

An Examination of the Impact of the Civil Rights Movement via the Life of Dr. Dezra White, M.D

Introduction:

The purpose of this lesson is for students to learn about the impact of the Civil Rights Movement. Students will summarize the effects of social, political and medical changes caused by organized activities. Students will look at the experience of Dr. Dezra White, M.D.

Students Background Knowledge:

Student should be familiar with protest during the Civil Right Movements to fight against Jim Crow laws which forced African-Americans to live segregated lives. Students should also know that Dr. Martin Luther King's non-violent protest left its mark on not only the United States, but also the world.

Teacher Background Knowledge:

The teacher should be knowledgeable about laws and customs that did not give Blacks the same rights and privileges as white Americans. Teacher should discuss **Jim Crow laws** which kept Blacks from voting by enacting **literacy tests** and the **poll taxes**. The literacy test was a requirement for Blacks to read before they could vote. African-Americans failed the exam because of racism; a black voter was often given a more difficult test than a white voter. If a Black person desired to vote he must pay a tax, called a poll tax. Many Blacks was so poor they could not pay the tax and consequently could not vote. The **Civil Rights Act of 1965** made literacy tests illegal. In 1966 poll taxes were outlawed. Teachers should inform students that the protests and marches of 1963 were a turning point because non-violent action became the standard method of opposing injustice. Other groups employed a radical method of protest that became known as the "Black Power Movement". The Civil Rights Movement also led to outward signs of "Black is Beautiful". The teacher should also remind students of Dr. King's "March on Washington", which told both the American people and Congress that Blacks and minorities deserved and demanded equal rights. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech told of his dream for peace and harmony in America and the world as a whole.

Adherence to TEKS:

USH.7. Trace the development and identify the impact of the civil rights movement, including significant individuals and laws.

Objective:

(USH.7.2) Summarize the impact and effects of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Key Concept:

Inequity –political, social, or economic- often causes organized protest against the government. Legislation expands opportunity for men and women.

1. Teacher will project the transparency on board with the word nonviolence.
2. Tell student just to take one minute to sit still and just think about the word nonviolence.

3. After one-minute wait time have students to take one minute to write down their thoughts on paper about nonviolence.

4. Ask 3 students to respond about nonviolence.

5. Write the following statements on a transparency for classroom discussion.

- a. Houston Police department will not hire Black men and women.
- b. All Black students must go to Texas Southern University and all White students must go to the University of Houston
- c. A white woman and a black woman work the same job but the white woman gets paid more.
- d. A man and a woman works the same job, he gets paid more.

6. After 10 minutes of discussion tell students these practices were evident in the past and still exist today.

7. Tell students that Black Americans got tired of this unequal treatment.

8. Dr. King used nonviolence to achieve social change. On the other hand, Malcolm X believed that one must use any means necessary to achieve social change.

9. Go to <http://www.webcorp.com/civilrights/mlk.htm> to listen to Dr. King's speech.

10. Discuss the video/speech

11. Tell students that they had 1 day to read "A conversation with Dr. Dezra White".

12. The teacher will give a teacher talk from the interview of Dr. Dezra White. Teacher will project this teacher talk (transparency) on the screen. Students will take notes. Teacher will tell students that Dr. White was also part of the Houston Medical Forum.

Dr. White was born in 1941 during World War II (1939-1945). Went to Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia, and from Morehouse, came back to Texas for the University of Texas, UTMB, which is in Galveston. He is an Obstetrician and Gynecologist. He was impressed with the opportunity he had here in Houston, Texas as a black doctor. In 1972 he joined Dr. Hollins and Dr Lord at Lockwood Clinic. Later, he worked near St. Joseph Hospital because of the core of black physicians that were already at St. Joseph. Dr. White's brother-in-law, Dr. Hermann Barnett was the first graduate from the University of Texas Medical Branch as an anesthesiologist.

Dr. White's second choice to practice medicine was Atlanta, Georgia, because that city had a strong base of black physicians and a good source of black patients. There were many black universities -- Morehouse, Spellman, Clark, AU Center -- that created a large African-American population. Dr. White believed that the black community in Houston was similar to a rough diamond, simply in need of some polish. Dr. White also believes that white physicians are going to refer most of their patients to white physicians.

Because Dr. White had three uncles who were physician, and other older physicians who were members of the Houston Medical Forum, he also became a member. He encouraged young

physicians to become members of the Houston Medical Forum, to get referrals from other doctors.

In the 1940's and 1950's, Dr. Edward Sprott (Dr. Dezra White's uncle) applied for a loan and built his own hospital. Dr. Sprott did this because segregation meant that Blacks could not enter white hospitals, and therefore required an all-black hospital. This served as motivation and inspiration for Dr. White, and contributed to his desire to become a doctor. To do so, Dr. White attended Morehouse University, an all-male black college with a strong pre-med program.

Throughout his life, Dr. White has been very active in his church and other organizations such as the Alphas and the local Morehouse alumni association, as well as politics. Dr. White has met with and given advice to local leaders such as: Sheila Jackson Lee, Sylvester Turners, Mayor Brown and Mayor White. Despite all his activity and advancement, Dr. White still believes that people must overcome racism. Dr. White characterized this racism thusly:

Oh, that's a black doctor. They think we are inferior or know less than they do. They find out, we know just as much as you do, or more! You know, but it's just that concept that goes back from way back when. We're slowly overcoming that. Maybe with the next generation...

Dr. White has experienced racism throughout his life. One example is when Fiesta insurance went to the hospital to recruit for one of their panels, but no black or minority doctors were on that panel. To help fight discrimination, Dr. White supports the Negro College Fund and supports black artists. He also advises students interested in medicine to continue their studies; initiative and drive helped him succeed and will help others become doctors.

14. Ask students what inferences they can make about the Civil Rights Movement from Dr. Whites interview and the teacher talk.

15. Allow 4 students to respond.

16. Tell students that when Dr, Martin Luther King, Jr. died, the Civil Rights Movement did not die with him. The fight for equality continues. It continues with legislation, in the courts, voting, affirmative action, etc.

17. Students will play a Bingo Game "Dr. Dezra White Bingo Game."