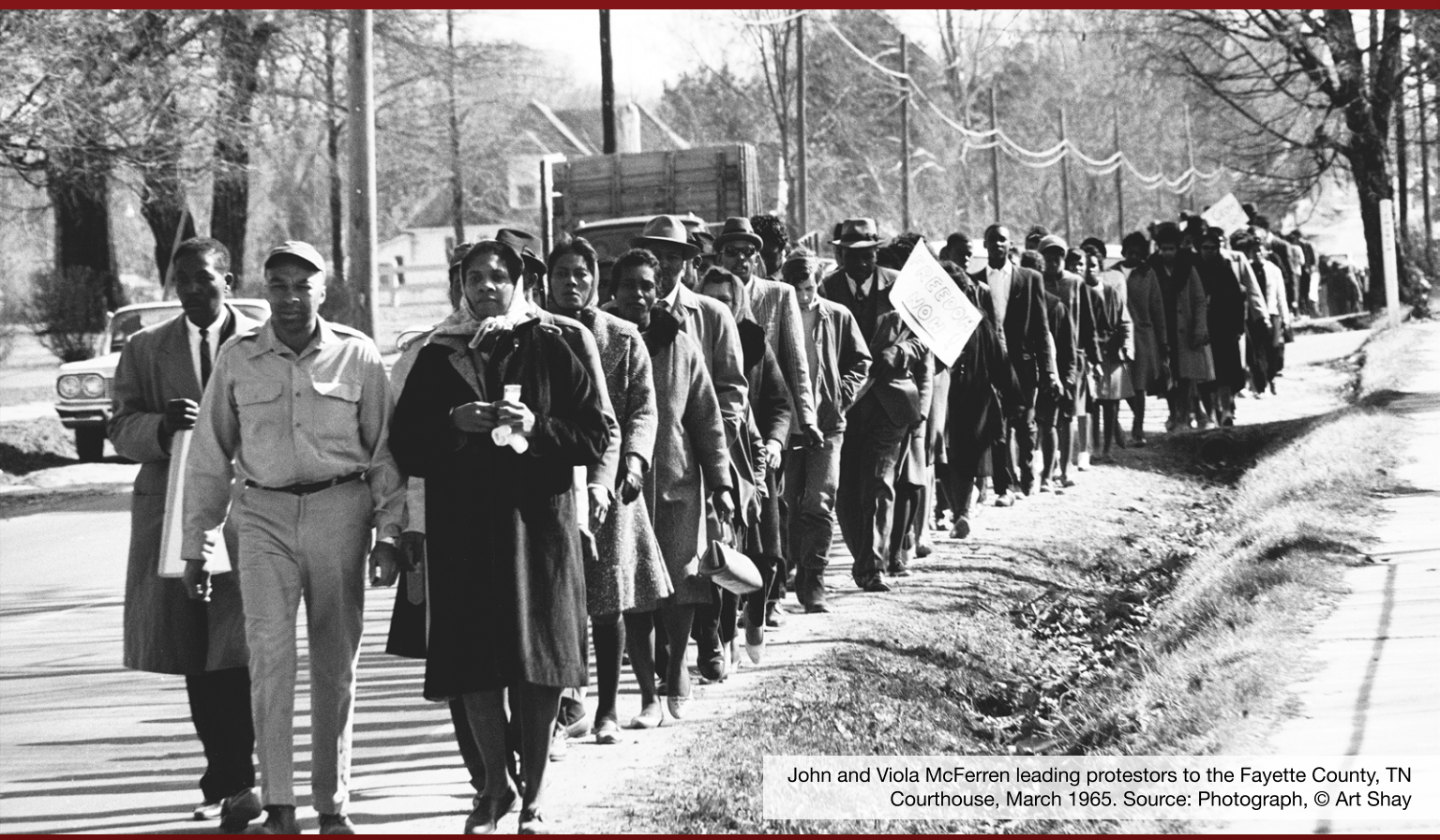
THE BENJAMIN L. HOOKS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

# TENT CITY:

## THE STORIES OF FAYETTE COUNTY, TENNESSEE

## A TEACHER'S GUIDE

By Sasha Arnold



John and Viola McFerren leading protestors to the Fayette County, TN Courthouse, March 1965. Source: Photograph, © Art Shay

THE BENJAMIN L. HOOKS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# THE BENJAMIN L. HOOKS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
## AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

**www.memphis.edu/benhooks**

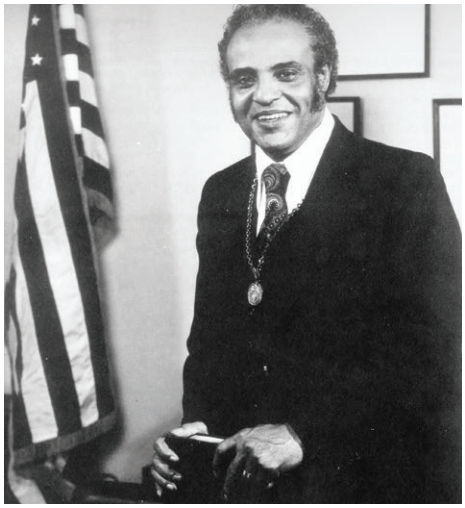
## About the Hooks Institute

With the approval of the Tennessee Board of Regents and funding from the United States Congress and the State of Tennessee, the Hooks Institute was born in 1996. It was founded by Benjamin Hooks and the Department of Political Science and College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Memphis. Together, their common goal for the Institute was to play a pivotal role in framing and solving community problems through the wisdom and vision of pioneers such as Benjamin L. Hooks.

The Hooks Institute's mission of teaching, studying, and promoting civil rights and social change is reflected in its programming, which includes funding faculty research and community service projects; hosting conferences, symposia, and lectures; and promoting and recognizing local and national scholarship on civil and human rights.

## About Dr. Hooks

Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks was a native of Memphis. He worked tirelessly, both as a leader in the NAACP and as the first African-American FCC Commissioner, for Civil Rights and the welfare of all people.



# About the Tent City Project

Headed by director of the Hooks Institute, Daphene McFerren, Esq. and Professor of English, Dr. Loel Kim, the Tent City Project seeks to archive the struggle for Civil Rights in Fayette County, TN. The project began with a NEH grant and the interviewing of the very people who made the movement a success. The Hooks Institute has archived not only those interviews but also the correspondences, articles, newsletters, and even the FBI files from the movement in cooperation with Special Collections at The University of Memphis Libraries. The Institute, in cooperation with Robert Hamburger, turned the interviews of Fayette County activists into a documentary shown on PBS stations in the Memphis area.

The most recent project in the Tent City program is the creation of a website making available to the public the memory of and lessons from the Fayette County civil rights movement. The website was created by Dr. Kim, Ms. McFerren, Debra Turner, and Hooks Institute graduate assistants and can be found at http://www.memphis.edu/tentcity.

With the addition of the Fayette and Haywood County movements to the Tennessee standards for 11th grade U.S. History, The Hooks Institute is attempting to aid Tennessee teachers in educating students about both the movement and students' roles in fighting inequality in contemporary society. This teacher's aid is the Institute's attempt at fulfilling this goal. The guide moves through Bloom's taxonomy with the first activities reinforcing basic knowledge of events and latter activities encouraging creativity and synthesis of information.

*Source: Collage of two photographs, © Art Shay and Photograph of Tents, Special Collections, University of Memphis*

For more information about or to donate to the Tent City Project or The Hooks Institute, please visit www.memphis.edu/benhooks or email us at bhi@memphis.edu.

# What Happened in Tent City?

(Summary for use with Activity 2)

On May 23, 1940, Burton Dodson found his house surrounded by armed white men. Realizing it was a lynch mob, Dodson refused to surrender. Dodson had been romantically involved with the same woman as a white man in Fayette County. Angry at Dodson, the man organized a group of men, who the sheriff hurriedly deputized, to "apprehend" Dodson at night. Shots were fired, but Dodson was able to escape amongst the cross fire. His family, who was in the home at the time, also survived. One of the "deputies" was shot and killed during the incident, and a warrant for Dodson's arrest was issued.

During the 1950s, attorney, John Estes, gave a series of sermons in Fayette and Haywood County churches, urging the black citizens of those counties to claim their rights as citizens and register to vote. The two counties were majority black, but only a few black citizens had registered to vote. When Burton Dodson was discovered in and extradited from East St. Louis Illinois in 1959, Estes volunteered as his attorney. Estes was the first black attorney to argue in the Fayette County Courthouse, and he was the first black man to walk through the front doors of the courthouse. Black citizens flooded to the courtroom to watch this black attorney try the Dodson case. Because so few black citizens were registered to vote, the jury selection consisted of only white men. Realizing the importance of the situation, Estes asked the potential jurors whether or not they thought black citizens should be able to register and vote. At first, the men said, "no," and Estes quickly dismissed them from service. Realizing that if they wanted to serve on the jury they couldn't answer, "no" to the question, the white jurors began to answer in the affirmative: "Yes, I feel black men should be able to register and vote." Enraged that Dodson had no black jurors and amazed at hearing so many white men affirm the black man's right to vote, Fayette County citizens were spurred into action and began a voter registration drive that would shake the nation.

In Dodson's courtroom sat two men who would serve as leaders of the Fayette County movement for many decades: John McFerren and Harpman Jameson. Hoping to raise money and awareness for the movement, Estes, Jameson, and McFerren traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with John Doar from the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division about the troubles Fayette County's black citizens faced when attempting to exercise their right to vote. To increase the effectiveness of the counties' drives, Estes founded the Civic and Welfare Leagues in Fayette and Haywood Counties. During the summer of 1959, black Fayette Countians stood in the sweltering Tennessee heat wearing their Sunday's best to register to vote. However, when those same registered voters attempted to vote in the 1959 Democratic Primary in August, they were turned away and told it was a white only primary.

As a result, The Department of Justice, represented by John Doar, filed suit against the Fayette County Democratic Executive Committee (FCDEC). This suit was the first brought under the Civil Rights Act of 1957. After a consent agreement was issued by Judge Marion Boyd forbidding the segregated election process, the FCDEC decided to use alternate means of keeping the county's black citizens from registering. As a result of the Fayette and Haywood County problems, the U.S. Government passed the Civil Rights Act of 1960, hoping to curb retaliation against black voters across the country. However, in Fayette County, most of the black citizens were sharecroppers or otherwise economically dependent on the white power structure. In an attempt to prevent black citizens from registering, the white leaders created a blacklist with the names of every black registered voter. Sharecroppers and tenant farmers on the list were evicted from their homes, many in the middle of Winter. Store owners refused to sell to individuals

on the list, and white doctors would turn sick patients away if their names appeared on the list. To house the evicted sharecroppers, John McFerren and other county leaders set up donated tents on the land of independent black farmer, Shephard Towles. At the end of December, 1960, the Early B. Williams family became one of the first families to move into the tents. This "Tent City" became the image of the Fayette County Civil Rights Movement.

In September 1960, the Justice Department, again represented by Doar, filed suit against Fayette Countians accused of engaging in retaliatory behavior against registered black voters, and a consent decree was ordered to end evictions based on voter registration status. Afterwards, landowners continued to evict tenants using the excuse of farm mechanization, and indeed, the lawsuit forced the landowners in Fayette County to adopt modern farming practices instead of relying on sharecroppers.

While local newspapers from Fayette, Haywood, and Shelby Counties had already been following the Fayette County story, in 1961, the West Tennessee movement garnered the attention of major, national news sources. Ted Poston ran a series of articles about the Tent Cities and Fayette County in The New York Post. African-American national magazines such as Sepia, Ebony, and Jet also ran stories of the intimidation faced by registered black voters. The movement became so well known that folk singer, Pete Seeger memorialized the struggle in his song "Fayette County." National press attention to the crisis in Fayette and Haywood Counties drew a flood of volunteers and donations to Fayette and Haywood Counties. The Fayette County Civic and Welfare League worked tirelessly to draw in and distribute support to the blacklisted citizens. However, a dispute arose between the leaders in the group regarding the distribution of funds, leaving Estes to work with The Fayette County Civic and Welfare League and Mcferren and Jameson to found the Original Fayette County Civic and Welfare League. While Estes's Haywood and Fayette County Leagues both quickly fizzled into extinction, the Original League continued its fight for justice into the twenty-first century.

Many black Fayette Countians left the county for job opportunities and to escape the culture of hatred pervasive in the county, and today, the county no longer has a majority black population. However, many black citizens remained in the county and fought for political, economic, and educational equality.

# "We just want to be citizens"

# Activity One:
# Mapping Civil Rights

**Objective:**
Students will recall events from the Civil Rights Movement they have learned either previously in this class or in another class in writing as a warm-up exercise. After a demonstration from the educator, students will be able to list at least three Civil Rights landmarks located in his or her community and discuss what happened at the location as well as its significance in the movement. This objective can be assessed using the guided questions below.

**Materials Needed:**
◊ A map of the community in which the school is located or where students live.
◊ List of landmarks or historical events from the Civil Rights Movement that occurred in the community.

**Instructions:**
Students will write their thoughts about the Civil Rights Movement as a bell ringer exercise. Students should be encouraged to discuss important events or individuals they recall from studying the movement. Following the writing assignment, students should read their writing to the class and talk about where the important events discussed occurred geographically. After the students finish reporting, the teacher should point out the locations which occurred in the students' community. The teacher should point to these places on a map so all of the students can see how close to home these events occurred. Additionally, the teacher should point out important events from the community that students did not think to mention. After the activity, students should have a greater appreciation for the history of the Civil Rights Movement in their own community. Educators in the Memphis area can utilize the website, http://memphis.edu/benhooks/mappingcivilrights.php, as a mapping resource.

**Guided Questions:**
◊ What events or people do you think best represent the Civil Rights Movement and why?
◊ Where did these important events occur? Where did the important figures of the movement do their work?
◊ How many of these events occurred in our community?
◊ What other events from the movement took place in our community?
◊ What effect on our community did these events have?
◊ What role did our community play in the Civil Rights Movement?

**Optional:**
Students can tour local Civil Rights Landmarks and create postcards about the location.

# Activity Two:
# About Tent City

**Objective:**
Student will read about the Civil Rights Movement in Fayette County using the handout included in this guide and will demonstrate reading comprehension by completing the included questions.

**Materials Needed:**
◊ "What Happened in Tent City" handout (pages 5-6)

**Instructions:**
Students will read the handout "What Happened in Tent City" and answer the questions included with it (page 9). The questions are intended to gauge reading comprehension and encourage indepth thought about the events that occurred in Fayette and Haywood Counties in Tennessee.

*Evicted family of sharecroppers standing outside their home. Source: Special Collections, University of Memphis*

# What Happened in Tent City?

(For use with Activity Two)

Name_____ Date_____

Class_____

**Directions:**
Read the handout "What Happened in Tent City?" and answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper.

1. What sparked the beginning of the civil rights movement in Fayette County?

2. What characteristics of the Fayette County movement make it an important event to study? Why are these characteristics key?

3. What did Memphis lawyer, James F. Estes, do for the movement that the local activists could not do for themselves?

4. What role did the U.S. government play in the Fayette County movement? How does its role compare to that of the individuals working on the ground in the county?

5. What is a grass-roots movement? What is the significance of this in regard to Fayette County?

6. Why were voter registration and then voting chosen by Fayette activists to focus on first? Was it the only solution to Jim Crow Laws? Would it solve all of the problems faced by local black citizens?

7. What would lead someone to say that voting is or is not guaranteed to U.S. Citizens today?

8. How can a community tell when its government and community participation is "fair"? What conditions would suggest that circumstances were unfair?

*Evicted family of sharecroppers standing outside their home. Source: Special Collections, University of Memphis*

# Activity Three:
# Scavenger Hunt

**Objective:**
Students will explore the website **www.memphis.edu/tentcity** to solve a puzzle with 100% accuracy.

**Materials Needed:**
◊ Puzzle located in this guide.
◊ Computers and internet access

**Instructions:**
Students will explore the website **www.memphis.edu/tentcity** to complete a puzzle included in this guide. This activity will engage students actively in learning about the movement.

# Tent City Puzzle

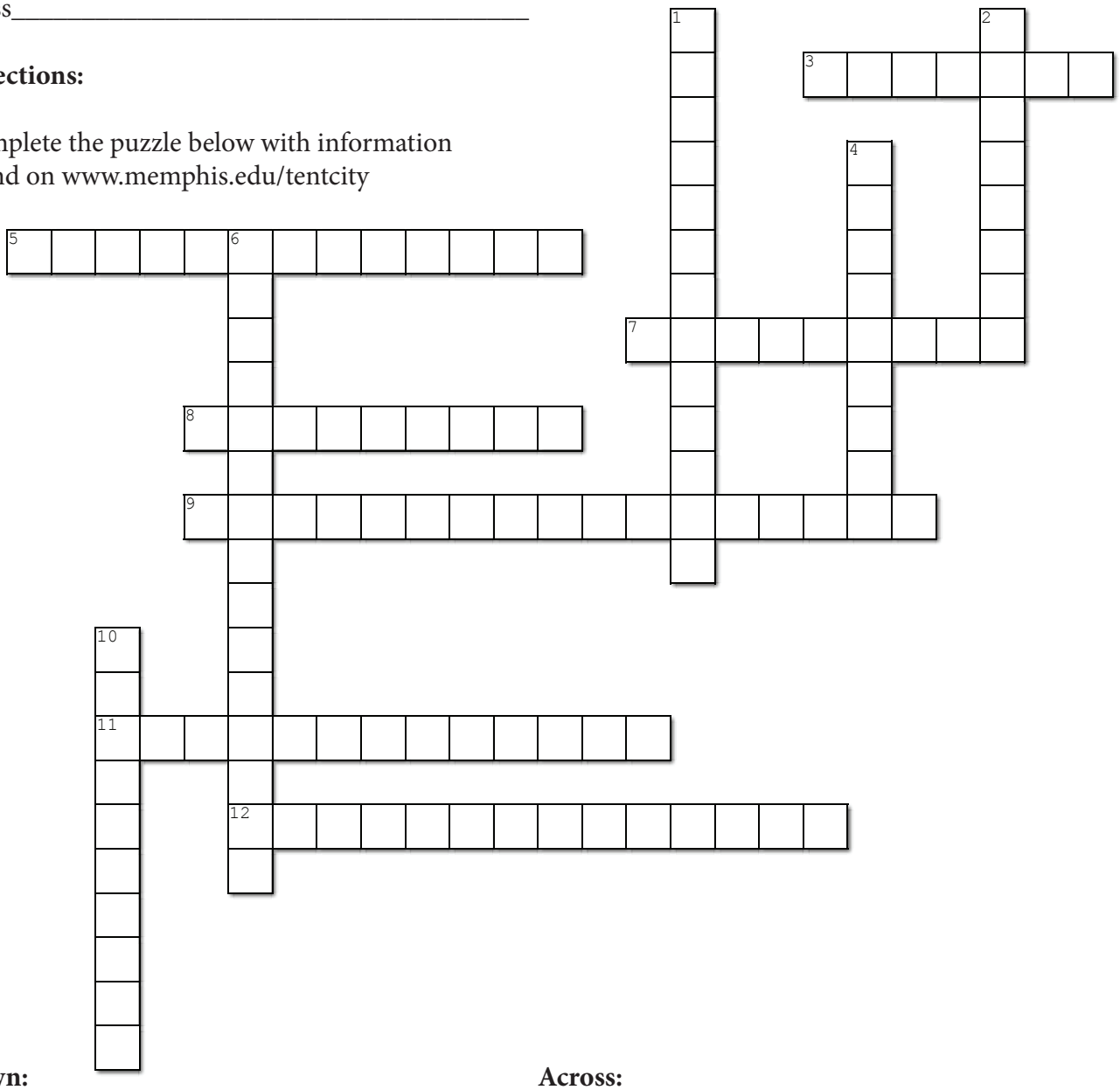
(For Use with Activity Three)

Name_____ Date_____

Class_____

**Directions:**

Complete the puzzle below with information found on www.memphis.edu/tentcity



**Down:**

1. The OFCCWL secretary
2. The man who ran for Fayette County Tax Assessor in 1964
3. A lease and work agreement between farmers and landowners
4. The New York Post reporter who brought Fayette County to national attention
5. The building constructed by League members and student volunteers from across the nation

**Across:**

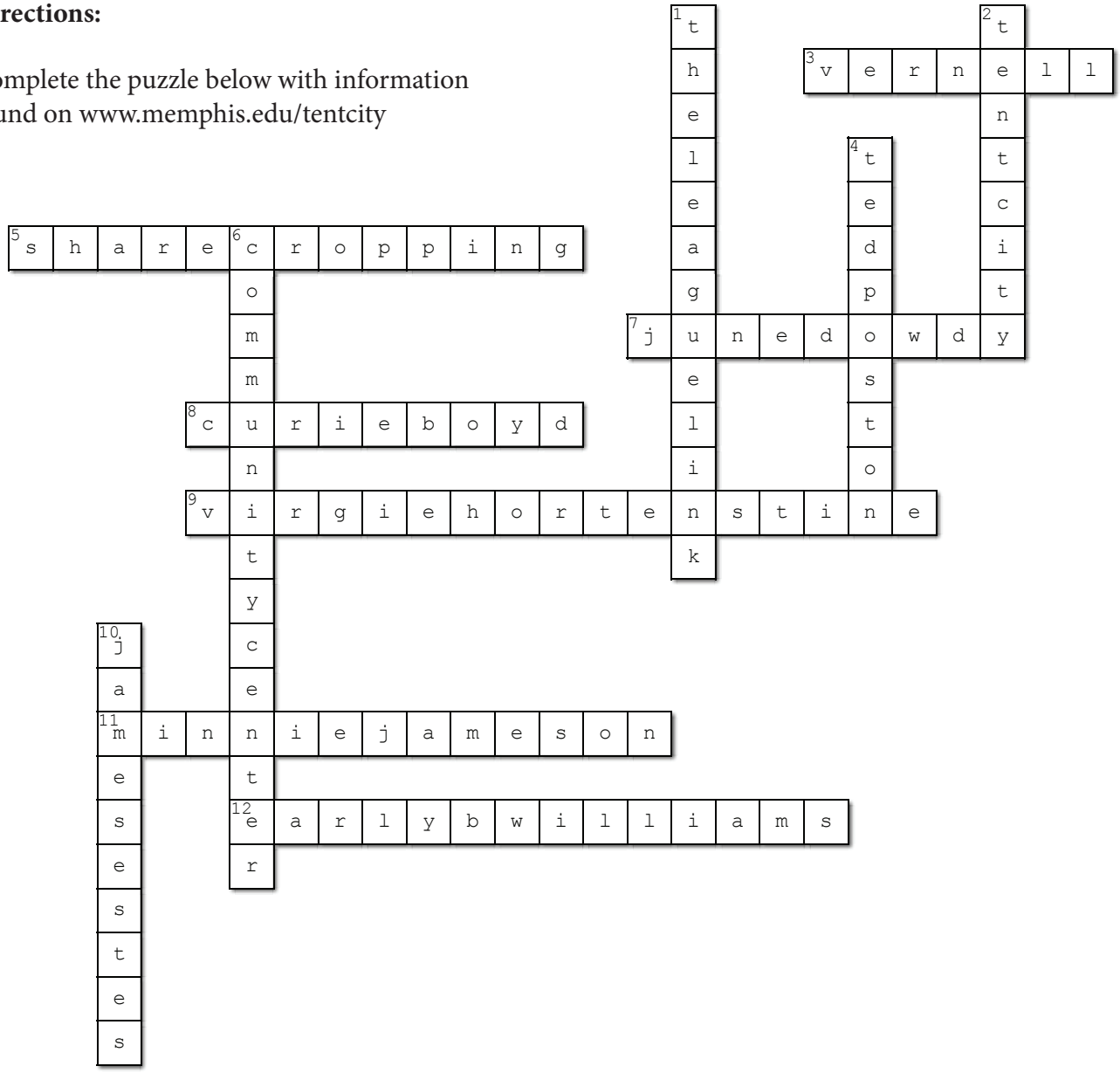
6. The Haywood County teacher who wrote the first complaint about being denied the right to vote
7. The man who was shot while sleeping in his tent
8. The activist from Cincinnati who supported local activists and worked to improve economic conditions in Fayette County
9. The OFCCWL newsletter
10. The black lawyer who represented Burton Dodson
11. Where evicted sharecroppers were forced to move
12. Precilla Hobson and her daughters, _____ and Vester were assaulted by white men, starting a boycott in Fayette County

# Tent City Puzzle Key

(For Use with Activity Three)

**Directions:**

Complete the puzzle below with information found on www.memphis.edu/tentcity




## Down:

1. The OFCCWL secretary
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## Across:

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12. Precilla Hobson and her daughters, _____ and Vester were assaulted by white men, starting a boycott in Fayette County

# Tent City Puzzle

(For Use with Activity Three)

Name_____ Date_____

Class_____

**Directions:**
Solve each riddle using the website www.memphis.edu/tentcity.
Then, write each numbered letter in its corresponding blank to solve the final riddle.

1) The Official Fayette County Civic and Welfare League (OFCCWL) Secretary

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
3 5

2) The OFCCWL Newsletter

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
2 18

3) The building built by the OFCCWL and volunteers from across the country

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
4 17 11

4) The black attorney who represented Dodson at his murder trial

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
8 21

5) The man who ran for Fayette County Tax assessor in 1964

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
7

6) Where evicted sharecroppers moved

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
20 10

7) The man who was shot while sleeping in his tent

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
14 13 1 16

8) The female Cincinnati–based activist who supported local activists and economic development

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
19

9) The *New York Post* reporter who brought the events in Fayette County to national attention

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
6 12

10) A lease/work agreement between farmers and landowners

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
15 9

**___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___**
**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14**

**___ ___ ___ ___ Z ___ ____ ____ !**
**15 16 17 18 19 20 21**

# Tent City Puzzle Key

(For Use with Activity Three)

**Directions:**
Solve each riddle using the website www.memphis.edu/tentcity.
Then, write each numbered letter in its corresponding blank to solve the final riddle.

1) The Official Fayette County Civic and Welfare League (OFCCWL) Secretary
   M I N N I E  J A M E S O N
   3  5
2) The OFCCWL Newsletter
   T H E  L E A G U E  L I N K
   2  18
3) The building built by the OFCCWL and volunteers from across the country
   T H E  C O M M U N I T Y  C E N T E R
   4  17  11
4) The black attorney who represented Dodson at his murder trial
   J A M E S  E S T E S
   8  21
5) The man who ran for Fayette County Tax assessor in 1964
   J U N E  D O W D Y
   7
6) Where evicted sharecroppers moved
   T E N T  C I T Y
   20  10
7) The man who was shot while sleeping in his tent
   E A R L Y  B  W I L L I A M S
   14  13  1  16
8) The female Cincinnati–based activist who supported local activists and economic development
   V I R G I E  H O R T E N S T I N E
   19
9) The *New York Post* reporter who brought the events in Fayette County to national attention
   T E D  P O S T O N
   6  12
10) A lease/work agreement between farmers and landowners
   S H A R E C R O P P I N G
   15  9

| W | E | J | U | S | T | | W | A | N | T | | T | O | | B | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | 11 | 12 | | 13 | 14 |

| C | I | T | I | Z | E | N | S | ! |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | | 19 | 20 | 21 | |

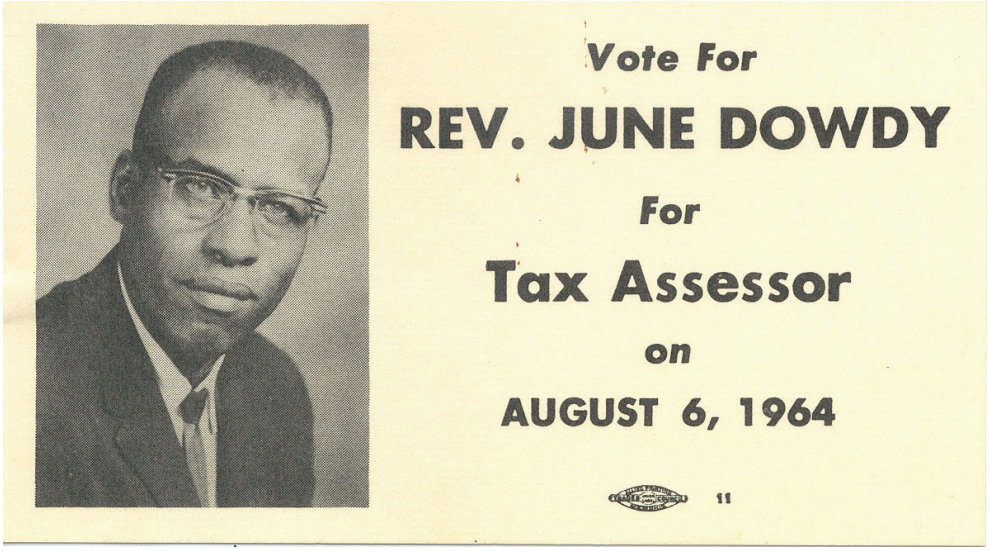
# Activity Four:
# A Voice from the People

**Objective:**
Students will read first hand accounts from activists and demonstrate comprehension of the materials by answering multiple choice questions. Students will then create fictional accounts of people living or volunteering in Fayette County during the movement using good writing practices.

**Materials Needed:**
- ◊ First-hand accounts (voices) from guide
- ◊ Reading comprehension questions from guide

**Instructions:**
Students will read the first-hand accounts of the activists and/or inhabitants of Fayette County, Tn. Students will then demonstrate their comprehension of the materials by answering a series of multiple choice questions. Additionally, students will create a fictional account of an individual's life in Fayette County during the Civil Rights Movement. Students can then present their accounts using their choice of medium: e.g. newspaper, newsletter, video, Power Point, or website.

**Optional:**
Have students watch the video interviews by Edward Gray:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGq06yA-hQg and by James Jameson:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgB1vPz0TqE in lieu of reading the accounts.
This option can replace the reading directions from the original activity.



# Edward Gray

## Excerpt from Robert Hamburger's *Our Portion of Hell – Fayette County, Tennessee: An Oral History of The Struggle for Civil Rights* (Links 1973)

**Used by permission of the author.**

(For use with Activity Four)

My name is Edward Gray. I'm twenty-three years old and I was born in Shelby County near Memphis, Tennessee. The reason I was born there is we didn't have a hospital in Fayette County—there isn't a hospital still. At the present time there isn't a hospital. The reason I was born in Memphis is that I was the first child born and they thought at the time there may be some complications. Memphis is about sixty miles from my home.

With me I started to work helpin my father out around the farm real early. Seven or eight years old, man, I was parta program really. It was nothing unusual to go to school in the morning and then come back home in the evenin and go to the field. Say, for example, in the summertime you'd come back home and spend three or four hours in the field helpin your father who's out workin choppin cotton or whatever had to be done. Not only the cotton —there was okra to be picked or whatever. You was parta the family and you was parta the group and this was one of the ways income was made and you was a parta it. Though you was goin to school, you was also helpin out at home, right. This continued not only in the summertime, but in the fall when you started pickin cotton and so forth. A whole lotta kids—they didn't go back to school. The school started in September and they wouldn't get back to school till January—till all the cotton or whatever got to be picked. It was harvested before they got back to school. Not only would they be behind from that year, but this was a constant thing for every year. I mean every year was like this. And one of the factors I can see—they were stayin on a white man's place and he said that they had to have this cotton outa the field if they wanted to stay on his farm. And there's no other way for the farmer to get it out unless he has the help of his children. And he knows if he don't get it out he's gonna have to move somewhere. So this is just one of those things, you know. The white man needed someone who could pick some cotton and get up and work when he said. The education—heck no, man. He figured if his sharecropper could read his name well enough to read his scales and weigh his cotton— that's about all he needed. That's about the way he considered decent education.

As far as sacrifices are concerned, I know my mother and father made extreme sacrifices for me and my brother to go to school. And not only then. They're makin sacrifices today. But, say now, some of this stuff it's gonna sound funny. Like when it rained. If I went to school and it had rained hard while I was at school I knowed—we lived off the road like—that I was gonna get wet as a dog goin home. Cause I was gonna have to walk across this little bridge if the bridge was still there. Water maybe washed it away. And if I went around to the other road I couldn't go across that way cause that's where water was comin down under the bridge. So I knowed there was gonna be water any way I went. So the best thing I could hope to do was get through the water, keep my books from getting wet—because if you lost a book, man, you wouldn't get another book, man. You'd be charged with that book. You'd have to pay for that book at the end of the year. You done just lost a book. The best thing you could do was try to keep your books from getting wet and hope to get home before you got pneumonia. Like I say, it was a rough thing. In line of sacrifices— if it rained at home that day—durin the wintertime it was real cold—if my father didn't bring us to the road on his truck he'd bring us on his tractor, or else we had a wagon and he'd bring us in the wagon, or we'd ride the horse. He and my grandfather used to bring us when the water was as high as we was. I would say I was eight or nine years old. He would meet me there in the morning or the evenin when the water was up and he would take me

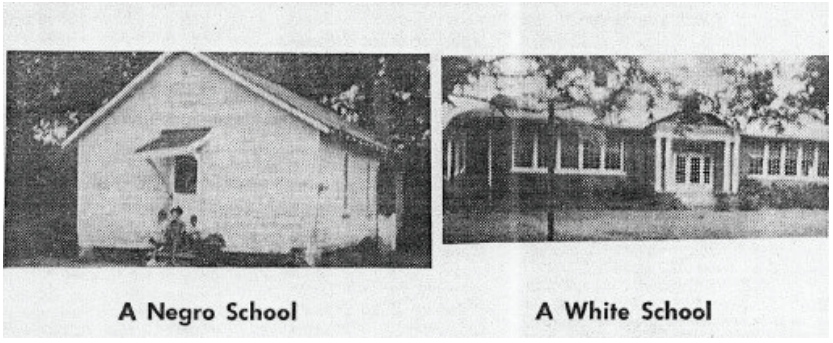
and put me on his shoulder—walkin through the water hisself, and I'm on his shoulder, to keep me from getting wet. That's right. And if it rained hard I just knowed there'd be somebody waitin on me to take me across that water in the evenin. Cause man, if I went across I'd've gotten drownded. The water was just too deep. You know the bridge—it wasn't nothing unusual for my father to have to fix that bridge, put that bridge back in shape, and repair those planks on it, five or six times a year. First big rain, man, it's gone. The planks are gone down stream here and there. That's the way it was. Right. I mean I know there was a whole lotta sacrifices. And still I'll be amazed. And this is one of the things—it motivates me to go ahead on and try to do a better job as far as education is concerned. It's kinda hard to believe some of the things I had to go through, but it's the truth—every bit of it.

Another thing in regards to schoolin. I never missed any days outa school workin at home or pickin cotton at home because I had to or something like this. My mother and father thought that education was a primary thing that we needed—that we had to have. And school was just one of those things that we just didn't miss. We just didn't miss it. If there was something we had to do— if we had to pick some okra that day—we'd get up early, say at six o'clock. At six o'clock in the morning in the summertime there's a whole lotta dew on the ground—and man, you'd be wet, you'd get wet pickin okra, and you'd come round to the house and dry off to get ready for school and go to school. If you didn't get it through the dew you'd get it through the rain. It was nothing for me to wear overshoes and boots down to the road where we caught the bus—and there's this big oak tree, it's still there today—I used to stand behind that tree and change my clothes after I walked across this creek and leave my clothes there till I went back home that evenin. So when I got back home at evenin, nine times outa ten I'd have two sets of wet clothes.

When I really began to know anything about Tent City—I used to attend mass meetins. My mother or my father—there was always one of us who'd go and someone always stayed home cause I had an aunt then at the time and we had to burn wood to keep her warm, especially in the wintertime. And someone had to go with whoever went—to walk to the road. It was the customary thing. Me and my brother Hugh we always went. Another factor that brought Tent City out is the fact that other people in other places began to be concerned about Tent City and sent relief and food and aid to the people in Fayette County, That's when you can say, "If other people feel this way about Fayette County—they've never seen it you know—it's the kind of thing that makes me wonder, "Somethin's really going on in this place, you know." That's when I really began to focus on this place, you know. That's when I really began to focus on Tent City.

As far as food on the table, I figured there probably wouldn't've been as much on the table if it hadn't been for food bein sent in. And clothin. Especially clothin. One year I'd run outa pants. I remember, it was near Christmastime. And my mother'd run into Somerville that day where the supplies and stuff would come in—at McFerren's store, that's where it was—and we got some shirts and pants. I remember these pants really distinctly cause I felt like a sissy wearin em. They were made like girls' pants—in front they didn't have no pockets, they didn't have no pockets up here. And the pockets in the back—you'd drop your hand in your pocket and it'd be way down here on your leg. They weren't like normal pants, you know. And I felt kinda funny wearin those pants, you know. And I had to wear em for over a year cause that's all I had. But that's one of the things I feel proud of in a sense—that through all of that I was still able to overcome the things that was obstacles in my way, things that seemed to pop up from here and there. But through all of it, with the help of my mother and father, I come out all right, determined to keep on pushin.

After goin to these mass meetins you began to see how other people in the county—the McFerrens, the Mormons, and people like them—began to express their views about it and how they felt about the situation. You began to develop mental pictures in your mind—you began to say, "Well, here I am, I'm lookin at things. I can see what my mother and father and other people—what their goals are, how they're tryin to stick together and obtain these things that they feel we should have. Yet still I can see the white man, on the other



A Negro School A White School

hand, is workin against us. At the same time knowin the white man is the person when I need something, he's the person I got to go to ask for this." You get two of three different mental views in your mind. This is when I really began to develop a sense of hate or disrespect for my fellow man—especially in Fayette County. Your really have to experience it to know what it's like. I can sit here and tell you about it all night, but to experience some of these things is really seein it like it really is.

As far as integratin school is concerned there's so many things I can tell you about that. It was 1965 when the first integration program in Fayette County began. The freshman and senior class went to the previously all-white school. There was about 500 to 530 students there and I think there was about sixteen blacks. When it first started you didn't get on the white bus that came by your door. You'd get on the regular black bus; you'd go up to all-black school; they'd pick you up up there and bring you back down there to the all-white school. This went on for a while. You didn't get on the bus at first with the all-white school. I think this went on for two or three weeks and then you was later put on the bus with white students.

That first day, man, it was just like—it's hard to describe. It was a rough day. Like the teachers—you could get the sense that they didn't want you up there—"Man we got these niggers comin in our school and we don't want em there." But a whole lotta teachers, you could see that they would try to act nice to try to hope that maybe you'd be satisfied and after this year you'd go back to the nigger school and not worry about this no more. "If you find out we're gonna treat you all right—maybe you just wanta find out we treat you all right maybe you not gonna come back no more."

Back to that first day again though. On the bus you had a special place to sit. It wasn't at the back, it was at the front, but it might as well have been at the back because you was isolated—there wasn't nobody else up there with you. They'd always try to figure a way where they'd have a seat between you and the other white kids sittin behind. They were always causin harassment. Like it was nothing for you to get thumped beside the head, or slapped beside the head, or throwin coins—this guy done got on with a pot full of coins that day and he got on and throwed coins from the time you got on the bus till you get to school. And a whole lotta times they didn't even see it, you know. A whole lotta times it'd be their children or their grandchildren'd be doin it, you see. Or their next-door neighbor, you know. And they were whites like they were. It didn't mean nothin to em. The only reason he's drivin the bus is for the salary, for the money. So he didn't give a damn. So he didn't want you on there nowhere.

Well, back to that first day. We got to school—I can speak of my situation—I went in there that day and, man, they looked at me like I was a guy that walked in from Mars. You see, I was the only black student in my homeroom. Man, they treated me like I was a—they didn't have nothing to say to me. That's number one. The only one that said anything to me was my homeroom instructor. My homeroom was where this lady taught Latin. So they got up there this first day and recited the Pledge of Allegiance in Latin. And that was the first time I had even been in a classroom where Latin was taught. I stood up—that's about all I did do that day cause I didn't know nothing about no Latin whatsoever. When the teacher had us stand up and introduce our name and all that stuff, when I stood up man they'd "Huh-huh-huh-huh-huh-huh-huh—they got a nigger standin up here." Guy who's chair was next to mine, he moved his chair all the way almost out middle ways of the floor to get away from me, you know. It was a hell of a thing. Not only did you develop a sense of—you know you wasn't parta the group. But you develop a sense of hate. Well not necessarily for them, but you'd hate you was in the situation. But yet and still—I tried to keep this point in mind—I knew that I was doin somethin that was gonna help somebody else, see. Because I knowed that this wasn't somethin that was gonna last but one year and be all over with. OK.

Now they had us separated so that some of us would eat one time, some of us would eat another time, some of us would eat no time. And they had it set up so that you would seldom run into anybody—another black student—durin the course of changing classes. Only time you might see em would be in lunchtime and then you'd be getting showered by pennies—they'd throw pennies at you the whole thirty to forty minutes before the next class. It wasn't nothing for you to be able to collect your lunch money for the next day offa the floor—but we got our share of nickles and pennies.

This was a thing that didn't let up. This went on for nine months—this kinda stuff. It wasn't nothing for a guy to walk into you in the hall and call you a nigger. You get to the point in two or three months where you didn't pay that much attention. For a guy to hit you—they'd hit you in the stomach. You'd walk down the hall and somebody's hit you on the side of your head with a piece of chalk, or stuff like this. Or they'd walk up to you in the corner and elbow you or something like that. That was nothin. You was accustomed to every pressure. You didn't know what was gonna happen the next moment. You really wasn't relaxed to study. You felt, you knew you wasn't relaxed—you knew you was outside, you wasn't really a part, they didn't want you in the system. That was one thing that was against you—they didn't want you. It may have been better if you figured your teachers was for you. You really wanted to have somebody on your side, see. You knew you was a minority student there. If you coulda felt that out of all those guys there, that maybe five or six teachers was on your side, you mighta felt better. But there wasn't nobody you felt was on your side because he wanted to be on your side. They may have just done that because they wanted to keep their jobs. There wasn't nobody that was on your side because they felt that integration was a thing that they believed. There wasn't no such thing as that. Like I say, in your classroom there was animosity, in the halls there was animosity—I really didn't feel free.

Like when I went about my studyin. I can't study in the day. Like when I studied in school and college I'd get up two or three o'clock in the mornin to study on until I get up to go to class. Man, you couldn't study at school cause somebody's gonna call you nigger and they'll be throwin chalk at you all the time. Just the fact of sittin there knowin—you readin and you knowin you might get hit on the head—you not comprehendin, you just lookin at words. It's the fact you knows you was always the center of attention and you know'd you was gonna get attention some kinda way. Now what I mean by attention is a piece of chalk or corn some guy had shelled the night before. Or pennies. Now outa nine black seniors there was only two that graduated that year—me and James. These people dropped out. They just quit. They didn't come, man. Things just got too wild up there—they couldn't take it. So it definitely worked. With guys goin against you, bein the minority student in that school, and knowin you'd be put in any situation that provided an avenue for failure, for your downfall—it was tough. In gym, man, you'd change clothes and when you'd come back somebody done throwed water on your clothes and throwed your books outa the rack where you had em, or pulled the shoestrings outs your shoes, or something like this.

Like I said, you wasn't studyin at school—that was just a place you made an appearance for the sake of it, you wasn't learnin. That's one of the reasons I think a whole lotta the black students didn't make it see, because when you got home at night they had other things to do. I worked when I got home. I didn't drop down at no desk and start studyin. I got home and worked till seven o'clock at whatever I had to do and went to bed around eight. My senior year in high school I didn't watch no TV. If you asked me what come on TV after eight o'clock durin the week I couldn't tell you. I didn't know cause I'd go to bed around eight o'clock and I'd sleep till one-thirty or two. Then I'd be done got up to study. It's hard to describe. You'd wake up and make a fire to study cause the house is so cold. You woke up, you're damn right, cause when you hit that cold floor you sure woke up. But the thing about it was tryin to make yourself to stay on up to study. That was a hard thing. Once I was up I didn't go back to bed. Around two-fifteen I'd be hittin the books and I wouldn't go back to sleep.

Then in the mornin we had to pick okra around six o'clock. My mother called us around seven-fifteen to get us ready for school and while we'd get ready for school my father would come on over from the okra field to take us on down in the truck to the bus line so we wouldn't be late. That went on all the time. You did this because you was helpin. If you went down in the okra field and you picked two crakes of okra by the time you left for school—at that time okra, I think, was sellin for three cents a pound and a crate of okra was about twenty-eight pounds. OK. Then you picked about fifty-six pounds while you was down there. Then three times fifty-six—see, you done earned a couple of dollars. Say, for example, if there's five of y'all and you picked that much. That's a nice little chip in the pot. And the longer it stays in the field the larger it gets and the lower the price. You had to be there to do your little share. It might not seem like much at the time—to you—but you was doin your share. When you're poor everything counts.

# Comprehension Questions

(For use with the Edward Gray Reading)

1. How was Edward's life similar to your own? How was it different?

2. What hardships did Edward face while trying to attend school? Why did he have these hardships?

3. Who is the narrator? What is the narrator's tone and purpose in the reading?

4. What was happening politically and socially that affected Edward's life?

5. Why did Edward have such an odd sleeping schedule? What was odd about it?

6. Did Edward have different responsibilities within his family than you do? Did he have similar responsibilities?

7. What role did teenagers like Edward play in the Civil Rights Movement?

8. What lessons might Edward have learned from his experiences? What lessons can students today learn from his experiences?

9. Why was it important for Edward and other students to desegregate the schools? What role did students play in this process?

10. Are there problems that students today face because of race, gender, or poverty level? Is there anything students today can do to solve these problems? If so, what?

11. Can you see similarities between Edward's role in fighting injustice and that of more famous adult activists? Can you see differences? Do you think one way of fighting injustice is more important than the other? Why or why not?

(For use with Activity Four)


# The Town Crier

**Serving Cochituate Wayland Weston**

Wayland, Massachusetts . THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 1963


## Firsthand -- Wayland Girl's Own Story Of Helping Negroes Win Vote In South

By LINDA LYNES

Hoeing cotton ten hours a day in the southern sun, eating meals with the field hands, singing with the choirs of small country Negro churches, and living daily life as the guest of a Negro farmer and his wife in West Tennessee, were elements of my introduction to the background and personalities involved in the civil rights movement.

Stares in grocery stores where we shopped with our hostesses, an order from the Sheriff to "Conclude your business and get out of the county," threats of being shot by local whites, and being treated with deference by adults purely because of the lack of color in our skin, were some local reactions we met in our integrated workcamp of northern students.

Greeting us as we drove into Brownsville, Haywood County seat, was the county courthouse, located in a square in the center of town. In front of the courthouse, as if proclaiming the justice to be found within, were two drinking fountains, one labelled "White," the other "Colored."

A hot dog party was given for us as a welcoming gesture. Among the receptionists were the 10 young people who were to be driven to Philadelphia as an exchange workcamp. In the dark, amid questions about the others' way of life, skin color was forgotten.

We went home that night with our Negro host families to what were to become truly homes for us. We had come in order to learn about the lives of the local people; as these people are farmers, we lived a farming life.

Early Monday morning our week began with a delicious large breakfast of fried ham, scrambled eggs, coffee, toast, and corn bread muffins. After breakfast we went to the fields at about 5:30 to learn to "chop cotton", which is to say, to weed and thin it with a hoe. The field hands with whom we worked were earning $2.50 a day and their three meals a day. After two weeks of chopping, ten of their 12 working hours, I was still not able to learn the accuracy and speed of one of my co-workers who said to me repeatedly, while she was helping me to finish my row:

"Now don't y'all worry if you cain't chop as good as me. I been choppin' fo'ty years now, I ain't never done nothin but chop. Look at y'all, readin' and writin' and all. I ain't never known nothin' but choppin' "

I, clumsily but truthfully added once that in spite of my schooling, I would be the ruination of my host if he depended on my ability as a field hand.

One of our first problems was determining how to address our host and hostess and how we wanted to be addressed. We quickly settled into the custom of calling adults by their first name prefixed with Mr. or Mrs. (pronounced "Miz".) We insisted that they drop the Miss for us, because of our age, but this was hard to establish, because they had never addressed a white man without the formality of Mr.-Mrs.-Miss.

My hostess spent her afternoons in the field but her mornings in the house. When we came to dinner the first day at noon, I concluded that she must have spent her entire morning cooking! We had meat in a sauce she had fixed, string beans and beet greens, two kinds of warm home-baked bread, a potato casserole, and a home-made baked dessert for which I never learned a name.

When I said to my host one day in jest, "Miz Katherine must do nothing but cook to produce so much good food," well, that decided it. The next morning I stayed home to help Miz Katherine.

I was not really surprised to find that she did a wide variety of chores, the same chores I've done at home. Here they were made more difficult by lack of vacuum cleaner and hot water, but simplified by the simplicity of the four room house. We picked beans and squash for dinner, and I tried to help fix the squash.

"How much water do I put in?"

"Not too much. An a little sugar and salt"

"How much sugar?"

"Jes' a little"

"How long should it cook?"

"You kin tell if it's done"

So, that was the trick to her good cooking!

Mr. Tom, my host, was very proud of his tractor, which saved him time and money.

One day while we were there he had to call a repair man to work on it. He told the girl who was living with me in his home that she and I had better stay in doors.

He had called a white man to do the job, and while the white man was willing to include a Negro's tractor among his jobs, (because as Mr. Tom put it, "A Negro's money is the same as a White Man's.") yet Mr. Tom said, "This man is mean, and he might not like it, you livin' with us."

One workcamper was told when he was shopping alone at a local store, that if he didn't leave, they would shoot into his hosts home.

When he told his hostess this and suggested he move, she said, "Don't you pay them no mind. They afraid we gonna get uppity. I'll tell you what: I'm jes uppity enough that I gotta right to keep whatever guests in my home that I want!"

The workcamper stayed and no one shot into his home.

The boy who drives the tractor for Mr. Tom told me that when he finishes high school he's going to join the army.

"It's the cheapest way for us to get an education, and besides, we can earn more money in the army than working on a farm. I don't think I'll have to shoot anybody though. I couldn't never do that, cause it's not right to kill another man."

One girl among the hands had just finished high school and was planning to go to a state college in the fall to learn to be a secretary. In discussing her hopes for the future and mine, I learned that she wants a job in New York City. When I asked her why, she said:

"I know a Negro's not treated like a white man even in the north but at least he can talk to white men, and some will treat him right. You're the first white person I ever talked to who cared about my ideas.

"I know it's hard to find a job, but it's harder here. My sister lives there, and she writes me about it."

When I asked the same girl a few days later what effect, if any, she thought the workcampers were having, she said:

"Oh, y'all are havin' a real good effect! When other colored folks see us talkin' to y'all, they see it can happen; and ridin' in the back of a truck with us, and choppin' I And if any white folk's sees u'all, well, maybe they'll have to think.

"Course, it won't really change no white man's ideas, cause people jes think the way they's been brought up."

One day when my southern family were all listening to the radio report of violence in civil rights demonstrations in Philadelphia, Cambridge, Md., and Jackson, Miss., my host said, "We want our rights here just like they do, but we don't want no violence in Haywood County."

Three years ago Mr. Tom had been forced to deal with mortgage foreclosure and the refusal of the white merchants to sell him food, clothing, or gasoline, because he had registered to vote.

Several times we went visiting grandparents and friends, and we saw the contrast between the life of our home-owning host families and the life of the sharecroppers. Beds with homemade mattresses, straight back chairs, bare electric light bulbs, and gay voices were all that cheered many of these two-and three-room houses, one board thick.

When the temperature was 95 and we had been working in the fields, and we were offered water, we accepted with unusually deep gratitude, not only because of thirst but also because we knew that our hostess must have brought the water from a well at the next house.

### Linda Lynes — Forward-Looking Girl

Linda, the 18-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Lynes, had a concern for the "problem" during her freshman year at Swarthmore College, but like most northerners, including her 12 fellow workcampers, she was unprepared for conditions as she found them in Haywood and Fayette County, Tenn.

What is it really like on the battlefront for civil rights in the South?

Linda Lynes of Wayland spent three weeks there--first, as part of a Quaker workcamp working in the cotton fields and living with sharecroppers and then in the "voter registration field"... the hardest work of all.

Whenever we went visiting, after introductions, there was always a time when we were trying to hide the awe we felt at the conditions we saw and trying to destroy the awe felt by the family at white men of good will. At this point we were introduced to the long line of children usually at least eight, often 15.

Knowing that white plantation owners, instead of paying their sharecroppers their share of income from the crop, gave them food and clothing, we could understand why the thin children wore such shabby clothes.

Then we would sit down on the porch and discuss local gossip: a friend's wedding, Sunday's sermon, the weather, the crop, the voter registration drive, where we northerners came from and in whose home we were living and how we liked chopping.

Once all of our bi-racial workcamp rode in the back of a pickup truck the 40 miles to Memphis to attend a meeting to discuss the economic difficulties of the farm life in West Tennessee and the delta countys in Mississippi:

Would it be possible to unionize farm workers? Would it have any effect on wage rates? What could they do about mechanization? Where was it possible to get crop loans and loans for equipment? how can co-operative farming make use of everyone's small plots of unplanted land?

These and other questions were primary in areas where most of the land is owned by poor Negroes or white men with sharecroppers and day laborers.

At that meeting it became especially clear to us that the civil rights struggle is inspired not only by the desire of the Negro people to be recognized as individuals with human problems, but also by the desires of these individuals to solve these problems. Our friends in the south, just like us and all our friends anywhere, worry about their financial needs and how to feed, clothe, house, educate, and bring up their children.

While we were living in Fayette and Haywood Counties, and while our host families were going out of their way to make us feel welcome, the police were going out of their way to make us feel unwelcome. They followed us often and frequently stopped cars with northern plates. The driver was required to show his license, auto registration, and permission to drive the car if it did not belong to him. Then he was subjected to a questioning something like this:

"What are y'all doing down here?"

"Visiting some friends."

"Are you a Communist? That's why you're makin' all this trouble, ain't it?"

"No I'm not a Communist."

"Well we don't want no Communists like you down here stirrin' up trouble. These niggers ain't intendin' y'all no good. There ain't no tellin' what they'll do. And I'm warnin you, you're not wanted and if you know what's good for you, you'll get out of this county."

One workcamper answered quietly, "You are the first man in this county who has not wanted me here."

Sundays we attended church with our hosts and hostesses and were invited to sing in the choir. We saw that religion is the dominant influence in these lives. Listening to their prayers for peace and love and justice, we could sense that, much as these people wanted justice, there was no hate in their hearts for the white men who inflicted injustice.

We will never forget the prayers, so often repeated, in which the minister or members of the congregation chanted in a beautiful voice words like these:

"Dear Lord, help us to show these guests that they are welcome here, and dear Lord, we know that there ain't no color in heaven, and, dear Lord, help all men to live a life of peace and love on earth so we'll be ready for that other life when we leave this one."

NEXT --Just who works against you on voter registration? Sometimes it's the Negroes. And what are the pressures in a small-town county?

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for Fayette County
Work Camp Project
c/o Virgie Hortenstine
5541 Hanley Road
Cincinnati, Ohio

Send contributions for building materials for community center to this address.

Next work camp November 27 - December 1, 1963

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| NAME |
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**A group of college students observed the life of Tennessee sharecroppers by staying with Negro families and instructing them on voter registration. In the above photo a new community center is being constructed at Somerville, Tenn.**

**NEEDED - $1,000** For this community center that now stands Roof high . . . . . This was built by workcampers and local Negroes working for civil rights . . . . . See Flyer "IT NEEDS A ROOF"

# Comprehension Questions

(For use with the Linday Lynes article)

1. What kind of life would Linda Lynes have lived prior to coming to Fayette County? How would her life have been similar to the lives lived by the Fayette Countians she lived with? How would it have been different?

2. How did Linda react to the hardships faced by Fayette Countians? How would you react in a similar situation?

3. Are there people today who live in extreme poverty or political hardships? What kind of struggles do these people face? What could you do to help them?

4. What did Linda do to help the people in Fayette County?

5. What problems did Linda have while living in Fayette County? How did she deal with these problems?

6. Why did the black family Linda lived with want to call her "miss"? Was this a surprise to Linda? Why did she ask not to be called "miss"?

7. How might Linda's experience change her life and view point after leaving Fayette County?

8. Why might black citizens of Fayette County idealize the northern United States? Do you think Linda encouraged them to further idealize the north? What evidence in the text supports your answer? How does this viewpoint relate to the Great Migration?

9. Why might white citizens in Fayette County feel threatened by Linda Lynes and other volunteers? What effect did the volunteers have on the civil rights efforts in the county?


*Source: Special Collections, University of Memphis. Estella McFerren, mother of civil rights activist John McFeren, with college students in front of her home. April, 1963*

# Kathy Westbrook
## from Robert Hamburger's *Our Portion of Hell* (Links 1973)

**Used by permission from the Author**

(For use with Activity Four)

In the beginnin we first began to start regsiterin people they were afraid. They were afraida white people in the neighborhood, they were afraid that they couldn't go to the merchants and get their food and clothin as they used to, and we had a problem getting em registered. We had to come in, sit in their homes, and talk with em a long time. We just had to sit down and convince em they wasn't goin to be hurt. Some people was really afraid.

A lotta people love to call me a big troublemaker. And I begin to ask momma and em a lotta questions. I wasn't really old enough to do a lot, but I begin to ask a lotta questions about a lotta things and stuff.

They begin to talk about, "You can't do this and can't do that."


I said, "Why you can't do it? I mean, like I heard on the news yesterday that you can do this, that, and the other. And you all go up there to voting. People haven't to go up there and be pushed around just any old kinda way."

Then they'd say, "There's not anything we can do about it."

I'd say, "Well, there's somethin somebody can do."

I didn't like the idea of bein pushed around by anybody. In the first place they used to go vote where the white officials was runnin the place. If your vote come in and they throw your vote away there wasn't anything you could do about it.

Then Vicki and Bob, and all the civil-rights workers come down and talk about it. I became interested. I'm nosy. Vicki she told me one say, "You're too young to vote and you can't be at the votin place on votin day." So they began to tell me little things that I could sit down and do at home like maybe call somebody or take somebody over to vote. Well that's the way it began. We wasn't really doin anything very much but get the people used to goin, and the few people that were goin, we'd try to get em up there and have em vote. Only a few had enough courage to go up and do something. And then comin up to the next election we began a few movements to improve things. I was interested in this. So we began to make simple ballots to illustrate so that people would know how to vote and people who didn't know how to read could use those to go by. And that's how I got started. I didn't know what to do or how to do it, but I knew there were things to be done. We had mass meetings which were really sorta dangerous in those times—the time of the Ku Klux Klan and all the rest of em—and I used to like to go and listen in and hear what would be said.

After we began to get in the Movement and some of the things were beginning to look kinda good— you know, some progress—the white people became furious and they begin to go round and make threats and they begin to talk with the older people. These people was afraida em, they knew it, and they begin to talk with em and tell em, "If you don't stop foolin with those white folks who come in here from up North tellin you all this trash. I'm not gonna let you have no more groceries outa my store." Somethin like that, you know. And then sometimes the people that would come in here to help us, they would get threats every once in a while. You could tell when it was getting dangerous. It started from that. It really seemed to start from a little something and it began to rise into somethin big.

# Comprehension Questions

(For use with the Kathy Westbrook reading)

1. Why were black citizens in Fayette County afraid to register to vote?

2. Did Kathy Westbrook let her young age discourage her from making a difference in her community? How did she deal with the issue of her age? What did she do to help the movement?

3. Can you think of problems in your community? Do you sometimes feel too young to help solve these problems? What could you do at your age to make a difference?

4. Do you think young people can make a big difference? Do you think Kathy made a big difference?

5. Why did the white citizens of the county feel threatened by black citizens registering to vote? What might have changed in Fayette County if all black citizens were allowed to vote? Why was the right to vote such an important thing to fight for?

6. In Fayette County during the Civil Rights Movement, there were not many stores for people to shop in. So, if you were banned from the stores in the county, you might have to drive an hour or more for basic necessities. When Kathy says that white citizens threatened not to let her and other politically active black Fayette Countians buy things in their stores, do you think this stopped them from registering to vote? Why or why not? How would you react to this situation?

7. What does it mean to be a citizen? How does the right to vote relate to citizenship? Why is it important for ALL citizens to have a say in who runs the government?

Photo from Memphis Press Scimitar morgue in Special Collections, University of Memphis Libraries.

# Comprehension Questions

(For use with the Jameson and Gray videos)

1. How were Edward's and James's lives similar to your own? How were they different?


2. What hardships did Edward and James face while trying to attend school? Why did they have these hardships?

3. Did Edward and James have different responsibilities within his family than you do? Did they have similar responsibilities?

4. What role did teenagers like Edward and James play in the Civil Rights Movement?

5. What lessons might Edward and James have learned from theirexperiences? What lessons can students today learn from their experiences?

6. Why was it important for students to desegregate the schools? What role did students play in this process?

7. Are there problems that students today face because of race, gender, or poverty level? Is there anything students today can do to solve these problems? If so, what?

8. Can you see similarities between Edward's and James's roles in fighting injustice and that of more famous adult activists? Can you see differences? Do you think one way of fighting injustice is more important than the other? Why or why not?

9. Compare and contrast the experiences of James Jameson and Edward Gray.

10. In what ways did Edward and James rely on adults for support? Were the adults in their lives able and/or willing to help them? Please discuss different adults when answering. Also, include evidence from the interviews to support your answer.

# Activity Five:
# REPORTER

**Objective:**
Students will conduct interviews of individuals who were a part of the Civil Rights Movement or who work for civil rights in contemporary society. Students will present their interviews creatively and utilizing proper grammar.

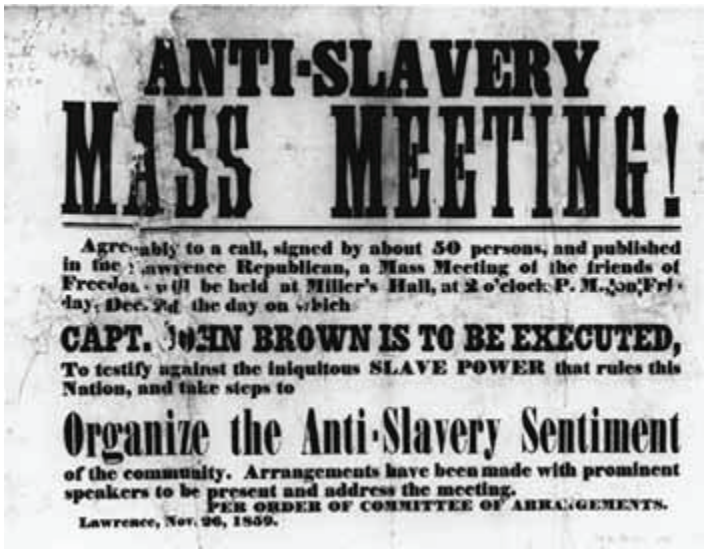
**Materials Needed:**
- ◊ Materials will vary with students' creativity but may include computers, newspaper/newsletter software, poster board, or a video recorder.
- ◊ Rubric included on pages 31-33

**Instructions:**
Students will find members of the community who remember or were involved in the Civil Rights Movement or the teacher will ask members of the community to visit the classroom. Contemporary civil rights activists can also be interviewed for a modern perspective on civil rights issues. Students will interview the community members and turn their interviews into a report. Students should have freedom to present their interviews in creative ways. Students should be honest when reporting their interviews and should also use good grammar, speaking, and research practices. Additionally, students should cite their personal interviews using appropriate MLA/APA formatting. A suggested rubric for the assignment is included.

**Optional:**
Students can research the effects the media had on The Civil Rights Movement, including the Fayette County movement (see **www.mempis.edu/tentcity**). The class can discuss the power of the media to help achieve meaningful social change.

# Activity Six:
# Tracing Civil Rights

**Objective:**
After learning about events from The Civil Rights movement nationally and in Fayette County, TN, students will report on the events, legislation, and other variables that worked to create the problems in the southern states (including Tennessee) leading up to the Civil Rights Movement in writing.


ANTI-SLAVERY
MASS MEETING!
Agreeably to a call, signed by about 50 persons, and published in the Lawrence Republican, a Mass Meeting of the friends of Freedom will be held at Miller's Hall, at 2 o'clock P. M., on Friday, Dec. 2d the day on which
CAPT. JOHN BROWN IS TO BE EXECUTED,
To testify against the iniquitous SLAVE POWER that rules this Nation, and take steps to
Organize the Anti-Slavery Sentiment
of the community. Arrangements have been made with prominent speakers to be present and address the meeting.
PER ORDER OF COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.
Lawrence, Nov. 26, 1859.

**Materials Needed:**
- ◊ Research materials (e.g. computers, books, databases, Google Scholar).
- ◊ MLA/APA citation guidelines (e.g. https://owl.english.purdue.edu)
- ◊ Plagiarism and source evaluation information sheets.
- ◊ Optional: graphic organizers, art supplies, Power Point, etc.
- ◊ Rubric on pages 31-33

**Instructions:**
Students will conduct research about civil rights events, legislations, people, and cultural trends that led to the racial disparities prior to and during the Civil Rights Movement and the Fayette County movement or shaped how the Civil Rights Movement was carried forth. Students can also consider how those events have shaped contemporary problems but should focus on the shaping of the Civil Rights Movement. The goal is for students to realize that social problems to not occur in a vacuum and that the decisions and cultural attitudes of one generation can have a ripple effect far into the future. Students should present their research and conclusions in essay form using proper MLA or APA formatting. They should also avoid plagiarism and effectively evaluate the credibility of their sources. Additionally, students should utilize good writing and grammar skills. Students can be assessed using the included rubric.

**Optional:**
Students can present their research and findings to the class. Students should have creativity in completing the project and planning the presentation. Students should use appropriate MLA/APA citations in their projects/presentations and should avoid plagiarism. One suggestion would be for students to create a graphic organizer/timeline showing the cause and effect relationship between events and problems.

# Activity Seven:
# Contemporary Issues

**Objective:**
Students will research contemporary civil rights issues and discuss how historical events/ problems have contributed to problems in contemporary society. Students should also research possible solutions to their contemporary issues and create a plan for addressing it.

**Materials Needed:**
- ◊ Articles: can be provided by teacher or found independently by students.
- ◊ Research materials( e.g. computers, books, databases, Google Scholar).
- ◊ MLA/APA citation guidelines (e.g. https://owl.english.purdue.edu)
- ◊ Plagiarism and source evaluation information sheets.
- ◊ Optional: graphic organizers, art supplies, Power Point, etc.
- ◊ Rubric on pages 31-33.

**Instructions:**
Each student will find an article discussing a contemporary civil rights issue.
(Teacher can also assign each student an article). The student should define the issue discussed in the article with clarity. Then, students should research the causes (both historical and contemporary) of the issue. These, too, should be articulated clearly. Students should evaluate the problem and its causes in order to create a possible solution to the problem. Each student should present the problem, its causes, and then effectively argue why his or her solution is the best way to solve the problem. The students' work should be recorded in essay format using appropriate MLA/APA formatting as well as good grammatical and researching skills. Students can be assessed using the included rubric.

**Optional:**
Students can present their research and findings to the class. Students should have creativity in completing the project and planning the presentation. Students should use appropriate MLA/APA citations in their projects/presentations and should avoid plagiarism.

*Source: Photograph: Special Collections, University of Memphis. Students from across the country came to Fayette County to work with African Americans in their struggle for civil rights.*

# RUBRIC
## (FOR USE WITH ACTIVITIES FIVE THROUGH SEVEN)

Student Name: _____

| CATEGORY | Percentage | Superior | Good | Average | Poor | Scores/ comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apparent Effort | Worth 15%<br>Superior: 14-15 Good: 12-13<br>Average:8-11<br>Poor: 0-7 | The project was submitted on time. The student worked hard on the project and paid close attention to details. The student utilized time and resources effectively. | The project was submitted on time. It is evident the student worked hard on the project, but he or she could have paid better attention to details and/or utilized time and resources more effectively. | The project was not submitted on time and/or the student did not put enough work into the project. Avoidable mistakes were made, and time/ resources were not utilized effectively. However, the student did complete the project as instructed. | The project was not submitted in a timely manner, and/or the student did not put much, if any, work into the project. The project appeared to be hastily constructed and full of avoidable mistakes. The student did not follow instruction or utilize time and resources effectively. | |
| Creativity 05% | Worth 05%<br>Superior: 5<br>Good: 4<br>Average: 3<br>Poor: 0-2 | The student thought outside of the given instructions to create a unique project. The student's project stood out positively from among the projects of his or her peers. | The student did show some creativity and did not create a project exactly like those of his or her peers. However, the student could have put more effort into creating a completely unique project. | The student followed instructions and did not plagiarize. However, he or she showed little or no creativity in the project. | The student plagiarized his or her ideas from another student. His or her project was a replica of another student's project. | |

# Rubric
## (For use with Activities Five through seven)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Integrity | 20% | Worth 20%<br>Superior: 18-20<br>Good:16-17<br>Average:12-15 Poor: 0-11 | The student avoided plagiarism and cited all sources appropriately. The student was also entirely honest about his or her research and findings. | The student avoided plagiarism and cited most sources appropriately. The student was also entirely honest about his or her research and findings. | The student did not willfully plagiarize, but there were serious errors in citations, and/or the student was not honest about his or her research and findings. | The student plagiarized his or her work and/or lied about his or her research and findings. | |
| Research/Citations | 10% | Worth 10%<br>Superior: 9-10 Good: 8<br>Average:6-7<br>Poor: 0-5 | The student used high-quality and reliable sources and cited them correctly. | The student mostly used high-quality and reliable sources and mostly cited them correctly. | The student used several unreliable sources and/or made many errors in citations. | The student used mostly unreliable sources and/or did not use enough sources. The student's citations contained serious errors, and/or the student plagiarized. | |
| Professionalism/Presentation | 20% | Worth 20%<br>Superior: 18-20<br>Good:16-17<br>Average:12-15 Poor: 0-11 | The student presented his or her findings professionally and with excellent grammar/usage. The student followed directions and addressed the prompt presented. | The student presented his or her findings professionally with some grammatical/ usage errors. The student followed directions and addressed the prompt presented. | The student needed improvement on presenting his or her findings professionally, and/or the project suffered greatly from grammatical/ usage errors. The student attempted to follow directions and address the prompt, but he or she was not entirely successful. | The student did not present his or her findings professionally, and the project was full of grammatical and usage errors. He or she ignored the instructions/ prompt provided. | |

# Rubric
## (For use with Activities Five through seven)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interpretation/argumentation | 30% | Worth 30%<br>Superior: 27-30 Good: 24-26<br>Average:16-23 Poor: 0-15 | The student accurately presented his or her research and effectively argued/ presented his or her points. The student's project was clear and well-organized. | The student accurately presented his or her research and presented mostly factual information. The student was a little unclear and/or confused on some information included in the project. The student argued well, but he or she could improve the its organization, persuasiveness, or research accuracy. | The student made several factual errors in the project and/ or did not accurately present his or her research. The student's argument needed to be clearer, and the project needed great improvement in the its organization, persuasiveness, or research accuracy. | The student made gross errors in accuracy. He or she made many factual mistakes and/or did not accurately present his or her research. The student's arguments were neither clear nor well presented. The project needed great improvement in the essay's organization, persuasiveness, and research accuracy. | **Total:** |

# Standards by Activity

**This Guide Focuses on meeting Standard U.S. 92 regarding the Tent Cities in Fayette County:**

"US.92 Describe significant events in the struggle to secure civil rights for African Americans, including the following: (C, H, P, TN)

◊ Columbia Race Riots
◊ **Tent Cities of Haywood and Fayette Counties**
◊ Influence of the Highlander Folk School and civil rights advocacy groups, including the SCLC, SNCC, and CORE
◊ Integration of Central High School in Little Rock and Clinton High School in Clinton, Tennessee
◊ Montgomery Bus Boycott
◊ Birmingham bombings 1963
◊ Freedom Rides, including the opposition of Bull Connor and George Wallace
◊ March on Washington ·
◊ Sit-ins, marches, demonstrations, boycotts, Nashville Sit-ins, Diane Nash
◊ Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. "

**Activities one and five encourage students to explore a variety of Civil Rights events and leaders in the Mid-South. Thus, students can use these two activities to learn about many of the other events mentioned in standard U.S.92. Additionally, students can, and should, discuss some of the events above in completing activity six.**

# Standards by Activity

**The following standards can be met through activity six in this guide. Which standards are met will be determined by the focus of the student's project.**

◊ US.21 Analyze the impact of the Great Migration of African Americans that began in the early 1900s from the rural South to the industrial regions of the Northeast and Midwest. (C, E, G, H)

◊ US.30 Analyze the political, economic, and social ramifications of World War I on the home front, including the role played by women and minorities, voluntary rationing, the Creel Committee, opposition by conscientious objectors, and the case of Schenck v. United States. (C, E, H, P)

◊ US.36 Analyze the attacks on civil liberties and racial and ethnic tensions, including the Palmer Raids, the immigration quota acts of the 1920's, the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, the efforts of Ida B. Wells and Randolph Miller, the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, the emergence of Garveyism, and the rise of the NAACP. (C, H, P, TN)

◊ US.40 Describe the Harlem Renaissance, its impact, and its important figures, including an examination of literary and informational text of or about Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Weldon Johnson, Duke Ellington, and Louis Armstrong

◊ US.61 Identify the roles and sacrifices of individual American soldiers, as well as the unique contributions of special fighting forces such as the Tuskegee Airmen, the 442nd Regimental Combat team, the 101 st Airborne, and the Navajo Code Talkers. (C, H)

◊ US.65 Examine the impact of World War II on economic and social conditions for African Americans, including the Fair Employment Practices Committee, the service of African Americans in the armed forces and the work force, and the eventual integration of the armed forces by President Truman. (C, E, H, P)

◊ US.89 Examine court cases in the evolution of civil rights, including Brown v. Board of Education and Regents of the University of California v. Bakke. (C, H, P)

◊ US.90 Examine the roles of civil rights advocates, including the following: (C, H, P, TN) · Martin Luther King, Jr. · Malcolm X · Thurgood Marshall · Rosa Parks · Stokely Carmichael · President John Kennedy · Robert Kennedy · President Lyndon Johnson · James Meredith · Jim Lawson

◊ US.91 Examine the roles of civil rights opponents, including Strom Thurmond, George Wallace, Orval Faubus, Bull Connor, and the KKK. (C, H, P)

◊ US.93 Cite textual evidence, determine the central meaning, and evaluate the explanations offered for various events by examining excerpts from the following texts: Martin Luther King, Jr. ("Letter from a Birmingham Jail" and "I Have a Dream" speech) and Malcolm X ("The Ballot or the Bullet"). (C, P)

◊ US.94 Analyze the civil rights and voting rights legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and the 24th Amendment. (C, E, H, P)

◊ US.95 Describe the Chicano Movement, the American Indian Movement, and Feminist Movement and their purposes and goals. (C, E, P)

◊ US.112 Describe the increasing role of women and minorities in American society, politics, and economy, including the achievements of Sandra Day O'Connor, Sally Ride, Geraldine Ferraro, Hillary Clinton, Condoleezza Rice, Nancy Pelosi, and the election of President Barack Obama. (C, H, P)

# Literacy Efforts

This teacher's guide aims to aid educators to meet literacy standards for eleventh and twelfth grade Social Studies classrooms. Non-fictional accounts are included along with discussion questions asking students to think critically about the provided texts in activities two, four, five, six., and seven. Students are also asked to conduct research and present their results using good writing and grammatical skills in activities five, six, and seven. Additionally, students are asked to demonstrate good argumentative skills in activity seven.

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