silly but that will reveal something new about their personality. [eg. "If you could transform into a type of transportation – bicycle, car, boat, airplane, spacecraft, etc. – what would you want to be?"]
- Write down your questions.

TASK #2: INTERVIEW

- On the page where you wrote your questions, also write the name of the person you are interviewing, your name (as the interviewer), and the date. [NOTE: if you are recording the interview, begin the recording by saying this information.]
- Now, ask your questions.
- If, while your partner is answering a question, you want to understand more, ask an additional question.

TASK #3: PRESENTATION

- Tell the rest of the class who you interviewed.
- Mention one piece of information about your partner that you never knew before or that you think is very interesting.



Now, think of someone you know – a grandparent, a neighbor, a local store owner, etc. – who you think has an interesting life story. Then, go through the same process that you just practiced, prepare several more questions than you did in class, have a recording device ready, and go do an oral history!

ART CHANGES EVERYTHING

In the picture, Andrea is wearing a T-shirt that has the saying: “Art changes everything”. And in her quotation below, she mentions some ways that art can cause change.



“Art serves many purposes; it can heal, educate, entertain, and challenge. Art is a tool for speaking out because it has the ability to transform people. I try to use my art to give agency and dignity to Transgender people and Black people all over the world.”

TASK #1: WRITE A POEM

- List five things you are especially grateful for.
- Andrea likes to take long walks in nature, around bodies of water. What do you like to do that helps you reduce stress and think deeply about things?
- Create a poem that uses the list you made and the things that help you reduce stress.

TASK #2: POETRY READING

- Read your poem to the class.

TASK #3: CREATE A COLLAGE

- Andrea’s art is often in the form of collages. And her art makes people think about a particular message.
- Collect words and images (from magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, junk mail, etc.) and arrange them together in an artistic way.
- As you create your artwork, think of what your goal is: to make people feel better, to educate, to entertain, to challenge an injustice, to empower, to honor an individual or group, etc.
- Write 2 or 3 sentences that describe your artwork’s MESSAGE. With Andrea’s quotation in mind, tell whether your purpose was to heal, educate, entertain, challenge, empower, dignify, or something else.



TASK #4: ART SHOW

- You and your classmates can place your ARTWORK and MESSAGE around the classroom. Then all of you can walk around the room and enjoy each other’s work.

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | ANDREA JENKINS

NAME: _____

LESSON PLAN: SPIRITUAL (CAIN'T NO ONE KNOW)

Ysaÿe Barnwell



Ysaÿe Barnwell, composer

LEARNING GOALS

Through engaging in a close reading of the lyrics with annotations, students will search for and identify the messages they perceive in the song.

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS Online Resources]

- Annotating work sheet for “Cain’t No One Know” and pencils
- Visual Resources PowerPoint [SLIDES 10, 11 & 12]
- Copies of the article “From Soweto, to Stonewall, Birmingham to LA,” p. 91
- Recording of “Cain’t No One Know”

INTRODUCTION

Andrea Jenkins set her goals high and has accomplished much during her lifetime despite the barriers she encountered. As the song says, we can never know at sunrise what will happen before the sunset; life is uncertain. As the first African American openly transgender woman elected office in the United States, Jenkins has encountered many barriers and dealt regularly with uncertainty and surprise. The words and mood of the song suit Jenkins well.

“Cain’t No One Know” is a powerful contemporary spiritual created by Ysaÿe Barnwell, a founding member of the female acapella group, Sweet Honey in the Rock. It was part of the musical score created for choreographer David Rousseve’s “Urban Scenes / Creole Dreams,” a work created through a blend of theater, performance art, dance and cutting-edge urban music. In Rousseve’s words, the work’s goal is to “bring issues of racism, misogyny, homophobia and AIDS to the unconverted.” Rousseve evokes deep passion, flowing from his family roots and African American/Creole culture. The somber melody and compelling rhythm draw listeners into the piece. But it is the lyrics might that leave the longest impression, especially when we connect them to personal life experiences.

Lyricists create a text with messages they want to communicate – but listeners must do some of the work to unpack them. When we pay close attention to a song, more will be revealed to us. In this lesson, students will do a close reading to interpret the lyrics, become more aware of the song’s message, and reflect on how the song might mirror their life experiences or those of people close to them.

KEY TERMS

A capella:	Singing without instrumental accompaniment
Annotate:	Adding notes while carefully reading a text; might be a comment, question, or explanation
Close reading:	A careful reading and re-reading of a short passage of text, noticing individual words, the syntax, and the order in which sentences and ideas unfold
Creole:	In the USA, the word “Creole” refers to people of any race or mixture who are descended from colonial French La Louisiane and colonial Spanish Louisiana (New Spain) settlers before the Louisiana region became part of the United States with the 1803 Louisiana Purchase

PROCESS

ACTIVITY #1

1. Distribute copies of the song lyrics for “Cain’t No One Know.” They are printed on the “Annotating Worksheet.” Play the recording as students listen and follow the lyrics.
 - Take time to have students discuss their first impressions of the song. What did they notice about the mood, the performers and the ideas expressed through the melody and lyrics.
 - Write the big ideas from students’ responses on the board as they talk.
 - Play it again to help students begin to find the smaller details.
2. Introduce the activities of **close reading** and **annotating**. To do a close reading:
 - read the text/ lyrics slowly without the recording
 - pay close attention to what the lyrics are saying
 - re-read lines to search for deeper understanding

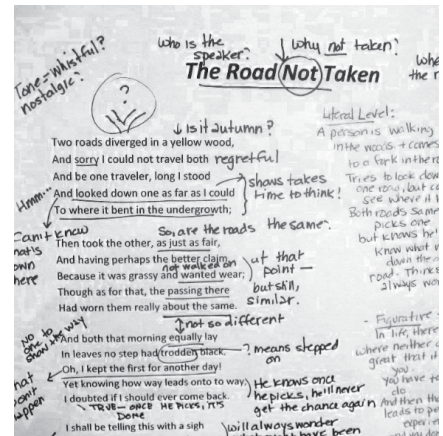
To annotate during a close reading the reader uses spaces next to the words to jot down their thoughts. This might include:

- Circling key words and phrases
- Making notes next to the lyrics that catch their attention
- Making notes about a connection to the reader’s life
- Making notes about what was interesting about these words
- Writing questions or comments they have about the meaning of a phrase

This close reading with written comments, questions, explanations, etc. is called annotating a text. The sample of an annotated poem is included in the PowerPoint, [SLIDE 12].

3. At some point, check in to assess understanding of certain references. Do students know what Soweto, Stonewall, Birmingham and LA mean?
 - Students can look them up or teachers can provide a short explanation.
 - Why did Barnwell include them in her song?
4. After listening and doing the close reading of the lyrics, ask students to talk about what the message or messages in the song. Near the end of this discussion, ask them to speculate about what Barnwell might include in the lyrics if she were writing a new verse in 2019.

ANNOTATING means to write about a text when doing a close reading. The writer might comment, ask a question, jot down thoughts about connections or their take on the meaning of the text.



Example of an annotated text of a poem

ACTIVITY #2

Discuss how this song connects with Andrea Jenkins' life journey. Encourage students to recall that she faced many barriers on the way to knowing herself, but she didn't let them defeat her. Instead she became a source of strength for others.

ACTIVITY #3

The music was first composed as music for David Rousseve's dance work, "Urban Scenes/Creole Dreams." The close reading provided a deeper understanding of the lyrics, but beneath the words there is a deeper, soulful mood in the music and the performance.

Invite students to create movements to physically express their understanding of the music. Let them know that their movements do not have to be descriptive of the words and themes but can be 'abstract' and creative. Have them create from feeling the song, not describing or acting out the lyrics of the song. Have each student show/share/perform/teach one or two movements that they created to the rest of the class.

Read a brief biography of composer Ysaÿe Barnwell on the Visual Resources PowerPoint [SLIDES 10 & 11].

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- The annotated lyric sheet provides evidence of the student's ability to analyze song texts, make connections between the song and their prior experience, and construct an interpretation of by applying personal meaning and preferences. This evidence can be assessed based on existing rubrics or checklists.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- There are three versions of this piece listed in the Resources section. Listen to them and compare/contrast how they interpret and deliver the song.
- Sing quietly along with the recording to get a deeper feeling for this powerful song.
- Students can write program notes for "Cain't No One Know" using the information from their close reading of the lyrics.
- Working in partners, students can do a **close reading** of a different song using the same approach.

RESOURCES

WEBSITES

<http://levyarchive.bam.org/Detail/occurrences/154>

Learn more about David Rousseve's "Urban Scenes/Creole Dreams" at this site.

<http://thebirdsings.com/caint-no-one-know/>

A website with recordings of how the voice parts fit together. 3 versions: duet, high voice emphasis, and low voice emphasis. Help for rehearsing the piece. Singers are Sweet Honey in the Rock.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGupGezPJBs>

Small group recording with a lot of power from a 2012 performance at the annual Festival of Evangelical Culture, held in St. Petersburg, Russia.

<https://youtu.be/t5SZFNareYM>

Live performance by Illinois All-State Choir with high school voices.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

MUSIC: Respond

Standard 7: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work.

Standard 8: Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading (Craft & Structure)

Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inference from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining... connotative and figurative meanings...

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading & Literature Strand

Standard 2: Students will actively engage in the reading process and read, understand, respond to analyze, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate a wide variety...of texts.

“SPIRITUAL” (CAIN’T NO ONE KNOW)

Make your annotation & comments in the spaces around the lyrics.

Cain’t no one know at sunrise
how this day is gonna end.
Cain’t no one know at sunset
if the next day will begin.
In this world of trouble and woe,
a Member had better be ready to go.
We look for things to stay the same,
but in the twinkling of an eye,
everything can be changed.

Cain’t no one know at sunrise
how this day is gonna end.
Cain’t no one know at sunset
if the next day will begin.

The troubles of this world
fill our hearts with rage
from Soweto, to Stonewall,
Birmingham and LA
We are searching for hope
that lies within ourselves
as we fight against misogyny
race hatred and AIDS.

Cain’t no one know at sunrise
how this day is gonna end.
Cain’t no one know at sunset
if the next day will begin.

—Y.M. Barnwell ©1994
Urban Scenes/Creole Dreams

“FROM SOWETO, TO STONEWALL, BIRMINGHAM TO LA”

THE SOWETO UPRISING

The **Soweto uprising** was a series of demonstrations and protests led by black school children in South Africa that began on the morning of 16 June 1976. Mass protests erupted over the government's policy to enforce education in Afrikaans (a language of Dutch origin) rather than their native language. Police opened fire in Orlando West on 10,000 students marching from Naledi High School to Orlando Stadium. The rioting continued and 23 people died on the first day in Soweto, 21 of whom were black, including a child, Hector Pieterse, as well as two white people, including Dr Melville Edelstein, a lifelong humanitarian. The impact of the Soweto protests reverberated through the country and across the world. In their aftermath, economic and cultural sanctions were introduced from abroad. Political activists left the country to train for guerrilla resistance. Soweto and other townships became the stage for violent state repression. Since 1991 this date and the schoolchildren have been commemorated by the International Day of the African Child. (Wikipedia)

STONEWALL

The **Stonewall riots** (also referred to as the **Stonewall uprising** or the **Stonewall rebellion**) were a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations by members of the gay (LGBT) community against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Manhattan, New York City. They are widely considered to constitute the most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for LGBT rights in the United States. (Wikipedia)

BIRMINGHAM

In the spring of 1963, activists in Birmingham, Alabama launched one of the most influential campaigns of the Civil Rights Movement: Project C, better known as The Birmingham Campaign. It would be the beginning of a series of lunch counter sit-ins, marches on City Hall and boycotts on downtown merchants to protest segregation laws in the city. Over the next couple months, the peaceful demonstrations would be met with violent attacks using high-pressure fire hoses and police dogs on men, women and children alike -- producing some of the most iconic and troubling images of the Civil Rights Movement. President John F. Kennedy would later say, “The events in Birmingham... have so increased the cries for equality that no city or state or legislative body can prudently choose to ignore them.” It is considered one of the major turning points in the Civil Rights Movement and the “beginning of the end” of a centuries-long struggle for freedom. (PBS) <http://www.pbs.org/black-culture/explore/civil-rights-movement-birmingham-campaign/#.W3G4CbgnZPY>



Soweto Demonstrations



The *Stonewall Inn* taken September 1969. The sign in the window reads: “We homosexuals plead with our people to please help maintain peaceful and quiet conduct on the streets of the Village.”



Photograph of police action of the Children's Crusade in Birmingham, Alabama on May 3, 1963

LA (LOS ANGELES) RIOTS/RODNEY KING RIOTS

Twenty-three years ago, the streets of South Los Angeles...broke into chaos. April 29, 1992 was the day an LA court announced a not-guilty verdict for four officers who had been on trial for the brutal beating of Rodney King — an incident that was caught on film. Also captured on video was the rampant violence that followed news of the verdict. The city would descend into what reporter Linda Deutsch remembers as a “war zone.” Over four days, 53 people died, thousands more were injured and many more were arrested as fires burned throughout the city. Not to mention a billion dollars in damage and unquantifiable distrust intensified between residents and law enforcement. Video footage and images of the infamous uprising have burned themselves into the cultural memory of the city, for those who live there and those who don’t.(Huffington Post) https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/29/1992-la-riot-photos_n_7173540.html



Protesters in LA with sign quoting Rodney King

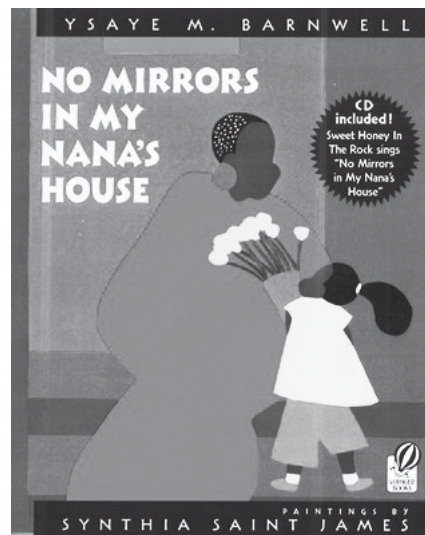
LESSON PLAN: NO MIRRORS IN MY NANA'S HOUSE

Ysaÿe Barnwell

INTRODUCTION

Composer Ysaÿe (eē-say) Barnwell is one of the founding members of Sweet Honey in the Rock, the amazing a capella ensemble of African American women. “No Mirrors in My Nana’s House” was part of a suite of songs commissioned for a dance theater piece called Crossings. She later transformed the song into a picture book with the help of painter Synthia Saint James.

As the little girl in the story grows up, she sees the world through her loving grandmother’s eyes. This provides a view that is warm and friendly rather than cold and disapproving. The feeling in both the song and the story is one of being deeply loved and accepted by the one who cares the most for you.



Picture Book Cover

KEY TERMS

A capella:	singing without any instruments, only voices
Dynamics:	loudness or quietness in music
Nana:	term for grandmother used in many countries and cultures
Predict:	making an educated guess about something
Tempo:	speed of the music
Social Emotional Learning:	The process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions

LEARNING GOALS

Students will ponder several questions about the elements of the story and illustrations. After examining the book’s illustrations and words, students use the evidence they gathered to make musical predictions about how the song will sound.

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS Online Resources]

- Audio Recordings of “No Mirrors in My Nana’s House” from WITNESS Online Resources
- Copy of the picture book (available in most public and school libraries). *No Mirrors in My Nana’s House* (1998) Barnwell, Ysaÿe M. & Synthia Saint James, Voyager Books
- Visual Resources Power-Point [SLIDES 10 & 11] for brief bio of Ysaÿe Barnwell

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

An image in the mirror only shows what is on the OUTSIDE of a person, not what they are like inside. The key idea in this discussion is to help students see that the first OUTSIDE impression we have of people only tells us physical information – just as a mirror only shows what is outside of a person. We may not even like them. But when we get to know them and who they are, what they like to do, and what they know, we find that we can become friends with them. It is like another song called “Getting to Know You.” It takes time!

NOTE TO TEACHERS: Here is some information about the musical elements in the recording:

- Who will sing it? *A group of women singers called Sweet Honey in the Rock*
- Will it have a fast tempo or slower tempo? *It's a fast, up-tempo song*
- Do you think there will be instruments playing at the same time as the voice? Which ones? *There are NO instruments. In music we would say it is a capella*
- Will it have soft or loud dynamics? *On the louder side. In music we would say mezzo forte*
- What about the mood of the song? Sad? Happy? Excited? Scary? Something else? *The song is upbeat and happy. However, mood is also rather subjective, so a wide range of predictions can all be correct.*

Read a short bio about composer Ysaÿe Barnwell on the Visual Resources PowerPoint [SLIDES 10 & 11].

PROCESS

ACTIVITY #1

Focus on the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) areas when introducing the story and song themes.

1. Read the book first without the music. Ask students to think about these questions:
 - What would it be like if you didn't have any mirrors in your house? What would be different?
 - Why do you think there are no mirrors in Nana's house?
 - What do you notice about the people in the illustrations? (In addition to their descriptions about color, action, etc., they might notice that they don't have eyes.)
 - Why do you think the illustrator did this?

ACTIVITY #2

1. Predict then analyze what you hear in the song of the same name. Tell students that the author of the book, Ysaÿe Barnwell, also wrote a song called “No Mirrors in My Nana's House.” Have a brief discussion about what students think they might hear in the music. They can **predict** how this song might sound. Here are some prompts for this conversation:
 - Who will sing it? One person? More than one? A man? Woman? Children? Will it have a fast tempo or slower tempo?
 - Do you think there will be instruments playing at the same time as the voice? Which ones?
 - Will it have soft or loud dynamics?
 - What about the mood of the song? Will it be sad? Happy? Excited? Scary? Something else?
2. Jot down the students' predictions. Remind them that making predictions is a little like brainstorming; there are NO WRONG answers, just good guesses.
 - Listen, then talk about the predictions were proven right and which were very different from the actual song.
3. Read the book again, along with the recording. Turn the pages to fit the song lyrics. Encourage students to sing along.
4. Connect the song to their personal experiences by asking children what names they have for their grandparents. Do any call their grandmother, Nana? How about their grandfather? Take time to share responses.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

No Mirrors in My Nana's House (1998) by Ysaÿe Barnwell and Synthia St. James (illus). The book also includes a CD of the song as performed by Sweet Honey in the Rock.

WEBSITES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRNfJxDNbEE S>

Sweet Honey in the Rock recording. One image from the book plus lyrics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GD57KULelgg>

Video illustrated by Chris Raschka and song by Sweet Honey in the Rock Sweet. This version of the illustrations is quite different from the Barnwell book. Everyone has eyes. Raschka is a well-known and loved illustrator of children's books. Since permission to use the Sweet Honey song to accompany the video was given, assume that Barnwell approved of this video.

<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/no-mirrors-in-my-nanas-house/>

Sisters Tia and Tamera Mowry read the book as the video cuts between them and the book illustrations.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Informally assess the predictions students make about how the music will sound for insights and evidence of their understanding of music's foundational knowledge and skills, and their ability to interpret a song.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Young students might enjoy watching the video of the song created by author, Chris Raschka with music by Sweet Honey in the Rock. The illustrations are very different, but the warmth of the message is similar.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

MUSIC: Foundations

Standard 7: Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic works

MUSIC: Respond

Standard 7: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work

MEET SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK



The 2019 VocalEssence WITNESS concert program features many songs either composed by or recorded by the members of Sweet Honey in the Rock.

MISSION: Educate, Entertain and Empower

Sweet Honey In The Rock® is a performance ensemble rooted in African American history and culture. The ensemble educates, entertains and empowers its audience and community through the dynamic vehicles of a cappella singing and American Sign Language interpretation for the Deaf and hearing impaired. Sweet Honey's audience and community comes from diverse backgrounds and cultures throughout the United States and around the world, and includes people of all ages, economic/education/social backgrounds, political persuasions, religious affiliations, sexual preferences and differing abilities.

VISION: Preserve / Persevere / Endure

Sweet Honey In The Rock® seeks to preserve and extend the traditions of African American vocal music; to inspire a multidimensional-intergenerational audience to find and use their individual and collective voice to address the critical issues of our time, and to celebrate our common humanity. Sweet Honey seeks to institutionalize its mission, vision, values, and aesthetic core in an organizational structure that will have a life and legacy beyond its current members.

VALUES: Truth, Justice and Compassion

As artists, activists, and humanitarians, Sweet Honey In The Rock® has, for forty years, raised her voice to advocate for truth, justice and compassion while addressing the critical issues of democracy, freedom, racism, and economic and social justice. Sweet Honey has also proactively advocated for accessibility and disability rights for the differently abled, and has welcomed the Deaf and hearing impaired by including a Sign Language interpreter in the ensemble.

AESTHETIC CORE: Creation / Collaboration / Connection

Sweet Honey In The Rock® embraces a wide range of musical genres, including spirituals, blues, folk, gospel, jazz, popular and world music. Sweet Honey draws upon a musical repertoire that spans traditional and original compositions, indigenous and universal aesthetics, historic and contemporary influences. Sweet Honey has a long track record of collaborating with authors, composers, choreographers, costume designers, poets, visual artists, et al. Sweet Honey welcomes the opportunity to connect with those of various artistic backgrounds, cultural origins and generations.

LESSON PLAN: SPELMAN COLLEGE GLEE CLUB



KEY TERMS

Abolition:	The act of putting an end to something
Civil rights:	The rights (fair demands) to full legal, social, and economic equality
Seminary:	A school, especially one of higher grades, for young women.
Exclusive:	Limited to the people or things decided upon; not allowing other people or things to be included
Co-education:	The joint education of both sexes at the same institution and in the same classes
Choral:	Having to do with an organized group of singers
Autonomous:	Independent, free
Technique:	A skill belonging to a particular art, science, job, sport, or other activity
Unison:	A sounding together of voices on the same note or octaves (eight notes) apart
Harmony:	A combination of tones, especially when blended in a way that is pleasing to the ear
Descent:	Coming from a source or origin
Academic:	Having to do with study and education
Liberal arts:	The course of instruction at a college, focusing on general knowledge of the arts, literature, sciences, history, economics, etc., rather than on professional or technical subjects
Ethical:	Having to do with the rules or standards for right conduct or practice
Engage:	To be interested and get involved in something
Commitment:	Promise to do something

INTRODUCTION

Spelman College is America's first, and oldest, private, liberal arts historically black college for women and is ranked #1 among all historically black colleges in the United States (according to U.S. News & World Report). It is the second largest producer of African-American college graduates who attend medical school, and ranks first among institutions that send Bachelor degree graduates to science, engineering, and mathematics doctoral programs. Spelman's glee club was formed in 1925, has performed throughout the country as well as in Brazil and Canada. And in 2016, they performed at the White House for President Obama.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will learn about Historically Black Colleges and Universities in general, and Spelman and its Glee Club in particular. They will also consider lessons they can learn from the formation of these institutions and how the characteristics that make for a successful choral group are some of the same qualities it takes to be successful in life.

MATERIALS

[included in the **WITNESS Online Resources**]

- PowerPoint: "Spelman College Glee Club"
- A DAY IN YOUR LIFE Worksheet
- WORKING IN HARMONY Worksheet
- Spelman Campus Map and Guide Resource

TIMELINE						
1881	1882	1884	1924	1925	1986	2016
Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary is founded	John D. Rockefeller becomes long lasting financial supporter	The school's name is changed to Spelman Seminary	The school's name is changed to Spelman College	Spelman College Glee Club is formed	Johnetta Betsch Cole becomes the college's first, Black female president	The Glee Club performs at the White House for President Obama

NOTE TO TEACHERS:

This lesson is designed to alternate between INFORMATION that you provide to your students (accompanied by PowerPoint slides) and ACTIVITIES for them to complete. Feel free to simplify both aspects – bringing out only one or two points in each INFORMATION section and considering one or two questions in each ACTIVITY.

PROCESS

1. INTRODUCTION

- **[SLIDE 1]** Many people who lived in the northeastern part of the country in the mid-1800s – White and Black – were involved in the abolition movement and in fighting for civil and political rights for Blacks.
- Many White women – who sought social and political equality for themselves – made it their mission to lift up the condition of African Americans.
- **[SLIDE 2]** In 1881, two friends – Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles – made this their mission. They traveled to Atlanta, Georgia and saw the terrible conditions in which Blacks were living and decided to create a school to educate African American women. They received \$100 from the First Baptist Church of Medford, Massachusetts and opened the school in the basement of the Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia.
- **[SLIDE 3]** The school was first called the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, and it's very first class was held on April 11th, and there were 11 students in attendance. By the time the first term ended on July 15th, the number of students increased to 80.
- The school continued to grow. By 1884, there were 600 students; and the school was moved from the church basement to a former hospital located on a 9-acre parcel of land.
- **[SLIDE 4]** The school also continued to grow in the number of people who wanted to support it. The most generous individual donor was John D. Rockefeller, who had made his fortune in the oil industry and is still considered to be the wealthiest American of all time. Sophia and Harriet met him at a fund-raising event in Ohio in 1882. Rockefeller donated all the money he had in his pockets - \$90.27, and he promised to give another \$250.



Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles

- But Rockefeller wanted to be sure that the two women were serious about their mission to create a successful school. He asked, “Are you going to stick? If so, I will do more for you.”
- **[SLIDE 5]** Laura Rockefeller was very supportive as well. Before Marrying John, her last name was Spelman. Her parents and sister were also generous contributors to the new school. And in 1884, Sophia (who became the school’s first president) suggested that the school’s name be changed to Spelman Seminary in honor of Laura’s family.
- In the beginning, training women to become teachers was the primary goal. But, by 1924, the school’s mission had changed, and it was offering a more general education. Because of this change, Sophia and Harriet decided to rename the school again. It would now be called Spelman College.
- **[SLIDE 6]** Sophia and Harriet did indeed stick to their mission. And John D. Rockefeller made good on his promise to “do more” for the school. In fact, Spelman College received, and continues to receive, millions of dollars from Rockefeller, his family, and the Rockefeller Foundation down to this day!



Laura Rockefeller

2. ACTIVITY and DISCUSSION

- Divide students into groups of two or three, and give each group a campus map, photograph sheet, and A DAY IN YOUR LIFE Worksheet.
- Students will learn about the various campus buildings and imagine what it would be like to be a Spelman student.
- Have each group tell the rest of the class their idea of what a day in the life of a Spelman student would like.
- **[SLIDE 7]** Remind students that Spelman college only enrolls female students.
- Mention that students at Spelman often take classes together with students from Morehouse College (an all-male college) and Clark Atlanta University (which enrolls both men and women), and that there are male professors at Spelman.
- Ask if they would like to go to a school that was only for boys or only for girls.



First Graduating Class of Spelman College

- Have the same groups work together to come up with reasons why a girl might prefer being a student at a college exclusively for women over a co-ed school.
- **NOTE: Here are points from various articles regarding the advantages of all-female schools:**
 - o More classes that focus on what women are experiencing in society
 - o Better opportunities for women to be prepared and supported to take on leadership roles
 - o More time and money spent on research that focuses on women
 - o Seeing more women in positions of leadership – as administrators and professors – helps female students to develop stronger identities and more positive self-images
 - o **[SLIDE 8]** “If you’re a girl and you’re used to boys sometimes having their voices heard over yours – well, it’s a real pleasure to be in a situation where you don’t have to fight to be heard. You don’t have to worry about how it sounds to be smart.” – Arlene Cash (Vice President of Enrollment Management at Spelman College)
 - o Have students comment on Cash’s statement

3. INFORMATION

- **[SLIDE 9]** A year after the college’s name was changed to Spelman College, a choral group was formed there. It was called the Spelman College Glee Club.
- A glee club is defined as a choral group, historically made up exclusively of male voices but also (as is the case at Spelman) of just female voices. Or they can include both male and female voices.
- Traditionally, these choral groups specialized in singing short songs (or glees). Glees, in this case, do not refer to the emotion of great delight. Rather, glees are songs written in three or more parts, usually without instrumental accompaniment, that were especially popular in the 1700 and 1800s.
- Perhaps students are familiar with the term “glee” from the television series that was on the air from 2009 to 2015.
- Today, you will find choral groups called glee clubs in high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the United States. But rarely, if ever, will you hear these groups singing actual glees.



4. DISCUSSION and ACTIVITY

- **[SLIDE 10]** A glee club is made up of several people singing together. Ask students what other activities require several people to work together to achieve a certain goal.
- Divide students into pairs or groups of three, and give each group a WORKING IN HARMONY Worksheet.
- In this activity, students will consider characteristics that contribute to the success of a choral group and see how those characteristics relate to the qualities that we need in order to be successful in life.

[**NOTE:** the Worksheet will contain the information in the left column. The right column will be blank, allowing students to think of the correlation.]

SUCCESSFUL CHORAL GROUP	SUCCESSFUL LIFE
1. Each singer is an individual, with his or her own distinct voice.	1. Each of us is unique, with his or her distinct personality, background, and point of view.
2. Each singer must work hard on their own – learning music, practicing the music, practicing vocal technique, and keeping their voice healthy.	2. Each of us must work hard to improve ourselves – our knowledge, our personality traits, our way of dealing with things, and our health.
3. When individual singers come together, they sometimes sing in unison, and sometimes they sing different musical lines. The challenge is making all the distinct voices and different lines blend and harmonize.	3. When an issue is discussed, sometimes we agree completely, and sometimes we have different lines of thought. The challenge is to learn how to express those different lines in a harmonious manner.
4. In order to produce beautiful music as a group, individual singers must listen to each other, be willing to put the sound of the group above the need to personally shine, and be humble enough to follow direction.	4. If we want to work well together with other individuals, we need to listen to each other, be willing to put the good of all above the advantage of self, and be humble enough to follow direction.
5. When a performance doesn't go as well as we would like, don't look for who to blame. And when a performance goes really well, give the credit to the group rather than to yourself. And if someone else gets a solo part, be happy for them.	5. When a project doesn't go as well as we would like, don't look for who to blame. And when a project goes really well, give the credit to the group rather than to yourself. And if someone else is given more responsibility, be happy for them.

- In attaining a successful life, as in working toward a successful performance, each of us must learn how to work hard, learn new ideas, learn how to think, learn how to learn, learn how to work together with others, learn how to ask questions, learn how to listen, learn how to follow, learn how to lead, learn from the past, learn how things really are now, learn how set goals for the future, learn how to fail, and learn how to succeed.

CONCLUSION

- The Spelman College Glee Club's success is proof that the individual members work for the good of the group. They have performed throughout the United States as well as in other countries such as Brazil and Canada.



- **[SLIDE 11]** And a highlight for the Glee Club took place in 2016, when they performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama.
- **[SLIDE 12]** The success of the Glee Club is also a reflection of the college's mission for all its students:
- **MISSION STATEMENT:** "Spelman College, a historically Black college and a global leader in the education of women of African descent, is dedicated to academic excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and the intellectual, creative, ethical, and leadership development of its students. Spelman empowers the whole person to engage the many cultures of the world and inspires a commitment to positive social change."
- **[SLIDES 13 & 14]** That Spelman has succeeded in its mission can be seen from the many outstanding women who have graduated from the college. Here are a few examples:
 - o Janet Bragg - first African-American female to obtain a commercial pilot license
 - o Marian Wright Edelman – lawyer, author, and founder of the Children's Defense Fund
 - o Audrey Manley – former U.S. Surgeon General
 - o Alice Walker – Pulitzer Prize-winning author
 - o Bernice King [daughter of Martin Luther King, Jr.] – public speaker, minister, lawyer
 - o Cassi Davis – actor, singer
 - o Rosalind Brewer – Chief Operating Officer of Starbucks; formerly the President and CEO of Sam's Club
 - o Tia Fuller – musician, composer, educator
- **[SLIDE 15]** Have students summarize lessons they learned from considering the history of Spelman College and its Glee Club.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Students will actively participate in the discussions.
- Students will complete the worksheets and participate in the associated activities.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Invite a Spelman College alumnus or representative to visit your classroom and talk to your students. Prepare the students to have well thought out questions to ask.
- Have students learn about other African American trailblazing women who lived (or live) in Minnesota:
 - o Emily O. Goodridge Grey (1834-1916) – First African American member (with her husband Ralph) of the Minnesota Territorial Pioneers (an organization founded in 1897 to honor those who settled in Minnesota before statehood)
 - o Lena Olive Smith (1885-1966) – First black woman to practice law in the state of Minnesota
 - o Nellie Stone Johnson (1905-2002) – First black person in Minneapolis elected to a citywide office as a member of the library board
 - o Toni “Tomboy” Stone (1921-1996) – First woman to play Negro League baseball, thus the first woman ever to play professionally in a men’s league.
 - o Jean Harris (1931-2001) – First black female mayor of Eden Prairie
 - o Dee Dunn (1944-2018) – First black female police officer of Minneapolis
 - o Wilhelmina M. Wright (1964-Present) – First black woman to serve on the Minnesota Supreme Court
 - o Neva Walker (1971-Present) – First black woman to serve in the Minnesota Legislature
 - o Josie Johnson (1930-present) – First black person to serve on the University of Minnesota’s Board of Regents

RESOURCES

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MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Geography (Geospatial Skills)

Standard 1: People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

History (Historical Thinking Skills)

Standard 1: Historians generally construct chronological narratives to characterize eras and explain past events and change over time.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

History

Standard 20: As the United States shifted from its agrarian roots into an industrial and global power, the rise of big business, urbanization and immigration led to institutionalized racism, ethnic and class conflict and new efforts at reform. (Development of an Industrial United States: 1870-1920).

SOCIAL STUDIES:

Peoples, Cultures and Change Over Time

Standard 5: History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively to address problems in their communities, state, nation and world.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Reading (Key Ideas and Details)

Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Standard 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Reading (Craft and Structure)

Standard 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Writing (Text Types and Purposes)

Standard 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Writing (Production and Distribution of Writing)

Standard 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Writing (Research to Build and Present Knowledge)

Standard 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

Speaking, Viewing, Listening and Media Literacy (Comprehension and Collaboration)

Standard 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

A DAY IN YOUR LIFE AT SPELMAN



Spelman College

A Choice to Change the World

Imagine you are 18 years old and just beginning your freshman (1st) year as a college student at Spelman. Where do you live? What classes are you taking? What other activities and places will be important to you? Use the Spelman Campus Map and Guide to create your idea of a day in your life as a Spelman student.

TASK #1: ANALYZE THE SPELMAN COLLEGE CAMPUS MAP

- Look at the names of the buildings.
- How many buildings are named after people?
Why do you think they're named that way?
- What do you think those buildings are used for?
- Which buildings have names that give you a clearer idea of what happens inside?
- There is only one place for sports shown on the map. What is it?

TASK #2: ANALYZE THE SPELMAN COLLEGE CAMPUS GUIDE

- Which are the buildings where students live?
- Which buildings have classrooms?
- Where can you study outside?
- Where can you find something to eat?
- Where can you relax with your friends?

TASK #3: CREATE YOUR DAY AT SPELMAN

- WAKE UP and GET READY in _____.
[Choose one residence hall.]
- EAT BREAKFAST in _____.
- Go to CLASSES at [Choose four subjects from the list and name the building where each subject is taught.]:
 - o to study _____.
 - o to study _____.
 - o to study _____.
 - o to study _____.
- Do HOMEWORK in _____.
- EAT DINNER in _____.
- Explore your interest in this student organization: _____.

NOTE: Now that you have imagined your day as a 1st year college student, some of you will have to reimagine that day at a college other than Spelman.

- Which of you would not be able to be a student at Spelman? Why?
- Go back to the map. If you cannot become a student at Spelman, where could you go instead?

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SPELMAN COLLEGE

NAME: _____

SPELMAN COLLEGE CAMPUS MAP



SPELMAN COLLEGE CAMPUS GUIDE

RESIDENCE BUILDINGS

- Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Hall
- Bessie Strong Hall
- Dorothy Shepard Manley Hall
- Howard-Harrelld Hall
- Laura Spelman Residence Hall
- Living-Learning Center II
- Morehouse-James Hall
- Sally Sage McAlpin Hall
- Stewart Living & Learning Center
- The Suites

SUBJECTS

- **Albro-Falconer-Manley Science Center** [Biochemistry; Biology; Chemistry; Computers; Engineering; Environment; Health; Math; Science]
- **Camille O. Hanks Cosby Academic Center** [Chinese; English; French; History; International Studies; Japanese; Religious Studies; Spanish; Writing]
- **Giles Hall** [Anthropology; Business; Education; Teaching; Politics]
- **Rockefeller Fine Arts Building** [Art; Art History; Drama; Filmmaking; Music; Photography]

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

- French Club (Francophonies)
- Chemistry Club
- Student Government Association
- Actively Changing Tomorrow through Service
- Drama and Dance Ensemble
- Chinese Culture Club
- Math Club
- Pre-Law Society
- Health Careers Club
- Spelman Hip-Hop Collective
- American Sign Language Club
- Environmental Task Force
- African Students' Association
- National Society of Engineers
- Debate Club

OTHER BUILDINGS

- Academic COMPUTING Center
- BOOKSTORE & POST OFFICE
- MacVicar HEALTH Services
- Manley College Center
 - Alma Upshaw DINING Hall
 - Beverly D. Tatum Suites DINING Hall [only for students who live in “The Suites” residence building]
- Robert W. Woodruff LIBRARY
- Sisters CHAPEL

OTHER PLACES

- The Oval
- The New Oval
- Tennis Courts
- Downtown Atlanta
- Morehouse College
- Clark Atlanta University

VOCALESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SPELMAN COLLEGE

SPELMAN COLLEGE

RESIDENCE BUILDINGS



**Abby Aldrich
Rockefeller Hall**



Bessie Strong Hall



Bessie Strong Hall



Bessie Strong Hall



**Laura Spelman
Residence Hall**



Living-Learning Center II



Morehouse-James Hall



Sally Sage McAlpin Hall



**Steward Living &
Learning Ctr.**



The Suites

CLASSROOMS



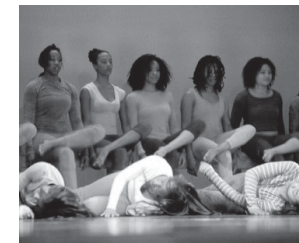
**Albro-Falconer-Manely
Science Center**



**Camille O. Hanks Cosby
Academic Center**



Giles Hall



**John D. Rockefeller
Fine Arts Building**

SPELMAN COLLEGE

OTHER BUILDINGS



Academic Computing Center



MacVicar Health Services



Alma Upshaw Dining Hall



Robert W. Woodruff AUC Library



Sisters Chapel



Book Store

VOCALLESSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SPELMAN COLLEGE

SPELMAN COLLEGE

OTHER PLACES



The Oval



The New Oval



Tennis Courts



Downtown Atlanta



Morehouse College



Clark Atlanta University

WORKING IN HARMONY

To become a successful choral group like the Spelman College Glee Club, you have to be able to harmonious – both musically and otherwise.

Listed below are some characteristics that contribute to the success of a choral group. Think about how those characteristics relate to the qualities that we need in order to be successful in life

SUCCESSFUL CHORAL GROUP	SUCCESSFUL LIFE
1. Each singer is an individual, with his or her own distinct voice.	
2. Each singer must work hard on their own – learning music, practicing the music, practicing vocal technique, and keeping their voice healthy.	
3. When individual singers come together, they sometimes sing in unison, and sometimes they sing different musical lines. The challenge is making all the distinct voices and different lines blend and harmonize.	
4. In order to produce beautiful music as a group, individual singers must listen to each other, be willing to put the sound of the group above the need to personally shine, and be humble enough to follow direction.	
5. When a performance doesn't go as well as we would like, don't look for who to blame. And when a performance goes really well, give the credit to the group rather than to yourself. And if someone else gets a solo part, be happy for them.	

VOCALSENCE WITNESS PROGRAM – YET THEY PERSIST | SPELMAN COLLEGE

NAME: _____

LESSON PLAN: “A CHOICE TO CHANGE THE WORLD”

Lyrics by Sarah Stevens

Music by Dr. Kevin Johnson



Sarah Stevens, Class of 2007
She wrote the words to this song.

LEARNING GOAL

Students will learn some of the ways “A Choice to Change the World” has been woven into the culture and climate of the school.

MATERIALS

[included with the WITNESS Online Resources]

- Recording of the Spelman Glee Club singing “A Choice to Change the World”
- Visual Resources PowerPoint [SLIDES 13, 14, 15]
- Electronic or paper copies of the song lyrics
- Three of the animated quotes from Angela Davis, Michelle Obama, and Sojourner Truth

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1881 as the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, Spelman College is the oldest historically black college for women in America.

In 2007, senior Sarah Stevens, a member of the Glee Club, wrote the words to what eventually became the song, “A Choice to Change the World.” The song melody was created by Dr. Kevin Johnson, the Glee Club Director, and Sarah Stevens.

The song was strongly influenced by Spelman’s mission and motto. It will be sung by students far into the future because it is now the school’s anthem. It will be performed by the Glee Club at the 2019 WITNESS Concert.

KEY TERMS

Anthem:	a song that has special importance for a particular group of people, an organization or a country; often sung on special occasions
Mission Statement:	a formal summary of the aims and values of a company, organization, or individual
Mural:	a painting or other work of art executed directly on a wall

PROCESS

ACTIVITY #1

1. Tell students that the Spelman College Glee Club will be guest artists at the WITNESS concert. The Glee Club sings a song that is very important to all students, faculty, and alumnae and other school supporters, “A Choice to Change the World.” The song is now the official school song, or anthem.
2. Ask students to define the term, “anthem.” They will likely link it to the “Star Spangled Banner.”
 - Provide a definition: “A song that has special importance for a particular group of people, an organization, or a country, often sung on a special occasion.”
3. Distribute or display the song’s lyrics and listen to the recording as students follow the lyrics.
 - As they listen, direct them to circle key words that stand out for them.
 - After listening, ask students to discuss what they’ve learned about Spelman.

ACTIVITY #2

1. Connect the song to the Spelman College Mission.
 - Read the statement and invite comments and questions from the students. Tell them that the song’s title, “A Choice to Change the World” has become the short version of the school’s mission. It is also easier to remember!
2. Revisit the song lyrics and ask students to discuss their thoughts and opinions about how the song is connected to the formal mission statement.

ACTIVITY #3

View some of the ways the school highlights the song’s messages. Images can be found on the Visual Resources PowerPoint from the WITNESS Online Resources. As student’s view the images, invite comments about what they tell us about Spelman College.

1. Spelman College commissioned a series of animated quotes from 40 women achievers spread across many years, who worked (and still work) for social justice. They include practitioners, activists, scholars, writers and others who have effected change. The series was produced by Signature Design in 2012.

SPELMAN MISSION STATEMENT

Spelman College, a historically Black college and a global leader in the education of women of African descent, is dedicated to academic excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and the intellectual, creative, ethical, and leadership development of its students. Spelman empowers the whole person to engage the many cultures of the world and inspires a commitment to positive social change.

- Hallway monitors in Laura Spelman Hall play the animated quotes. The program was designed to inspire the students enrolled in Spelman's Social Justice Fellows Program, and the rest of the student population attend Spelman College and walk through Laura Spelman Hall.
- Three of the animated quotes from Angela Davis, Michelle Obama, and Sojourner Truth can be found in the WITNESS Online Resources.



A Choice to Change the World Mural

2. A mural now greets visitors to Laura Spelman Hall. [SLIDE 15] Its title is also “A Choice to Change the World.” The mural is arranged in chronological order, left to right. The left side begins with the construction of Laura Spelman Hall in 1880. The far-right ends in the present.

The mural consists of three layers.

- The background depicts a timeline of how Laura Spelman Hall was used and how it changed across 138 years.
- The next layer depicts changing campus life along with political and social justice national movements.
- And the top layer is devoted to women who were or are presently advocates for social justice. Women featured are Spelman College Alumnae and Presidents, Scholar Activists, American Advocates, and International Advocates.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Learn more about mission statements. Does your school have one? Your school districts? What does it say? Could a school choir develop a mission statement?
- Search the web for the anthems of songs you sing, or for the anthems of countries represented in your school population. Learn more about the United States anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner” at the Smithsonian Institute site, <https://amhistory.si.edu/star-spangledbanner/>.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading

Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it.

MUSIC: Respond

Standard 7: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work.

Standard 8: Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.

RESOURCES

WEBSITES

<https://youtu.be/cxkiQCJBt9w>

Recording of the song by the Spelman Glee Club

https://www.spelman.edu/docs/spelman-messenger/spelman-messenger-fall2008.pdf?sfvrsn=83f272a0_6

Song lyrics

www.spelman.edu Spelman website

“A CHOICE TO CHANGE THE WORLD”

Sarah Stevens & Dr. Kevin Johnson

Chorus It's my choice
 And I choose to change the world
 It's my voice
 And I'll speak with pride and courage
 I'll be the change I wanna see
 I'll scream out loud and say
 It's my choice
 And I choose to change the world

Verse One Why put off for tomorrow
 What I can do today
 Why wait for another
 When I can pave the way
 No matter how young or old
 I hold the power of change
 Rather large or small, few or all
 My choice remains the same

Chorus

Verse Two Within this institution
 We are women of change
 The shoulders that we stand upon
 Never received applause or fame
 but in their honor, I will live
 Each day better than before
 And show just how it takes a choice
 To change yourself and so much more

Chorus

Bridge The change begins today
 With every choice that I make
 Spelman look around and see
 Where the changes need to be
 End poverty...Fighting overseas
 Another dies from a disease...End hypocrisy
 Starving on the streets...And no one does a single thing

Chorus

 It's my choice
 Make a choice
 What's your choice?
 It's my choice
 And I choose to change the world.

PART 3:

VOCALESSENCE TEACHING ARTISTS: THEIR WORKSHOPS AND HOW TO PREPARE FOR THEM



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WORKSHOPS WITH VOCALESSENCE TEACHING ARTISTS

This year, students will learn about the history and importance of several trailblazing women of African American and African descent from both our local Twin Cities community and beyond. Through the lens of their artistic medium (such as dance, music composition, singing, or acting), Teaching Artists will engage students in a variety of activities and discussions that will help further their understanding of these trailblazing women and the positive impacts they have had on our communities. Students will be energized and inspired to use various modes of creative expression to explore what it takes to become trailblazers in their own communities.

To prepare for your workshop or residency experience with the Teaching Artist, a planning meeting will be scheduled at least three weeks prior to the first workshop day. This meeting is an important step in the process and provides a time for all participating school teachers and the Teaching Artist to: 1) craft the vision of the workshop content and activities, 2) share ideas (why and how), 3) walk through logistics and daily class schedule (who, where, when), 4) tour the workshop facilities and classrooms at the school, and 5) identify what materials or other preparation work needs to be done in advance of the first workshop day. Planning meetings should be 30 to 60 minutes in length and can be scheduled during common prep periods or before/after the school day. It is imperative that all participating teachers and staff be present at the planning meeting to facilitate a successful, cohesive and engaging workshop experience for the students and teachers involved.

TIMOTHY BERRY



Timothy Berry has performed nationally as a singer, actor, and percussionist; including August Wilson's *Fences*, and *Black Nativity* with Penumbra Theater, and *La Bohème* with the Minnesota Opera. He has also performed with Grammy Award winner, Larnelle Harris. His recorded music is on a variety of CDs, from Gospel to Caribbean, including his *Soul Drums* series, which stems from West African, Afro-Cuban, and African American music traditions. Dr. Berry has received several awards as a composer including: The Live Music for Dance award from the American Composer's Forum, the Cultural Community Partnership grant, and winner in the Essentially Choral Competition for emerging American composers sponsored by VocalEssence and the American Composers Forum. He has composed commissioned works for dance, choral, and church groups.

Dr. Berry is an Assistant Professor and Director of Educator Partnerships and Student Support for the College of Education at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He maintains an active research agenda including critical race theory, project-based learning, and music and the arts. A member of the Critical Race Studies in Education Association, Dr. Berry has presented at national conferences and leads professional development in P-12 and higher education settings on topics that focus on critical race theory, leadership, racial equity, cultural competency, and organizational change. His doctoral degree in Educational Leadership is from MSU, Mankato. He holds a Masters degree in Music Education with an emphasis in multicultural music from The University of Minnesota.

PATRICIA BROWN



For 24 years, Patricia Brown has been an active member of the Twin Cities arts community as a dancer, instructor, choreographer, and performer. She is an African-based movement instructor whose fusion style is rooted in dance of West Africa, other African regions, the Caribbean, and Americas. Incorporating various forms of artistic expression, her classes are a dynamic representation connecting the mind, creative energy, and body in motion. In addition to being a teaching artist with the VocalEssence WITNESS School Program, she teaches students in various settings, including primary and secondary schools, juvenile detention facilities, and summer arts programs, and creates choreography for theater, dance groups, and choirs. Patricia is an adjunct faculty member in the Theatre Arts and Dance departments at both Macalester College, and the University of Minnesota, where she received the College of Continuing Education Distinguished Teaching Award, and the Century Council Diverse Community Award. In 2013 Penumbra Summer Institute created the Patricia A. Brown scholarship in her honor. She was also nominated for a Sage Award for “Outstanding Dance Educator.” In 2015, Arts-Us presented her with the Legacy Arts Recognition Award.

Her choreography, and performances have been seen on area stages, including the Walker Arts Center, O’Shaughnessy Auditorium, Minnesota Historical Society, Patrick’s Cabaret, Macalester College, and Penumbra, Southern, Pillsbury House, Children’s, SteppingStone, History, and In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theaters. National credits include Jazz at Lincoln Center, Guthrie Theater, Lied Center for Performing Arts, University of Michigan Men’s Glee Club, Lincoln Memorial, St. John the Divine, and Center for Puppetry Arts.

BRANDON COMMODORE



Brandon Commodore is a well-versed musician whose love and passion for music shines through at every lesson, rehearsal, workshop or performance. Brandon decided to follow his father’s footsteps and picked up a pair of drumsticks at a very young age. In high school, Brandon began working professionally in the Twin Cities area. Later while studying Music Performance at McNally Smith College of music, Brandon joined the Grammy Award winning Sounds of Blackness, shortly thereafter Grammy nominated Mint Condition, and currently serves as drummer and bandleader for esteemed singer, songwriter and producer Stokley Williams. When not touring with Stokley, Brandon works as a music producer, songwriter, teaching artist, and bandleader to several projects in the Twin Cities (including his own, #MPLS) and continues to be a student of musicianship.

Off the stage, Brandon cares very deeply for young people. He strives to offer mentorship, guidance, and positive example through the art of music and creative expression.

GINGER COMMODORE



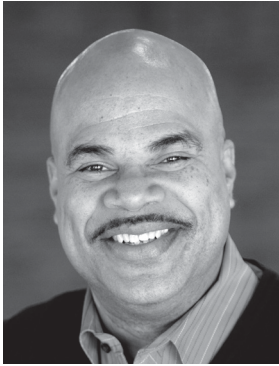
Ginger Commodore is a singer, songwriter and actress who enjoys an illustrious career in the Twin Cities area. She is an original member of the Grammy Award-winning singing ensemble The Sounds of Blackness and several local Gospel groups. She is also an original member of the vocal jazz ensemble Moore by Four. She's shared the stage with such notables as Doc Severenson, Patrice Rushen, Kenny Loggins and Rachelle Ferrell. Ginger's theatrical credits include productions with the Minnesota Opera Company, the Mixed Blood Theatre, the Children's Theatre Company, Hey City Theatre, the Penumbra Theatre Company and Chanhassen Dinner Theater, Park Square Theatre and with Wonderlust Productions. Her career has led her to travel across the United States, and the world, performing in Italy, England, Finland, Portugal, and Japan. Ginger has expanded into producing and performing in tribute shows in the Twin Cities. With her band GCQ, she's performed tributes to Stevie Wonder, Natalie Cole and Roberta Flack and most recently Aretha Franklin. Ginger is also an instructor with Penumbra Theatre's Summer Institute.

KARLA NWEJE



Karla Nweje is an arts educator, choreographer, performer, and literary artist. She holds a BFA in Dance Performance and Composition from Brooklyn College/CUNY. As a literary artist, Karla is a published author, anthology editor, and contributing writer to literary publications and writes/presents interactive workshops for youth. After obtaining teaching credentials, she worked as a NYC high school language arts teacher by day and a performer by night. During this time, she used movement and theater arts techniques to enhance the learning process in her classroom. The positive results she witnessed affirmed her conviction that the arts are vital to comprehensive youth development. Karla has performed and toured with dance and theater companies in NYC, Atlanta, and the Twin Cities. She continues to create and share work through The Samimejon Movement, her group performance initiative. She is on several teaching artist rosters, including COMPAS (Creative Classroom and Artful Aging programs), East Side Arts Council, and The Cowles Center for Dance. A 2013 recipient of Ordway's Excellence in Educational Service Award, Karla enters her 10th season as a teaching artist and design team member for its Dance to Learn Program. She is a regular presenter and speaker at arts and education conferences and was the keynote presenter for NWC's 2014 Creativity Festival. Through arts residencies, workshops, professional development and more, Ms. Nweje continues to cultivate partnerships across organizations, programs, and school districts to make quality arts experiences accessible to all learners.

T. MYCHAEAL RAMBO



Regional Emmy Award-winning actor, vocalist, arts educator and community organizer; T. Mychael Rambo has made an indelible mark here in the Twin Cities performing principle roles at such theaters as Penumbra, the Guthrie, Ordway, Illusion Theatre, Mixed Blood, Park Square Theatre, Children's Theatre, Ten Thousand Things Theater and Minnesota Opera, to name but a few. Nationally and internationally his stage credits include Carnegie Hall and performances abroad in Africa, Europe and South America. He has appeared in local and national television commercials, feature films, HBO mini-series, and other television programming. T. Mychael is an accomplished residency artist and an affiliate professor in the College of Liberal Arts, Theatre Arts and Dance at the University of Minnesota.

As a recording artist, T. Mychael has released two popular CD's: *Simply* - a collection of jazz standards; and *The Gift- A Christmas With Love* - a selection of original and holiday classics. T. Mychael had the great honor of singing the National Anthem for both President Barak Obama and former President Jimmy Carter. Mr. Rambo is also the proud recipient of the 2009 Sally Award in Education presented by the Ordway and the 2010 Minnesota Black Music Award. His other honors and awards include Young Audience Artist of the Year with his dear friend and teaching partner Anita Ruth, McKnight Theatre Artist Fellowship, Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Fellowship, Bush Finalist and both the University of Minnesota Century Council Community Award and Outstanding Community Service Award among others.

ANITA RUTH



Anita Ruth has been active in the Twin Cities theatrical, musical and educational circles for many years. After serving as musical director for eighty shows at the Chanhassen Dinner Theaters, she has led a varied and exciting life as a freelance musician and educator. She spent eight years at the Children's Theater Company in both musical and educational capacities. Continuing her work young people, Anita has partnered with T. Mychael Rambo on the COMPAS Artists Roster, being named Artists of the Year in 2006 by Young Audiences of Minnesota. She also worked for fifteen years with Project Success, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to helping inner city students thrive and fulfill their dreams. She now holds the position of Resident Music Director at Artistry Theater, formerly Bloomington Civic Theater. Anita is very grateful to have the chance to participate in the VocalEssence WITNESS Program, and being able to bring knowledge and acclamation to the culture and history of African Americans.

ROXANE WALLACE



Roxane Wallace is active in the arts as a performer, teacher, dancer, and choreographer. Originally from California, she holds a BA in Philosophy from the University of California at Berkeley. Constantly engaged in her field, she has worked with choreographers and directors of both regional and international acclaim earning her the “Best Dancer” title in the 2004 City Pages “Best of the Twin Cities”, a 2007 MN Sage Award for Outstanding Performer, and the honor of being named a McKnight Artist Fellow in Dance. Mrs. Wallace was seen nationally and internationally as a principal artist with Stuart Pimsler Dance and Theater Company for 15 years. As a creator of original, socially conscious work Mrs. Wallace wrote, choreographed, directed and produced “Evolution of a Soul Sista” and her “REvolutionary Soul Sistas” was presented by The Red Eye Theater where she served as a member of their Critical Core group. She continues to conduct workshops, serve as a guest instructor and/or choreographer and provides inspiration through

dance to all ages in schools, universities, community groups and organizations around the Twin Cities and beyond. Currently, in addition to the Vocal Essence WITNESS program, she is a company member of Time Track Productions, a teaching artist for the Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts and an instructor at Zenon Dance Studio and School.

IMAGE CREDITS/SOURCES

COVER:

Spelman College Glee Club with the 44th President of the United States Barack Obama:

https://www.spelman.edu/images/glee-club-images/media_glee2016_hires3wh.jpg?sfvrsn=da9c9850_2

VocaleSSence Singers of This Age

Bruce Silcox

Hallie Quinn Brown

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21210/hallie-quinn-brown#view-photo=32258204>

Former Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton

<https://blogs.thomsonreuters.com/answeron/authors/sharon-sayles-belton/>

Representative Ilhan Omar

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members/photo.asp?district=60B>

Council Member Andrea Jenkins:

<https://www.instyle.com/news/andrea-jenkins-trans-first-transgender-black-woman-elected-public-office>

PART 1:

Robert Graham

Caroline Wood

VocaleSSence Chorus

Krivit Photography & Bruce Silcox

Philip Brunelle

Krivit Photography

G. Phillip Shoultz, III

Laura Alpizar

WITNESS Artist Workshops

Stephen Maturen

VocaleSSence Singers Of This Age

Bruce Silcox

Spelman College Glee Club

https://www.spelman.edu/images/glee-club-images/media_glee2016_hires3wh.jpg?sfvrsn=da9c9850_2

Orchestra Hall

http://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/images/rentals/rental_overview_header.png

PART 2:

SHOSHOLOZA

Southern Africa map

<http://www.globalcitymap.com/africa/southern-africa-map.html>

Shosholoza sheet music

<http://www.joythroughmusic.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Shosholoza.pdf>

South African steam train

https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-w4XHw2-uoJM/Wa_CYeargBI/AAAAAAAAAW4/G9U-qGLd3A0n6LMxkiiGLXSBg4YTXTDUACLcBGAs/s1600/shosholoza1.jpg

HALLIE QUINN BROWN

Hallie Quinn Brown full profile photo

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f2/Hallie_Q_Brown.jpg

Hallie Quinn Brown white dress, Wilburforce

<https://www.mydaytondailynews.com/news/hallie-quinn-brown-voice-for-social-change/Tlr7jBlkXO7qwUg7GEptGI/#mKrn2vLEe-aArMsg6z9zJw>

Women in uniforms

<https://www.mydaytondailynews.com/news/hallie-quinn-brown-voice-for-social-change/Tlr7jBlkXO7qwUg7GEptGI/#m6bBX-PILeEaArMsg6z9zJw>

Banner used by the Oklahoma Federation of Colored Women's Clubs

https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2010.2.1abc

Original Hallie Q. Brown Community Center building, 553 Aurora, St. Paul, MN

<http://collections.mnhs.org/cms/display.php?irn=10713563>

Girls exhibiting their summer program handicrafts at Hallie Q. Brown Community Center

<http://collections.mnhs.org/cms/display.php?irn=10704415>

Penumbra Theatre Company's "Wedding Band"

<https://www.backstage.com/interview/minnesotas-penumbra-theatre-company-inspires-both-outrage-and-unity/>

Hallie Q. Brown Community Center lighthouse logo

<http://www.hallieqbrown.org/site/index.php/center-services/rooms/>

AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME 'ROUND

The Freedom Riders, college student activists, 1964

<https://kimberlythomerson.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/freedom-riders-mississippi.jpg>

Martin Luther King, Jr. with Civil Rights marchers in the Selma to Montgomery March, 1965

<https://images.jacobinmag.com/2015/01/17002641/civil-rights11-1.jpg>

Pete Seeger on the left with activists in Greenwood, Mississippi, 1963

https://media.npr.org/assets/img/2013/08/28/gettyimages_136347338-60bf7c9623d65fc5c41e3c83af92307c-352caa84-s1600-c85.jpg

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round sheet music

<http://www.justicechoir.org/songbook/>

SHARON SAYLES BELTON

Sharon Sayles Belton Headshot

<https://blogs.thomsonreuters.com/answerson/authors/sharon-sayles-belton/>

Sharon Sayles Belton high school photo

<https://hclib.tumblr.com/post/57085621346/central-high-school-centennial-information>

Sharon Sayles Belton campaign speech photo

<https://www.twincities.com/2016/02/09/15-trailblazing-black-minnesotans-you-should-know-more-about/>

Sharon Sayles Belton

http://terrygydesen.com/homepage_slider/slider-7/

Sharon Sayles Belton Bridge

<http://www.legalcurrent.com/former-minneapolis-mayor-sharon-sayles-belton-honored-with-bridge-dedication/>

Sharon Sayles Belton Bronze Bust, Minneapolis City Hall

<https://mshale.com/2017/05/19/sharon-sayles-belton-bronze-bust-unveiled-minneapolis-city-hall/>

STILL I RISE

Gospel Choir from the Voice Council Magazine

<http://www.voicecouncil.com/singing-harmonies-4-blocking-gospel-chords-david-combes/>

And Still I Rise book jacket

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13211.And_Still_I_Rise

ILHAN OMAR

Ilhan Omar headshot

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members/photo.asp?district=60B>

Ilhan Omar side profile headshot

<http://www.citypages.com/news/ilhan-omars-improbable-journey-from-refugee-camp-to-minnesota-legislature/398441901>

Ilhan Omar swearing-in ceremony

<https://www.voanews.com/a/first-somali-american-legislator-begins-work-in-minnesota/3662397.html>

Ilhan Omar Time Magazine Cover

<http://allthingsomali.com/time-magazine-chooses-ilhan-omar-first-somali-american-muslim-legislator-for-its-firsts-cover/>

ELLA'S SONG

Ella Baker portrait

<http://singyoursongthemovie.com/ella-baker/>

Ella Baker, photo by Danny Lyon, 1964

<https://snccdigital.org/people/ella-baker/>

Ella Baker giving a speech

<https://ellabakercenter.org/about/who-was-ella-baker>

ANDREA JENKINS

Andrea Jenkins portrait

<https://campus-climate.umn.edu/content/andrea-jenkins-chicago-transgender-oral-history-project>

Andrea Jenkins in City Council chamber

<http://www.mndaily.com/article/2018/01/n-former-umn-oral-historian-steps-into-leadership-role-on-minneapolis-city-council>

Andrea Jenkins interview

<https://www.twincities.com/2016/12/18/umn-oral-history-project-captures-range-of-transgender-experiences/>

Andrea Jenkins, Art Changes Everything shirt

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ward8/about-andrea>

Andrea Jenkins Artwork

<https://www.tcdailyplanet.net/andrea-jenkins-grand-marshal-of-2015-twin-cities-pride-uplifts-trans-voices-photos/>

CAIN'T NO ONE KNOW

Ysaÿe Barnwell, composer

<https://www.eomega.org/article/singing-the-lessons-of-african-american-history>

Example of an annotated text of a poem

<https://thejoyofteachingblog.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/015.jpg>

Soweto Demonstrations

<http://i1.wp.com/www.orondeamiller.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/soweto-uprising.jpg>

The Stonewall Inn, September 1969

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/35/Stonewall_Inn_1969.jpg/330px-Stonewall_Inn_1969.jpg

Photograph of police action of the Children's Crusade in Birmingham, Alabama on May 3, 1963

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Moore_\(photographer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Moore_(photographer))

Protestors in LA with sign quoting Rodney King

https://s-i.huffpost.com/gadgets/slideshows/421656/slide_421656_5402836_free.jpg

NO MIRRORS IN MY NANA'S HOUSE

No Mirrors in my Nana's House book cover

<https://images.gr-assets.com/books/1328875724l/98409.jpg>

Sweet Honey in the Rock 1

<http://sweethoneyintherock.org/music-media/gallery/>

Sweet Honey in the Rock 2

http://epmgaa.media.clients.ellingtoncms.com/img/photos/2014/12/19/sweet_honey_t750x550.jpg?d885fc46c41745b3b-5de550c70336c1b382931d2

SPELMAN COLLEGE GLEE CLUB

Spelman College outdoor photo

<https://africa.si.edu/2017/02/spelman-gee-club/>

Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles, c. 1881

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spelman_College#/media/File:Harriet_E._Giles_and_Sophia_B._Packard.jpg

Laura Spelman Rockefeller

<https://www.nycommunitytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/LauraSpelmanRockefeller.pdf>

First graduating class of Spelman College, 1892

http://www.gutenberg-e.org/gordon/details/Chapter2paragraph36_23.html

Spelman College Glee Club

<http://www.hppr.org/post/christmas-morehouse-selman-gee-clubs-tuesday-dec-26-2-pm-ct>

Spelman College Glee Club with President Barack Obama

https://www.selman.edu/images/glee-club-images/media_glee2016_hires3wh.jpg?sfvrsn=da9c9850_2

Spelman College graduates

<http://www.newnownext.com/spelman-college-considers-admitting-transgender-women/08/2016/>

Spelman College "A Choice to Change the World" logo

<https://hbcumoney.com/2013/02/25/hbcu-endowment-feature-selman-college/>

Spelman College campus map

<https://www.selman.edu/about-us/welcome-center/campus-map>

Photos of Spelman College campus buildings (Spelman College Campus Guide worksheets)

<https://www.selman.edu/about-us/welcome-center/campus-map>

A CHOICE TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Sarah Stevens, Class of 2007, co-composer of the song “A Choice to Change the World”

<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQhtDIIWnPZ5wFbFBd4hsBgF-GIaJc1dQaPJ-2T22gh2FavSfrp0g>

A Choice to Change the World mural, Spelman College

<http://thesignaturedesign.com/projects/campuspublic/a-choice-to-change-the-world>

PART 3:

VOCALLESSENCE TEACHING ARTISTS:

THEIR WORKSHOPS AND HOW TO PREPARE FOR THEM

WITNESS Workshop with Ginger Commodore

Stephen Maturen

WITNESS Workshop with Patricia Brown

Stephen Maturen



IMAGE COURTESY OF TA-COUMBA AIKEN



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