

ALL IN GOD'S IMAGE

A CELEBRATION of BLACK HISTORY and DIVERSITY



EAST OHIO CONFERENCE
MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

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Note to Teachers, Parents, and Caregivers,

This unit was designed to provide an introductory look at African American History for Sunday school settings. It is arranged in four lessons, one per Sunday, to take place during Black History Month or at other times during the year. Because of the developmental differences between the three age groups (Grades K, 1 & 2; 3 & 4; and 5 & 6), the concepts and activities explored in each of the four lessons may differ among grade levels.

The format of each lesson includes:

- Objectives. These are pertinent to each age group.
- Supplies. Supplies might include specific book titles and/or equipment, i.e., a computer, to project online stories, pictures, or maps.
- Introduction and Bible Memory Verse. Please encourage the child(ren) to learn the Bible verse and see how it relates to the information shared on that particular day.
- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. The stories have been chosen carefully for each grade level. The books can easily be obtained through your local libraries, book distributors, or read-aloud versions which are available online. Scripted discussion questions should also prove helpful and are listed in each lesson. Skits (role play) may be included for older students. In addition, suggested photographs of key individuals, maps, and other materials will be mentioned.
- Music. Music has been essential in the African American culture for centuries and was shared with all Americans. Simple songs are included in the lesson plans, many of which are found in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Most of the songs should be familiar and are easy to teach.
- Conclusion and Prayer. Closing statements and prayers are included. Please also spotlight the prayers of several African Americans which are also listed at the end of each lesson.
- Activities. Art projects are opportunities to end the lesson in creative ways.
- Extended Activities. Children can be encouraged to share new information with family members and friends. Some home activities are suggested, and extensive listings of recommended books for children are also included at the end of the unit.
- References and Appendix. A complete list of books and some extended activities are spotlighted at the end of the unit.

Final Comments:

Attempting to introduce African American History in a short timeframe is challenging but important in all Sunday school settings in the Ohio Episcopal Area. I have included significant events and individuals, but there are so many more! I hope that this will be just the first step in continuing to explore Black History in future years. We all have so much yet to learn.

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Teacher/Parent Code to Lesson Plans

- Lesson Number and Grade Level(s) are at top of first page of each lesson **in bold**.
- Themes explored in the lesson are at top of first page of each lesson **in bold**.
- Lesson Objectives are on first page of each lesson.
- Sentences highlighted in gray are scripted words of important information to be shared by the adult.
- Sentences *in italics* are suggested questions (and answers) which can be posed by the adult or read by an older student.

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Week 1 Lesson Plan

Themes: The Rich African Culture, Despair and Courage in Slavery
Suggested Grade Levels: K, 1, and 2

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ...

- Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.
- Define the concept of slavery.
- Name individuals who demonstrated courage when attempting to escape to freedom through the Underground Railroad.
- State ways in which Africans were leaders, musicians, storytellers, artisans, farmers, and other trades people prior to enslavement in the 17th Century and how these gifts were brought to America.
- Define the term spiritual and be able to learn and sing an example.
- Begin a mural which will include pictures and words representing the period of Black History discussed in the lesson.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or on online read-aloud versions (See reference list): *Anansi the Spider, a Tale from the Ashanti* by Gerald McDermott. *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Selected books from library (listed below, optional)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Apply this verse to our world's diversity, all people made in God's image. Ask children to memorize this verse in the week to come ([appendix](#)). Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good.

Ask the children what special things happen during the month of February (Ground Hog's Day, Valentine's Day, birthdays of Pres. Washington and Lincoln). Show them a picture of Carter Woodson (obtained online or in reference books). This is a picture of Carter Woodson, who is known as the father of Black History Month which takes place every February. Mr. Woodson was an African American whose parents were born slaves. He graduated from the University of Chicago and was the second African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard University. A writer and historian, Carter Woodson started Black [Negro] History Week in 1926. Beginning today, we are going to spend four Sundays talking about some of the many events and people we celebrate in Black History. There are so many, though, that we cannot get through them all in one month! We should celebrate African American History as part of American history all year through!

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Show children map of world with special emphasis on West Africa. Read or listen to the book, *Anansi the Spider, A Tale from the Ashanti* by Gerald McDermott. *What were some of the ways that Ashanti's sons helped him? How do you help your parents or caregivers when they need you? How did the God of All Things, Nyame, decide to reward the sons? (Nyame gave them all the moon.)* Anansi the Spider is a folktale that has been passed on for many generations, first by word-of-mouth. African Americans have been great storytellers since long before they came to America. But Africans did not choose to leave their beautiful continent to come here; they were captured, chained, and brought here in big ships to serve as slaves to the American people. *What is a slave? (A person who is taken against his or her will by force to do work for others). Does God want people to force other people to be slaves? Why not?* While slavery took place for hundreds and hundreds of years in America, the African American people still shared their many gifts with others. They told stories, were leaders, were tradespeople, musicians, made beautiful art, built large buildings, made cloth and colorful clothes, harvested plants, and made medicine and food. (They brought these skills from their homeland in Africa.) And, they were forced to do very very hard work outside, which other people didn't want to do, from morning until night. Even children were slaves. On Sundays, they worshiped God. They prayed and sang songs we now call spirituals. Some of those spirituals were songs of encouragement to each other, and some were even secret messages for people attempting to escape on the Underground Railroad. We will learn a spiritual in a few minutes!

During the years of slavery, there were many courageous people who tried to help others escape to freedom. This was called the Underground Railroad, but it wasn't a real railroad with trains. It was a network of people, of all colors, who helped hundreds of individuals escape to the north. One of the most famous "conductors" was Harriet Tubman who led more than 300 people to freedom. She was a hero! (Show photo of Harriet Tubman obtained online or in reference books.) Another person was Henry Brown, who actually mailed himself to freedom, described in Ellen Levine's book, *Henry's Freedom Box*. Read or listen to the book, *Henry's Freedom Box*, by Ellen Levine. *How would you feel if you watched your family being separated and you might never see them again? What do you think of Henry's idea to travel to freedom in a box? Who helped him along the way? Why didn't Black slaves know their birthdays? (Information might be kept from them by masters if it was known at all; no calendars; time was measured according to seasons not days, etc.) Was it fair that they couldn't know their birthdays? Why did Henry consider March 30, 1849 to be his birthday at the end of the book?*

- Music to hear and/or sing. "This Little Light of Mine" spiritual (using body instruments and audio). We mentioned spirituals a minute ago. One of the spirituals that has lasted for hundreds of years is called "This Little Light of Mine". Today we are going to learn the song together. African slaves were not allowed to use musical instruments, but many loved to use parts of their own bodies as instruments. How could we make sounds using only our bodies? (clapping, stomping our feet, hitting the ground with our hands or an object like a wooden spoon, etc.) Let's try those sounds, and then we will learn the song together. "This Little Light of Mine" is #585 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Great singing and instruments, everyone! *How were the enslaved people lights to others around them? (brave, talented, hardworking, prayerful, determined, God-loving, etc.) What types of light do we show to each other every day?*
- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We pray that we will continue to learn more about Black History in the weeks to come. Let's now also say a prayer of Harriet Tubman together. (Repeat several times.) Harriet Tubman's Prayer: "I'm going to hold steady on You, an' You've got to see me through."
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Using poster board and/or mural paper, begin a group mural showing highlights of lessons each week. (This week—African artisans and their creations, "Anansi" the spider, slave ships and slavery, Henry's box to freedom, Carter Woodson, etc.)
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week. Make a colored hands wreath to celebrate the many different people who live in the world. (See directions in [appendix](#).)

Week 2 Lesson Plan

Themes: Emancipation, Segregation, the Great Migration, Harlem Renaissance
Suggested Grade Levels: K, 1, and 2

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State how a document (the Emancipation Proclamation) written by President Abraham Lincoln freed most of the enslaved people in America on January 1, 1863. (It wasn't until June 19, 1865, however, that all of the enslaved people learned of their freedom. That day is now celebrated as "Juneteenth" every year in the United States.)
- Define the word migration as it applies to African American people who moved to the North after the Civil War was over.
- Describe ways in which Black people were kept separated from white people in many public places (including water fountains, bathrooms, trains, and buses).
- Give examples of some Black authors, artists, and musicians who shared their gifts with America about one hundred years ago (Harlem Renaissance).

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions (see reference list): *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* by Langston Hughes. *Ellington Was Not a Street* by Ntozake Shange.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Selected books from library (listed below) OPTIONAL
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- U.S. Map during the 1860s
- Rhythm instruments if available

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good. New Bible Verse--Even though the African Americans were kept in slavery for hundreds of years, in God's spirit, they were always free. Ask children to memorize this new verse in the week to come (**appendix**). 2 Corinthians 3: 17 CEB The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. Last week, we talked a lot about how people from Africa were forced to come to America and become slaves for white people. (Review other points from the lesson.) This week, we are going to talk about the challenges African Americans continued to face after they were no longer enslaved and how they contributed to American life and events.
- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Review the U.S. map during the 1860s (obtained online or in reference books). Our country at the time was divided into the North and South. The slaves who were working in the South were not free and continued to work very hard for no pay. A war began in 1861 called the U.S. Civil War. It was a very sad time for our country. States fought against each other. In 1863, the President of the United States, whose name was Abraham Lincoln, wrote a letter stopping slavery in the South. (Note: 200,000 Black men joined the Union Army and Navy, and many lost their lives in the war.) Sadly, some of the enslaved people didn't hear that they were free until two years later! Now, every June 19, many people celebrate the holiday, Juneteenth. *Why do you think it took more than two years for some people to learn that slavery was ended? (News traveled very slowly in those days. There were no phones, computers, or texting to share information.)* After all of the enslaved people were free and the Civil War ended, a number of African Americans decided to move in search of new jobs in the North (migration). Even though they were no longer slaves, life for African Americans was still very difficult. Laws were passed, called Jim Crow laws, which kept Blacks and whites separate in much of the country. They had to use separate bathrooms, drinking fountains, schools, ride in special train cars called Jim Crow cars, and when buses were invented, had to sit in the back behind the white people. A famous black writer at the time, named Langston Hughes, wrote one of many poems in which he described that time in history as a child. His book, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*, includes a poignant poem entitled "Merry-Go-Round." (Read the poem to the children.)

How would you feel if you were told you couldn't be treated the same as others? How do you think the boy in this poem feels? By the 1920s, when some of your grandparents or great-great grandparents probably lived, a neighborhood in New York City called Harlem became a place where many Black artists and musicians came to live. Some wrote books, like Langston Hughes; others composed music or played instruments such as Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie; some painted pictures or were actors like Paul Robeson. It was an exciting time in America! Let's hear a little girl's story of life in her Harlem home during that time many years ago. (Read or listen to the book, *Ellington Was Not a Street* by Ntozake Shange.) *What would it have been like to live in a house where many famous people visited? What are some of the sounds the little girl heard at that time?*

- Music to hear and/or sing. Speaking of music, last week we talked about songs which were created by African Americans called spirituals. Spirituals were passed down from one generation to another. Let's sing the song we learned last week, "This Little Light of Mine," which is #585 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Today we are going to learn another spiritual. It is called "Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In". Let's use some rhythm instruments or our body instruments again while we sing this song! (Note: This song is in the public domain.) Great job, everyone! *Who are the "saints" we are singing about in the song? (Good people who have died and are no longer living with us on Earth.) Where are they "marching"? (They are marching into Heaven.) Who will be crowned Lord of Lords? (Jesus) Why should children play in peace? (We need to love our neighbors as ourselves as Jesus taught us.)* Now let's sing the song one more time as we march around the room with rhythm instruments or body instruments!
- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson today. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We are sad for those men and women, boys and girls, who were treated differently because of their skin color and hope that we can all learn from their stories. Let's now also say a prayer by another famous African American who believed in equality and diversity throughout the world, Mary McLeod Bethune. Mary McLeod Bethune's prayer: "Dear God, We send a cry of Thanksgiving for people of all races, creeds, classes, and colors the world over, and pray that through . . . our lives the spirit of peace, joy, fellowship, and brotherhood [and sisterhood] shall circle the world."
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Continue a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—Emancipation Proclamation, Juneteenth, migration to North, Jim Crow laws, artists and musicians from Harlem Renaissance, etc.) Listen to the music of Duke Ellington or another musician of the Harlem Renaissance.
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: Paint a picture just as the artists did in Harlem. How did you feel when you were painting? Share your painting with others.

Week 3 Lesson Plan

Theme: The Civil Rights Movement
Suggested Grade Levels: K, 1, and 2

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State ways (review) in which Black people were kept separated from white people in many public places (including water fountains, bathrooms, schools, trains, and buses).
- Name two individuals, Rosa Parks and Ruby Payne, who joined thousands of other people, both white and Black, in protesting segregation.
- Describe the important contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to the Civil Rights Movement.
- Complete a cloud picture which includes your dream for the future.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *I Am Rosa Parks* by Rosa Parks. *Martin's Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport. *The Life of Ruby Bridges* by Elizabeth Raum.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map and U.S. map
- Glitter and cotton (optional)
- Rhythm instruments if available

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. 2 Corinthians 3:17. The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. Today, our memory verse comes from the book of James, who was one of the apostles. James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy ([appendix](#)).

Last week, we talked about even after African Americans were no longer enslaved, they were still not treated the same as white people. (Examples? Separate bathrooms, water fountains, school, places on buses, etc.) These types of “tests” led many people to challenge these rules and protest in different ways. This was called the Civil Rights Movement and it took place when your grandparents or great grandparents were young.

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Two of the most famous people to protest unfair laws were Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges. Rosa Parks, who lived in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to sit at the back of a bus in 1955 as she came home from work. Rosa Parks started a year-long protest when other people refused to ride the city buses in order to protest. [Read Chapter 1 from the book *I Am Rosa Parks* by Rosa Parks.] Ruby Bridges was just a little girl about your age when, in 1960, she was the first African American student to go to an all-white school in New Orleans, Louisiana. Let’s hear her story. [Read the book *The Life of Ruby Bridges* by Elizabeth Raum (pages 14-19).] *How would you have felt if you were Rosa Parks or Ruby Bridges? (scared, nervous, excited) Why do we consider them American heroes? (because by their courage, other people joined in protesting these types of rules)* Probably the person we know the best who led the Civil Right Movement was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. [Show his picture which can be obtained in reference books or online.] We even celebrate his birthday every year in January! Dr. King grew up as a boy in segregation in the South. He was a minister’s son and sang hymns and read the Bible just like we do at our church. He also became a minister himself and preached about loving each other, no matter what our skin color. Dr. King led many marches and protests with hundreds of people. He said he had a dream “that one day ... little Black boys and Black girls will join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers” (Speech by Martin Luther King Jr., Washington D.C., August 28, 1963). Finally, in 1964, a law was passed in the United States called the Civil Rights Act. No longer could Black and white people be kept apart. In 1965, the Voting Rights Acts also became law. [Read or share illustrations from the Caldecott award-winning book, *Martin’s Big Words*, by Doreen Rappaport.] Sadly, Dr. King was shot and died in 1968, but he accomplished more at the age of thirty-nine than most people do in their entire life. *Do you agree with Dr. King’s dream that all children, no matter what their skin color, can be friends?*
- Music to hear and/or sing. For the last two Sundays, we have been singing spirituals, and we will sing them again today if we have time. But now, we will learn a new song called “We Shall Overcome” by a man named Rev. Charles Albert Tindley. He was born one hundred years before the Civil Rights movement even happened, but this song was sung during the Civil Rights movement and is still sung today! It is located on page #433 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Good job! Now let's sing the song one more time as we rock our bodies back and forth to the music.

- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson today. Prayer: Dear God, thank you so much for the many people who worked hard for equal rights for all. We remember the men, women, and children who joined together on busses, in schools, and on city streets singing the song, "We Shall Overcome". Let's now also say a prayer by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Oh God, help us walk together, pray together, sing together, and live together until that day when all God's children [of all colors] will rejoice in one common band of humanity in the kingdom of our Lord. Amen."
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Continue a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—famous people of the Civil Rights movement including Rosa Parka, Ruby Bridges, and Martin Luther King, Jr.) Cut out a big, white cloud out of construction paper, and glue it on to blue (sky) construction paper. Above the cloud, write the words, "I Have a Dream." On the cloud, children can print or draw what their dreams are for our world. They can draw a picture or provide a photograph of themselves to place at the bottom.
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: Ask a grandparent or great-grandparent if they remember seeing Dr. King's speech on television on August 28, 1963. If so, ask what they remember about that day.

Week 4 Lesson Plan

Theme: Post-Civil Rights America
Suggested Grade Levels: K, 1, and 2

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State some ways that life has changed for African Americans since the Civil Rights Movement took place fifty years ago. Civil Right Laws
- Name two individuals, President Barack Obama and Mae Jemison, who are just a few of the hundreds of African Americans known for their contributions to our country.
- Complete a paper rocket to celebrate Mae Jemison's contributions.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *Mae Among the Stars* by Roda Ahmed. *Mae Jemison* by Luke Colins. *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters* by Barack Obama.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map and U.S. map

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy. Our last memory verse this month comes from the book of Matthew. Matthew 7:12 CEB Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the Law and the Prophets. (appendix) Last week, we talked about even after African Americans were no longer enslaved, they were still not treated the same as white people. In 1964, a new law, called the Civil Rights Act, assured that for the first time, Black citizens would have the same freedoms as white citizens. This included at jobs, schools, and all public places in the United States! In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson also signed the Voting Rights Act which allowed voting by all citizens, no matter what their skin color.

Do you think it was fair that it took hundreds of years for African Americans to have the same rights as others? Why not? How do you think life changed in America after these laws were passed?

- **Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion.** Through the years, hundreds of African Americans have continued to excel in all areas of life. There are so many biographies about artists, athletes, musicians, teachers, political leaders, and others, that we've made a long list for your parents. I hope you and your parents will read a few together! One person who stands out in the 21st century was Mae Jemison. Mae was born in 1956 and had a big dream as a child. [Let's hear about her dream in the book, *Mae Among the Stars*, by Roda Ahmed. You can also read a portion of a different book, *Mae Jemison*, by Luke Colins.] *Mae's teacher told her to be a nurse instead of an astronaut. Why do you think she said that to Mae? (In those days, neither girls nor African Americans were astronauts.) How do you think Mae's parents helped her reach her dream? (They encouraged and supported her.) What is your dream?* Another person who has encouraged his daughters is Barack Obama. (Picture obtained online or in reference books.) Who knows why he is famous? In 2008, President Obama became the first African American President of the United States, and he accomplished many things during the eight years he was President. In 2010, he wrote a book for his daughters, Sasha and Malia, about many Americans who have made a difference in the world (*Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters*). At the end of his "letter," President Obama says, "Have I told you that America is made up of people of every kind? People of all races, religions, and beliefs. People from the coastlines and the mountains. People who have made bright lights shine by sharing their unique gifts and giving us the courage to lift one another up, to keep the fight, to work and build upon all that is good in our nation." *What lesson can we learn from President Obama's letter? (There are many different people in America with special gifts; we need to share our gifts with one another.)*
- **Music to hear and/or sing.** For the first two Sundays, we sang spirituals that were passed down from generation to generation by enslaved African Americans. Last week, we learned a new song called "We Shall Overcome." This song was sung during the Civil Rights movement and is still sung today! Let's now sing all three of the songs that we learned during our Black History Month Celebration. Sing "This Little Light of Mine," "When the Saints Go Marching In," and "We Shall Overcome." If time permits, listen to music, such as Mytrell Foreman's "Jesus Hears Me," or other Christian hip-hop vocalists.)

- Conclusion. With the children's help, share significant events and people from the four weeks of our Black History Month Celebration. Begin with the first week, Africa and the enslavement of Africans, and continue all the way through today's lessons including Barack Obama, Mae Jemison, and hip-hop music. Dear God, we thank you for all of the many ways African Americans have blessed our country. Forgive us if we have not always realized how important it is for us to learn about each other. We were made in your image and should always treat each other as we would want to be treated. May we continue to learn more in the months and years to come and help others to learn more, too. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Finish a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—Civil Rights Laws, President Barack Obama, astronaut Mae Jemison, Christian hip-hop music) Mae Jemison Rocket—using construction paper design your own 3D rocket in honor of Mae Jemison. Draw or glue her face on the rocket!
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: With a parent or older brother or sister, find more pictures of President Obama and his family. Draw a picture of him (and don't forget to put our flag in the picture, too!) Choose a biography, historical fiction book, or nonfiction book from the lists of references, or find a book on one of the lesser-known people mentioned at the end of the list ([appendix](#)). When you are done, choose another book!

Week 1 Lesson Plan

Theme: The Rich African Culture, Despair and Courage in Slavery
Suggested Grade Levels: 3 and 4

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ...

- Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.
- Define the concept of slavery.
- Name individuals who demonstrated courage when attempting to escape to freedom through the Underground Railroad.
- State ways in which Africans were leaders, musicians, storytellers, artisans, farmers, and other tradespeople prior to enslavement in the 17th Century and how these gifts were brought to America.
- Define the term spiritual and be able to learn and sing an example.
- Begin a mural which will include pictures and words representing the period of Black History discussed in the lesson.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *Anansi the Spider, A Tale from the Ashanti* by Gerald McDermott. *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map
- Homemade clay or Play Dough

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including memory Bible verses). Apply these verses to our world's diversity, all people made in God's image. Ask children to memorize this verse in the week to come ([appendix](#)). Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good.

Ask the children what we typically think about during the month of February (Ground Hog's Day, Valentine's Day, birthdays of Pres. Washington and Lincoln). Show them a picture of Carter Woodson (obtained online or in reference books). This is a picture of Carter Woodson, who is known as the father of Black History Month which takes place every February. Mr. Woodson was an African American whose parents were born slaves. He graduated from the University of Chicago and was the second African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard University. A writer and historian, Carter Woodson started Black [Negro] History Week in 1926. Beginning today, we are going to spend four Sundays talking about some of the many events and people we celebrate in Black History. There are so many, though, that we cannot get through them all in one month! We should celebrate African American History as part of American history all year through!

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Show children map of world with special emphasis on West Africa. (Read or listen to the book, *Anansi the Spider, A Tale from the Ashanti* by Gerald McDermott.) *How did Ashanti's sons help him? How do you help your parents or caregivers when they need you? How did the God of All Things, Nyame, decide to reward the sons? (He gave them the moon.)* *Anansi the Spider* is a folktale that has been passed on for many generations, first by word-of-mouth. African Americans have been great storytellers since long before they came to America. But Africans did not choose to leave their beautiful continent to come here; they were captured, chained, and brought here in big ships to serve as slaves to the American people. *What is a slave? (A person who is taken against his or her will by force to do work for others). Does God want people to force other people to be slaves? Why not?* While slavery took place for hundreds and hundreds of years in America, the African American people still shared their many gifts with others. They told stories, were musicians, made beautiful art, built large buildings, made cloth and colorful clothes, harvested plants, and made medicine and food. And, they were forced to do very, very hard work outside, which other people didn't want to do, from morning until night. Even children were slaves. On Sundays, they worshiped God. They prayed and sang songs we now call spirituals. Some of those spirituals were songs of encouragement to each other, and some were even secret messages for people attempting to escape on the Underground Railroad. We will learn a spiritual in a few minutes! During the years of slavery, there were many courageous people who tried to help others escape to freedom. This was called the Underground Railroad, but it wasn't a real railroad with trains. It was a network of people, of all colors, who helped hundreds of individuals escape to the North. One of the most famous "conductors" was Harriet Tubman who led more than 300 people to freedom. She was a hero! (Show photo of Harriet Tubman obtained online or in reference books.) Another person was Henry Brown who actually mailed himself to freedom, described in Ellen Levine's book, *Henry's Freedom Box*. Read or listen to the book, *Henry's Freedom Box*, by Ellen Levine.

How would you feel if you watched your family being separated and you might never see them again? What do you think of Henry's idea to travel to freedom in a box? Who helped him along the way? Why didn't Black slaves know their birthdays? (Information might be kept from them by masters if it was known at all; no calendars; time was measured according to seasons, not days, etc.) Was it fair that they couldn't know their birthdays? Why did Henry consider March 30, 1849 to be his birthday at the end of the book?

- Music to hear and/or sing. "This Little Light of Mine" spiritual (using body instruments and audio) We mentioned spirituals a minute ago. One of the spirituals that has lasted for hundreds of years is called "This Little Light of Mine." Today we are going to learn the song together. African slaves were not allowed to use musical instruments, but many loved to use parts of their own bodies as instruments. How could we make sounds using only our bodies? (clapping, stomping our feet, hitting the ground with our hands or an object like a wooden spoon, etc.) Let's try those sounds, and then we will learn the song together. "This Little Light of Mine" is #585 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Great singing and instruments, everyone! *How were the enslaved people lights to others around them? (brave, talented, hardworking, prayerful, determined, God-loving, etc.) What types of light do we show to each other every day?*
- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader. Summarize the important points of the lesson. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We pray that we will continue to learn more about Black History this month and in the months to come. Let's now also say a well-known prayer of Harriet Tubman together. (Repeat several times.) Harriet Tubman's Prayer: "I'm going to hold steady on You, an' You've got to see me through."
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Begin a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—African artisans and their creations, "Anansi" the spider, slave ships and slavery, Henry's box to freedom, Carter Woodson, etc.) Using homemade clay or Play Dough, create little figures, animals or birds. This form of art came with the Dahomey artisans to America when they were enslaved. (An artisan is a skilled artist.) The Dahomey kingdom was well-established in West Africa by the 1600s. For more information, see "John Dreams" from the book *Freedom Over Me* by Ashley Bryan. (See the list of references at end of unit).
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week (included in packet): Make a colored hands wreath to celebrate the many different people who live in the world. (See directions in [appendix](#).)

Week 2 Lesson Plan

Theme: Emancipation, Segregation, the Great Migration, Harlem Renaissance
Suggested Grade Levels: 3 and 4

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State how a document (Emancipation Proclamation) written by President Abraham Lincoln freed most of the enslaved people in America on January 1, 1863. (It wasn't until June 19, 1865, however, that all of the enslaved people learned of their freedom. That day is now celebrated as "Juneteenth" every year in the United States.)
- Define the word migration as it applies to African American people who moved to the North after the Civil War was over.
- Describe ways in which Black people were kept separated from white people in many public places (including water fountains, bathrooms, schools, trains, and buses). Jim Crow Laws; Segregation
- Give examples of some Black authors, artists, and musicians who shared their gifts with America about one hundred years ago (Harlem Renaissance).

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* by Langston Hughes. *Ellington Was Not a Street* by Ntozake Shange.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or another device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Selected books from library (listed below, optional)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- U.S. map during the 1860s
- Green or blue papers or sticky notes for segregation simulation

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good. New Bible Verse--Even though the African Americans were kept in slavery for hundreds of years, in God's spirit, they were always free. Ask children to memorize this new verse in the week to come ([appendix](#)). 2 Corinthians 3: 17 The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. Last week, we talked a lot about how people from Africa were forced to come to America and become slaves for white people. (Review other points from the lesson.) This week, we are going to talk about the challenges African Americans continued to face after they were no longer enslaved and how they continued to contribute to American life and events.
- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Review the U.S. map during the 1860's. Explain that our country was divided into the North and South at that time. The slaves who were working in the South were not free and continued to work very hard for no pay. A war began in 1861 called the U.S. Civil War. It was a very sad time for our country. States fought against each other. In 1863, the President of the United States, whose name was Abraham Lincoln, wrote a letter stopping slavery in the South. (Note: 200,000 black men joined the Union Army and Navy, and many lost their lives in the war.) Sadly, some of the enslaved people didn't hear that they were now free until two years later! Now, every June 19, many people celebrate the holiday, Juneteenth. *Why do you think it took more than two years for some people in America to learn that slavery was ended? (News traveled very slowly in those days. There were no phones, computers, or texting to share information.)* After all of the enslaved people were freed and the Civil War ended, a number of African Americans decided to move in search of new jobs in the North (migration). Even though they were no longer slaves, life for African Americans was still very difficult. Laws were passed, called Jim Crow laws, which kept Blacks and whites separate in much of the South (segregation). They had to use separate bathrooms, drinking fountains, schools, ride in special train cars called Jim Crow cars, and when buses were invented, had to sit in the back behind the white people. A famous Black writer at the time, named Langston Hughes, wrote one of many poems in which he described that time in history as a child. His book, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*, includes a poignant poem entitled "Merry-Go-Round." (Read the poem to the children.) *How would you feel if you were told you couldn't be treated the same as others? How do you think the boy in this poem feels?*

- [*Simulation of Segregation: Mark areas of your classroom or house with “green” or “blue” markers. Make sure that each child is assigned one of the two colors. Spaces might include bathrooms, television, computer, refrigerator, water faucet, drinking fountain, stairway, exit/entrance, etc. (Try to give one group the preferable spaces, i.e. bathroom, water fountain, computer, etc.) Give them all five to ten minutes to do whatever they would like in the large space providing they only use the sections marked with their color, green or blue. *How did you feel when you could only use certain parts of the classroom or house? Were some parts better than others? How do you think Black Americans at this time in history felt when they could only use a particular part of the building or bus/train and whites were able to use another, better part? We will talk next week about how these rules were finally forced to change.*]

By the 1920's, when your grandparents or great-grandparents probably lived, a neighborhood in New York City called Harlem became a place where many Black artists and musicians came to live. Some, like Langston Hughes, wrote books; others composed music or played instruments such as Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie; some painted pictures or were actors like Paul Robeson. It was an exciting time in America! Let's hear a little girl's story of life in her Harlem home during that time many years ago. (Read or listen to the book, *Ellington Was Not a Street*, by Ntozake Shange.) *What would it have been like to live in a house where many famous people visited? What are some of the sounds the little girl heard at that time? (talking, musical instruments playing, singing, laughter) Do you think Americans today still benefit from the talents of these artists and musicians? Why?*

- Music to hear and/or sing. Speaking of music, last week we talked about songs which were created by African Americans called spirituals. Spirituals were passed down from one generation to another. Let's sing the song we learned last week, “This Little Light of Mine,” which is #585 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Today we are going to learn another spiritual. It is called “Oh, When the Saints Go Marching In”. Let's use our “body instruments” again while we sing this song! (Note: This song is in the public domain.) Great job, everyone! *Who are the “saints” we are singing about in the song? (Good people who have died and are no longer living with us on Earth.) Where are they “marching”? (They are marching into Heaven.) Who will be crowned Lord of Lords? (Jesus) Why should children play in peace? (We need to love our neighbors as ourselves as Jesus taught us.)*
- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson today. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We are sad for those men and women, boys and girls, who were treated differently because of their skin color and hope that we can all learn from their stories. Let's now also say a prayer by another famous African American who believed in equality and diversity throughout the world, Mary McLeod Bethune. (Repeat several times.)

Prayer from Mary McLeod Bethune: “Dear God, We send a cry of Thanksgiving for people of all races, creeds, classes, and colors the world over, and pray that through ... our lives the spirit of peace, joy, fellowship, and brotherhood [and sisterhood] shall circle the world.”

- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Continue a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—Emancipation Proclamation, Juneteenth, migration to North, Jim Crow laws, artists and musicians from Harlem Renaissance, etc.) Listen to the music of Duke Ellington or another musician from the Harlem Renaissance.
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week. Paint (or use markers) a picture just as the artists in Harlem. How did you feel when you were painting?

Week 3 Lesson Plan

Theme: The Civil Rights Movement
Suggested Grade Levels: 3 and 4

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State ways (review) in which Black people were kept separated from white people in many public places (including water fountains, bathrooms, schools, trains, and buses). Segregation
- Name two individuals, Rosa Parks and Ruby Payne, who joined thousands of other people, both white and Black, in protesting segregation.
- Describe the important contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to the Civil Rights Movement.
- Complete a cloud picture which includes your dream for the future.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online: *I Am Rosa Parks* by Rosa Parks. *The Life of Ruby Bridges* by Elizabeth Raum. *Martin's Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- World map and U.S. map
- Glitter and cotton (optional)
- Rhythm instruments if available

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. 2 Corinthians 3:17. The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. Today, our memory verse comes from the book of James, who was one of the apostles. James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy ([appendix](#)). Last week, we talked about how even after African Americans were no longer enslaved, they were still not treated the same as white people.

(Examples? Separate bathrooms, water fountains, school, places on buses, etc.) These types of “tests” led many people to challenge these rules and protest in different ways. This was called the Civil Rights Movement and it took place when your grandparents or great-grandparents were young.

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Two of the most famous people to protest unfair laws were Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges. Rosa Parks, who lived in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to sit at the back of a bus in 1955 as she came home from work. Rosa Parks started a year-long boycott when other people refused to ride the city buses in order to protest. [Read Chapter 1 from the book *I Am Rosa Parks* by Rosa Parks.] Ruby Bridges was just a little girl about your age when, in 1960, she was the first African American student to go to an all-white school in New Orleans, Louisiana. Let’s hear her story. [Read the book *The Life of Ruby Bridges* by Elizabeth Raum.] *How would you have felt if you were Rosa Parks or Ruby Bridges? (scared, nervous, excited) Why do we consider them American heroes? (because of their courage, other people joined in protesting these types of rules)* Probably the person we know the best who led the Civil Rights Movement was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. [Show his picture which can be obtained in reference books or online.] We even celebrate his birthday every year in January! Dr. King grew up as a boy in segregation in the South. He was a minister’s son and sang hymns and read the Bible just like we do at our church. He also became a minister himself and preached about loving each other, no matter what our skin color. Dr. King led many marches and protests with hundreds of people. He said he had a dream “that one day ... little Black boys and Black girls will join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers”. (Speech by Martin Luther King Jr., Washington D.C., August 28, 1963) Finally, in 1964, a law was passed in the United States called the Civil Rights Act. No longer could Black and white people be kept apart. [Read or share illustrations from the Caldecott award-winning book, *Martin’s Big Words*, by Doreen Rappaport.] Sadly, Dr. King was shot and died in 1968, but he accomplished more at the age of thirty-nine than most people do in their entire life. *Do you agree with Dr. King’s dream that all children, no matter what their skin color, can be friends?*
- Music to hear and/or sing. For the last two Sundays, we have been singing spirituals, and we will sing them again today if we have time. But now, we will learn a new song called “We Shall Overcome” by a man named Rev. Charles Albert Tindley. He was born one hundred years before the Civil Rights movement even happened, but this song was sung during the Civil Rights movement and is still sung today! It is located on page #433 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Good job! Now let’s sing the song one more time as we rock our bodies back and forth to the music.

- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson today. Prayer: Dear God, thank you so much for the many people who worked hard for equal rights for all. We remember the men, women, and children who joined together on busses, in schools, and on city streets singing the song, “We Shall Overcome”. Let’s now also say a prayer by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Oh God, help us walk together, pray together, sing together, and live together until that day when all God’s children [of all colors] will rejoice in one common band of humanity in the kingdom of our Lord. Amen.”
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Continue a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—famous people of the Civil Rights movement including Rosa Parka, Ruby Bridges, and Martin Luther King, Jr.) Cut out a big, white cloud out of construction paper, and glue it on to blue (sky) construction paper. Above the cloud, write the words, “I Have a Dream”. On the cloud, children can print or draw what their dreams are for our world. They can draw a picture or provide a photograph of themselves to place at the bottom.
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: Ask a grandparent or great-grandparent if they remember seeing Dr. King’s speech on television on August 28, 1963. If so, ask what they remember about that day.

Week 4 Lesson Plan

Theme: Post- Civil Rights America

Suggested Grade Levels: 3 and 4

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State some ways that life has changed for African Americans since the Civil Rights Movement took place fifty years ago. Civil Right Laws
- Name two individuals, President Barack Obama and Mae Jemison, who are just a couple of the hundreds of African Americans known for their contributions to our country.
- Complete a paper rocket to celebrate Mae Jemison's contribution.

Supplies:

- Suggested books listed in lesson plans as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions. *Mae Among the Stars* by Roda Ahmed. *Mae Jemison* by Luke Colins. *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters* by Barack Obama.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map and U.S. map

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy. Our last memory verse this month comes from the book of Matthew. Matthew 7:12 CEB Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the Law and the Prophets. (appendix) Last week, we talked about how even after African Americans were no longer enslaved, they were still not treated the same as white people. In 1964, a new law, called the Civil Rights Act, assured that for the first time, Black citizens would have the same freedoms as white citizens. This included jobs, schools, and all public places in the United States! In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson also signed the Voting Rights Act which allowed voting by all citizens, no matter what their skin color.

Do you think it was fair that it took hundreds of years for African Americans to have the same rights as others? Why not? How do you think life changed in America after these laws were passed?

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Through the years, hundreds of African Americans have continued to excel in all areas of life. There are so many biographies about artists, athletes, musicians, teachers, political leaders, and others, that we've made a long list for your parents. I hope you and your parents will read a few together! One person who stands out in the 21st century was Mae Jemison. Mae was born in 1956 and had a big dream as a child. Let's hear about her dream in the book, *Mae Among the Stars*, by Roda Ahmed. You can also read a portion of a different book, *Mae Jemison*, by Luke Colins. *Mae's teacher told her to be a nurse instead of an astronaut. Why do you think she said that to Mae? (In those days, neither girls nor African Americans were astronauts.) How do you think Mae's parents helped her reach her dream? They encouraged and supported her.) What is your dream?* Another person who has encouraged his daughters is Barack Obama. [Share picture from reference books or internet.] Who knows why he is famous? In 2008, President Obama became the first African American President of the United States, and he accomplished many things during the eight years he was President. In 2010, he wrote a book for his daughters, Sasha and Malia, about many Americans who have made a difference in the world (*Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters*). At the end of his "letter," President Obama says, "Have I told you that America is made up of people of every kind? People of all races, religions, and beliefs. People from the coastlines and the mountains. People who have made bright lights shine by sharing their unique gifts and giving us the courage to lift one another up, to keep the fight, to work and build upon all that is good in our nation." *What lesson can we learn from President Obama's letter? (There are many different people in America with special gifts; we need to share our gifts with one another.)*
- Music to hear and/or sing. For the first two Sundays, we sang spirituals that were passed down from generation to generation by enslaved African Americans. Last week, we learned a new song called "We Shall Overcome." This song was sung during the Civil Rights movement and is still sung today! Let's now sing all three of the songs that we learned during our Black History Month Celebration. (Sing "This Little Light of Mine," "When the Saints Go Marching In," and "We Shall Overcome.") If time permits, listen to music, such as Mytrel Foreman's "Jesus Hears Me," by other Christian hip-hop vocalists.]

- Conclusion. With the children's help, share significant events and people from the four weeks of our Black History Month Celebration. Begin with the first week, Africa and the enslavement of Africans, and continue all the way through today's lessons including Barack Obama, Mae Jemison, and hip-hop music. Dear God, we thank you for all of the many ways African Americans have blessed our country. Forgive us if we have not always realized how important it is for us to learn about each other. We were made in your image and should always treat each other as we would want to be treated. May we continue to learn more in the months and years to come and help others to learn more, too. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Finish a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—Civil Rights Laws, President Barack Obama, astronaut Mae Jemison, Christian hip-hop music) Mae Jemison Rocket—using construction paper design your own 3D rocket in honor of Mae Jemison. Draw or glue her face on the rocket!
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: Find out more information about the presidency of Barack Obama. How old was he when he became president? What number president was he? How many four-year terms did he serve? Choose a biography, historical fiction book, or nonfiction book from the lists of references, or find a book on one of the lesser-known people mentioned at the end of the lists ([appendix](#)). When you are done, choose another book!

Week 1 Lesson Plan

Themes: The Rich African Culture, Despair and Courage in Slavery
Suggested Grade Levels: 5 and 6

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ...

- Explain the importance of Carter Woodson and Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.
- Examine the terms slavery, enslaved people, the Middle Passage, and the abolitionist movement.
- Describe some conditions of slavery in America and the time period in which it occurred.
- Define the term Underground Railroad as it existed during the time of enslavement.
- State ways in which Africans were leaders, musicians, storytellers, artisans, farmers, leaders, and other tradespeople prior to enslavement in the 17th Century and how their gifts were brought to America.
- Begin a mural which will include pictures and words representing the period of Black History discussed in the lesson.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read aloud-versions: *Freedom Over Me* by Ashley Bryan.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map
- Homemade clay or Play Dough

Lesson Format:

- Introduction. Bible Memory Verses (apply these verses to our world's diversity, all people made in God's image, and review the story of Moses and the Israelites in slavery and how it relates to the slavery of African Americans. Ask children to memorize these verses in the week to come ([appendix](#)). Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good.

Joshua 1: 9 (CEB) [God said to Moses' people, the Israelites] I've commanded you to be brave and strong, haven't I? Don't be alarmed or terrified, because the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Review with the children all of the special holidays and events in February. If no one mentions it, introduce the idea of Black History Month. Show them a picture of Carter Woodson (obtained online or in reference books). This is a picture of Carter Woodson, who is known as the father of Black History Month which takes place every February. Mr. Woodson was an African American whose parents were born slaves. He graduated from the University of Chicago and was the second African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard University. A writer and historian, Carter Woodson started Black [Negro] History Week in 1926. Beginning today, we are going to spend four Sundays talking about some of the many events and people we celebrate in Black History. There are so many, though, that we cannot get through them all in one month! We should celebrate African American History as part of American history all year through! *Why is it important to celebrate African American History not only in February but throughout the year? (Black History is interwoven with all American history. It is part of the total American experience, and many of us have a lot to learn!)*

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Show children map of world with special emphasis on West Africa. Go over vocabulary needed for this story excerpt—slavery, enslaved people, Middle Passage, Negro. Read or listen to sections of *Freedom Over Me* (“Mrs. Mary Fairchilds” and “Peggy”) by Ashley Bryan. (See the list of references at end of unit.) The enslaved people described in this book are not real but are based on hundreds of people who lived at that time. *Compare the way Mrs. Fairchilds spoke about her slaves as opposed to “Peggy,” talking about her own experiences as an enslaved person. Did Mrs. Fairchilds see her workers as people or property? How do you know? (She is auctioning them like property and selling them for money.) What are the experiences which “Peggy” describes about being captured, her trip to America through the Middle Passage on a slave ship, and her life as a cook? While slavery took place for hundreds and hundreds of years in America, the African American people still shared their many gifts with others. They were leaders, told stories, were musicians, made beautiful art, built large buildings, made cloth and colorful clothes, harvested plants, and made medicine and food. And, they were forced to do extremely hard work outside, which other people didn't want to do, from morning until night. Even children were slaves. On Sundays, they worshiped God. They prayed and sang songs we now call spirituals. Some of those spirituals were songs of encouragement to each other, and some were even secret messages for people attempting to escape on the Underground Railroad. We will learn a spiritual in a few minutes! During the years of slavery, there were many courageous people who tried to help others escape to freedom. This was called the Underground Railroad, but it wasn't a real railroad with trains. It was a network of people, of all colors, who helped hundreds of individuals escape to the North. One of the most famous “conductors” was Harriet Tubman who led more than 300 people to freedom. (Show photo of Harriet Tubman obtained online or in reference books.)*

These people were called abolitionists and included many people of all colors, some of whom were arrested and executed. Among the most famous were Frederick Douglass, Anthony Burns, and Sojourner Truth.

- Music to hear and/or sing. “This Little Light of Mine” spiritual (using body instruments and audio) We mentioned spirituals a minute ago. One of the spirituals that has lasted for hundreds of years is called “This Little Light of Mine.” Today we are going to learn the song together. African slaves were not allowed to use musical instruments, but many loved to use parts of their own bodies as instruments. How could we make sounds using only our bodies? (clapping, stomping our feet, hitting the ground with our hands or an object like a wooden spoon, etc.) Let’s try those sounds, and then we will learn the song together. “This Little Light of Mine” is #585 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Great singing and instruments, everyone! *How were the enslaved people lights to others around them? (brave, talented, hardworking, prayerful, determined, God-loving, etc.) What types of light do we show to each other every day?*
- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader.) Summarize the important points of the lesson. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We pray that we will continue to learn more about Black History in the weeks to come. Let’s now also say a well-known prayer of Harriet Tubman together. (Repeat several times.) Harriet Tubman’s Prayer: “I’m going to hold steady on You, an’ You’ve got to see me through.”
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Begin a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—African artisans and their creations, slave ships and slavery, the Underground Railroad, Carter Woodson, etc.) Using homemade clay or Play Dough, create little figures, animals or birds. This form of art came with the Dahomey artisans to America when they were enslaved. (An artisan is a skilled artist.) The Dahomey kingdom was well-established in West Africa by the 1600’s. [For more information, read the book *Freedom Over Me* (“John Dreams”) by Ashley Bryan.]
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week. Research African names. Choose one that you like and its meaning. Share the name you chose with us next week and its origin. Remember, Africans were not allowed to use their real African names in America, another example of the tragedies they faced during enslavement.

Week 2 Lesson Plan

Themes: Emancipation, Segregation, the Great Migration, Harlem Renaissance
Suggested Grade Levels: 5 and 6

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State how a document (Emancipation Proclamation) written by President Abraham Lincoln freed most of the enslaved people in America on January 1, 1863. (It wasn't until June 19, 1865, however, that all of the enslaved people learned of their freedom. That day is now celebrated as "Juneteenth" every year in the United States.)
- Define the word migration as it applies to African American people who moved to the North after the Civil War was over.
- State the meaning of lynching and the people like Ida B. West who tried to prevent it.
- Describe ways in which Black people were kept separated from white people in many public places (including water fountains, bathrooms, trains, and buses). Jim Crow Laws; segregation.
- State the many contributions which African Americans shared during the Harlem Renaissance.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *A Children's Introduction to African American History* by Jabari Asim. *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* by Langston Hughes. *Ellington Was Not a Street* by Natozake Shange.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- U.S. map during the 1860s
- Green and blue papers or sticky notes for segregation simulation.

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it.

Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good. New Bible Verse--Even though the African Americans were kept in slavery for hundreds of years, in God's spirit, they were always free. Ask children to memorize this new verse in the week to come. (appendix) 2 Corinthians 3: 17 (CEB) The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. Last week, we talked a lot about how people from Africa were forced to come to America and become slaves for white people. (Review other points from the lesson.) This week, we are going to talk about the challenges African Americans continued to face after they were no longer enslaved but how they continued to contribute to American life and events.

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Review the U.S. map during the 1860s. Our country was divided into the North and South at that time. The slaves who were working in the South were not free and continued to work extremely hard for no pay. A war began in 1861 called the U.S. Civil War. It was a very sad time for our country. States fought against each other. In 1863, the President of the United States, whose name was Abraham Lincoln, wrote a letter stopping slavery in the South. (Note: At that time, 200,000 Black men joined the Union Army and Navy, and many lost their lives in the war.) Sadly, some of the enslaved people didn't hear that they were now free until two years later! Now, every June 19, many people celebrate the holiday, Juneteenth. *Why do you think it took more than two years for some people in America to learn that slavery was ended? (News traveled very slowly in those days. There were no phones, computers, or texting to share information.)* After all the enslaved people were freed and the Civil War ended, a number of African Americans decided to move North in search of new jobs (migration) and others stayed in the South. Even though they were no longer slaves, life for African Americans was still very difficult. "A number of individuals faced a terrible practice called lynching. Up until the late 1950s, white people sometimes gathered to torture and murder African Americans in front of approving crowds. Families occasionally held picnics while they watched the killings. These murders were called lynchings, and although they took place throughout the country, most occurred in the southern states ... More than 4,000 Black people died at the hands of white lynchers in [the United States]." From *A Children's Introduction to African American History* by Jabari Asim, p. 25. *If you had lived during the time of lynchings, what might you have done to try to stop them? (One courageous African American journalist, Ida B. Wells, wrote articles about lynchings in Mississippi. When her house was burned down by angry whites, she moved to Chicago and continued to write.)* In addition to lynchings, laws were passed, called Jim Crow laws, which kept Blacks and whites separate in much of the South. African Americans had to use separate bathrooms, drinking fountains, schools, ride in special train cars called Jim Crow cars, and when buses were invented, had to sit in the back behind the white people. A famous Black writer at the time, named Langston Hughes, wrote many poems in which he described that time in history as a child.

His book, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*, includes a poignant poem entitled “Merry-Go-Round.” Read the poem to the children. *How would you feel if you were told you couldn't be treated the same as others? How do you think the boy in this poem feels?* [*Simulation of Segregation: Mark areas of your classroom or house “green” or “blue”. Make sure that each child is assigned one of the two colors. Spaces might include bathrooms, television, computer, refrigerator, water faucet, drinking fountain, stairway, exit/entrance, etc. (Try to give one group the more popular spaces, i.e., bathroom, water fountain, computer, etc.) Give the group five-ten minutes to do whatever they would like in the large space providing they only go in the sections marked with their color, green or blue. *How did you feel when you could only use certain parts of the classroom or house? Were some parts better than others? How do you think Black Americans at this time in history felt when they could only use a particular water fountain or part of the building or bus/train, and whites were able to use another, better part? We will talk next week about how these rules were finally forced to change.*]

By the 1920s, when your grandparents or great-grandparents probably lived, a neighborhood in New York City called Harlem became a place where many Black artists and musicians came to live. Some, like Langston Hughes, wrote books; others composed music or played instruments such as Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie; some painted pictures or were actors like Paul Robeson. It was an exciting time in America! Let's hear a little girl's story of life in her Harlem home during that time many years ago. Read or listen to the book, *Ellington Was Not a Street*, by Ntozake Shange.

- Music to hear and/or sing. Speaking of music, last week we talked about songs which were created by African Americans called spirituals. Spirituals were passed down from one generation to another. Today we are going to learn another type of song. It is not a spiritual but is a song that was based on a poem by another famous, African American writer, James Weldon Johnson. It is called “Lift Every Voice and Sing”. J. Rosamond Johnson, James' brother, wrote the tune in 1905, in honor of the late President Lincoln's birthday. Try finding a video or audio recording of this famous song. It can also be found in *The United Methodist Hymnal*, #519. *Why do you think that many people refer to this song as the Black National Anthem? Why has it provided inspiration to the many African Americans who have faced discrimination for so many generations?*
- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson today. Prayer: Dear God, we give thanks for the African American people through history and those who are so important in our lives today. We are sad for those men and women, boys and girls, who were treated differently because of their skin color and hope that we can all learn from their stories. Let's now also say a prayer by another famous African American who believed in equality and diversity throughout the world, Mary McLeod Bethune. (Repeat several times.) Prayer from Mary McLeod Bethune: “Dear God, We send a cry of Thanksgiving for people of all races, creeds,

classes, and colors the world over, and pray that through ... our lives the spirit of peace, joy, fellowship, and brotherhood [and sisterhood] shall circle the world.”

- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Continue a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—Emancipation Proclamation, Juneteenth, migration to North, Jim Crow laws, artists and musicians from Harlem Renaissance, etc.) Listen to the music of Duke Ellington or another musician from the Harlem Renaissance.
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week. Pretend you are Ida B. Wells and write a newspaper article against lynching.

Week 3 Lesson Plan

Theme: The Civil Rights Movement
Suggested Grade Levels: 5 and 6

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State ways (review) in which Black people were kept separated from white people in many public places (including water fountains, bathrooms, schools, trains, and buses). Segregation and Jim Crow Laws
- Describe the first lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina.
- State other ways that Americans also protested during the Civil Rights Movement (marches, boycotts, refusal to use city services, etc.)
- Describe the March on Washington D.C. in 1963 and its leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Create a picture in a cloud of your dream for the future.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles as obtained from local libraries, book distributors, and/or online read-aloud versions: *Sit-in: Four Friends Stood Up By Sitting Down* by Andrea Davis Pinkney.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Selected books from library (listed below, optional)
- Bible(s)
- World map and U.S. map
- Glitter and cotton for cloud picture (optional)

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it.
2 Corinthians 3:17. The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. Today, our memory verse comes from the book of James, who was one of the apostles. James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy ([appendix](#)).

Last week, we talked about how even after African Americans were no longer enslaved, they were still not treated the same as white people. (Examples? Separate bathrooms, water fountains, schools, places on buses, etc.) These were the types of “tests” which led many people to challenge the Jim Crow Laws and protest peacefully in different ways. This was called the Civil Rights Movement and it took place when your grandparents or great-grandparents were young. Many large groups of people, even children, participated in marches, rallies, boycotts against services, and sit-ins.

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. One of the first sit-ins took place in 1960. Four college students who lived in Greensboro, North Carolina, protested the fact that African Americans were not allowed to sit at the lunch counter (a very long table) at the front of a restaurant. With the help of other Black leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., they organized a non-violent sit-in in which they refused to leave their seats at the counter. The next day more students took their place. And after a while, there were lunch counter sit-ins in other parts of the South as well. [Read the book, *Sit-in: Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* by Andrea Davis Pinkney.] [Lunch Counter Role Play: In your home or in the classroom, set up chairs to simulate a lunch counter. One or more children can represent the college students that first day who refused to leave their seats. Other people can represent the rude and sometimes hostile people who tried to force them out. If there is time, reverse roles.] *How would you have felt if you were sitting at the counter and people were treating you poorly? What would you have done? Why do you think sit-ins were called nonviolent protests?*

Probably the person we know best who led the Civil Right Movement was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. [Show his picture as obtained from reference books or online.] We even celebrate his birthday every year in January! Dr. King grew up as a boy in segregation in the South. He was a minister’s son and sang hymns and read the Bible just like we do at our church. He also became a minister himself and preached about loving each other, no matter what our skin color. Dr. King led many marches and protests with thousands of people, and he was often arrested and put in jail. On August 28, 1963, Dr. King led an event that was so big that it took place in our nation’s capital, Washington D.C. At that march, he said he had a dream. [Read or listen to a portion of the “I Have Dream Speech” completed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Washington DC on August 28, 1963.] *Do you agree with Dr. King’s dream that all children, no matter what their skin color, can be friends?* Finally, in 1964, a law was passed in the United States called the Civil Rights Act. No longer could Black and white people be kept apart in the South. Sadly, Dr. King was shot and died in 1968, but he accomplished more at the age of thirty-nine than most people do in their entire lifetime.

- Music to hear and/or sing. For the last two Sundays, we have been singing spirituals, and we will sing them again next week. But now, we will learn a new song called “We Shall Overcome” by a man named Rev. Charles Albert Tindley. He was born one hundred years before the Civil Rights movement even happened, but this song was song during the Civil Rights movement and is still sung today! It is located on page #433 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Good job! Now let’s sing the song one more time as we rock our bodies back and forth to the music.

- Conclusion (including prayer from African American leader) Summarize the important points of the lesson today. Prayer: Dear God, thank you so much for the many people who worked hard for equal rights for all. We remember the men, women, and children who joined together on busses, in schools, in marches, and on city streets singing the song “We Shall Overcome”. Let’s now also say a prayer by Martin Luther King, Jr. “Oh, God. Help us to walk together, pray together, sing together, and live together until that day when all God’s children [of every color] will rejoice in one common band of humanity.”
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Continue a group mural showing highlights of lesson each week. (This week—the first sit-in, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and all who did nonviolent protests. Have the children cut out a large cloud out of white construction paper. Glue it on a piece of (sky) blue paper. Above the cloud, write the words, I Have a Dream. The children can write or draw a picture of their dream for a better world in the cloud. They can also draw a picture of themselves at the bottom or include a photo.
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: Ask a grandparent or great-grandparent if they remember seeing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech on August 28, 1963 on television. If so, ask them what it was like.

Week 4 Lesson Plan

Theme: Post-Civil Rights America
Suggested Grade Levels: 5 and 6

Objective(s):

By the end of the lesson, the Sunday school participant will ... Repeat--Explain the importance of Black History Month in February and celebrating Black History throughout the year.

- State both positive and negative ways that the lives of African Americans have changed since the Civil Rights Laws were passed more than fifty years ago. Racial disparities
- Explain the Black Lives Matter movement, how it began, and why it continues today.
- Identify a few examples of the hundreds of African Americans in present-day America who have made contributions in art and music, government, athletics, mathematics, writing, and/or science.
- Describe how hip-hop music began and a specific selection of Christian hip-hop.

Supplies:

- Suggested book titles listed in lesson plan as obtained from local libraries, book distributors: *A Child's Introduction to African American History* by Jabari Asim. *Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters* by Barack Obama.
- Large poster board or mural paper (for use all month)
- Crayons or markers which include black and brown colors (for use all month)
- Construction paper which includes black and brown colors, scissors, and glue sticks (for use all month)
- Computer or other device with flash drive portal (for use all month)
- Selected books from library (listed below, optional)
- Bible(s)
- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- World map and U.S. map

Lesson Format:

- Introduction (including Bible memory verse) Begin the lesson by reviewing the Bible verse from last week. Have individuals repeat the verse if they memorized it. James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy. Our last memory verse this month comes from the book of Matthew. (appendix) Matthew 7:12 CEB Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the Law and the Prophets.

Last week, we talked about how even after African Americans were no longer enslaved, they were still not treated the same as white people. In 1964, a new law, called the Civil Rights Act, assured that for the first time, Black citizens would have the same freedoms as white citizens. This included jobs, schools, and all public places in the United States! In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson also signed the Voting Rights Act which allowed voting by all citizens, no matter what their skin color.

- Story Excerpt(s) and Discussion. Even after those laws were passed, do African Americans still face discrimination and unequal treatment today? YES! Let's now continue by discussing negative ways in which African Americans still face discrimination and unequal treatment fifty years after the Civil Rights Movement took place. [With the children, brainstorm types of racial disparities and place on a list. These might include: unequal pay, different medical coverage including doctor care and hospitals, housing options, educational opportunities, number of arrests and incarcerations, fewer roles on television and in movies, etc.] In 2013, a new national movement, Black Lives Matter, was started after an African American teenager named Trayvon Martin was shot by mistake. *Have any of you heard or seen the words, "Black Lives Matter"? Where? When?* Share the book, *A Child's Introduction to African American History* by Jabari Asim, p. 85. In 2008, President Obama became the first African American President of the United States, and he accomplished many things during the eight years he was president. (Most of you were born when he was still president!) In 2010, he wrote a book for his daughters, Sasha and Malia, about many Americans who have made a difference in the world (*Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters; see the references at end of unit*). At the end of his "letter," President Obama says, "Have I told you that America is made up of people of every kind? People of all races, religions, and beliefs. People from the coastlines and the mountains. People who have made bright lights shine by sharing their unique gifts and giving us the courage to lift one another up, to keep the fight., to work and build upon all that is good in our nation." *What lesson can we learn from President Obama's letter? (There are many different people in America with special gifts; we need to share our gifts with one another.)*
- Music to hear and/or sing. Another person was Clive Campbell who developed the idea of hip-hop music. It was a new style of music which is still popular today. African Americans, then, have contributed to spirituals, jazz, instrumental music, the "blues," and in recent years, hip-hop and rap music. [Listen or view a music video, such as Mytrell Foreman's, "Jesus Hears Me," or other Christian hip-hop vocalists.]

- Conclusion: With the children’s help, review the pictures they have included on their mural. Today, they will have the chance to add other pictures of people and events from the past fifty years of African American history. Dear God, we thank you for all of the many ways African Americans have blessed our country. Forgive us if we have not always realized how important it is for us to learn about each other. We were made in your image and should always treat each other as we would want to be treated. May we continue to learn more in the months and years to come and help others to learn more, too. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.
- Activities (craft, skit, discussion, creative writing, DVD excerpt, etc.) Finish the group mural showing highlights of lessons each week. (This week—Civil Rights Laws, President Barack Obama, astronaut Mae Jemison and other famous Americans, Black Lives Matter, etc.) Matching Game: There have been hundreds of African Americans who have made significant contributions to our country throughout hundreds of years. For example, question: Have you ever heard of Mae Jemison? She was the first African American female astronaut! Let’s play a game: I will say a name of a famous person of color we have talked about this month, and you will tell me if you know what he or she has done. Names will include people in music, art, writing, athletics, politics/government, science, and math. (See [appendix](#) for this activity which can be done individually or in a group.)
- Extended activities (optional) to do during the week: Learn more about President Barack Obama. How many terms did he serve? What were some special projects he did while he was in office? How did his wife, Michelle Obama, help school children in our country? Choose a biography, historical fiction book, or nonfiction book from the lists of references, or find a book on one of the lesser-known people mentioned at the end of the list ([appendix](#)). When you are done, choose another book!

Bible Memory Verses (Common English Bible)

Lesson One:

Genesis 1: 27, 31 (CEB) God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God saw everything He had made: It was supremely good. K-6

Joshua 1: 9 (CEB) [God said to Moses' people, the Israelites] I've commanded you to be brave and strong, haven't I? Don't be alarmed or terrified, because the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. 5-6

Lesson Two:

2 Corinthians 3: 17 CEB The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Lord's Spirit is, there is freedom. K-6

Lesson Three:

James 1: 1 and 2 CEB My brothers and sisters, think of the various tests you encounter as occasions for joy. K-6

Lesson Four:

Matthew 7:12 CEB Therefore, you should treat people in the same way that you want people to treat you; this is the Law and the Prophets. K-6

How to Make a Colored Hands Wreath for Martin Luther King Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is always the third Monday in January and it marks Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday. This craft is in honor of that day. The colored hands represent children of different races joining hands in peace and unity.

Materials Needed

- colored papers, assorted
- scissors
- glue

Step 1

With the back portion of the colored papers, let a child trace his/her hand with a marker. Do the same to the other paper colors until you have around 7-8 pieces.

Step 2

With a pair of scissors, cut the drawings and set aside.

Step 3

When all hand shapes are cut, arrange them in a circle as if the hands are reaching outwards. Make sure the colors are alternately placed. Glue the outer side so it touches the side of the other hand. Continue doing this until you create a circle that resembles a wreath. There you have it ... you just finished making your colored hands wreath for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Doesn't it look awesome when finished? Now go hang it proudly for all to see!

This activity can be found at: artistshelpingchildren.org/kidscraftsactivitiesblog/2012/01/how-to-make-a-colored-hands-wreath-for-martin-luther-king-day/

Lesson 4: Famous African Americans (Matching Game) Grades 5 and 6

(Match the individual on the left with his or her important contribution on the right. This is just a sample of the many individuals who have contributed to America!) Hint: A few of these people wrote the prayers and songs we learned this month.

- | | |
|--|--|
| _____ Harriet Tubman | a. Started “Black History Week” |
| _____ Dahomey artisan | b. Conductor on Underground Railroad |
| _____ Sojourner Truth | c. Shipped himself to freedom |
| _____ Duke Ellington | d. West African craftsperson |
| _____ Ida B. Wells | e. Abolitionist |
| _____ Rosa Parks | f. Women’s rights and abolitionist |
| _____ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. | g. Harlem Renaissance writer and poet |
| _____ David, Joseph, Franklin, and Ezell | h. Harlem Renaissance musician |
| _____ Mae Jemison | i. Educator, Statesperson, Activist |
| _____ Carter Woodson | j. Journalist who reported lynchings |
| _____ Harry “Box” Brown | k. Began hip-hop |
| _____ Frederick Douglass | l. “Lift Every Voice and Sing” |
| _____ Langston Hughes | m. Led Montgomery bus boycott |
| _____ Clive Campbell | n. Leader of Civil Rights Movement |
| _____ Ruby Bridges | o. “We Shall Overcome” |
| _____ James Weldon Johnson | p. Lunch Counter Sit-in (Greensboro, NC) |
| _____ Rev. Charles Albert Tindley | q. First African American U.S. President |
| _____ Barack Obama | r. Scientist and astronaut |
| _____ Kamala Harris | s. First Black student to attend an
all-white school in the South |
| | t. First female Vice President of the U.S.SSS |

Lesson 4: Famous African Americans (Matching Game) Grades 5 and 6

Answer Key

(Match the individual on the left with his or her important contribution on the right. This is just a sample of the many individuals who have contributed to America!)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| b | Harriet Tubman | a. Started “Black History Week” |
| d | Dahomey artisan | b. Conductor on Underground Railroad |
| f | Sojourner Truth | c. Shipped himself to freedom |
| h | Duke Ellington | d. West African craftsperson |
| j | Ida B. Wells | e. Abolitionist |
| m | Rosa Parks | f. Women’s rights and abolitionist |
| n | Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. | g. Harlem Renaissance writer and poet |
| p | David, Joseph, Franklin, and Ezell | h. Harlem Renaissance musician |
| r | Mae Jemison | i. Educator, Statesperson, Activist |
| a | Carter Woodson | j. Journalist who reported lynchings |
| c | Harry “Box” Brown | k. Began hip-hop |
| e | Frederick Douglass | l. “Lift Every Voice and Sing” |
| g | Langston Hughes | m. Led Montgomery bus boycott |
| k | Clive Campbell | n. Leader of Civil Rights Movement |
| s | Ruby Bridges | o. “We Shall Overcome” |
| l | James Weldon Johnson | p. Lunch Counter Sit-in (Greensboro, NC) |
| o | Rev. Charles Albert Tindley | q. First African American U.S. President |
| q | Barack Obama | r. Scientist and astronaut |
| t | Kamala Harris | s. First Black student to attend an all-white school in the South |
| | | t. First female Vice President of the U.S. |

Suggested Non-Fiction Books for Younger Readers

- *Asim, Jabari & Gaines, Lynn. (2018). *A Child's Introduction to African American History*. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers.
- Brian, Ashley. (2007). *Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Farris, Christine King & London, Ladd. (2008). *March On! The Day My Brother Martin Changed the World*. New York: Scholastic Press.
- Fishman, Cathy Goldberg & Elliott, Mark. (2012). *When Jackie and Hank Met*. New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation.
- Giovanni, Nikki. (2007). *On My Journey Now: Looking at African-American History Through the Spirituals*. Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press.
- Harrison, Vashti. (2017). *Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- *Hughes, Langston & Pinkney, Brian. (1994). *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Pinkney, Andrea D. & Pinkney, Brian. (1996). *Bill Pickett: Rodeo-Ridin' Cowboy*. New York: Gulliver Books.
- *Pinkney, Andrea Davis & Pinkney, Brian. (2010). *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- *Raum, Elizabeth. (2020). *The Life of Ruby Bridges*. Mankato, Minnesota: Amicus.
- *Shange, Ntozake & Kadir Nelson. (2004). *Ellington Was Not a Street*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Shetterly, Margot Lee & Freeman, Laura. (2018). *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

(Books marked with asterisk (*) were utilized in lessons.)

And more interesting people to explore!

Bessie Coleman (1892-1926). "Brave Bessie" was the first African American aviator.

Ta-nehisi Coates (1975-). African American author and journalist. He has written series for Marvel comics, "The Black Panther" and "Captain America."

Rita Dove (1952-). First African American and youngest poet to receive the U.S. Poet Laureate in 1993.

Pauli Murray (1910-1985). First African American woman to be ordained an Episcopal priest.

Note: Individual names were provided by Sharon Sudberry, Church of the Saviour United Methodist Church.

References

Note: The following books were used in the preparation of this teaching unit. They are a valuable asset for children of all ages.

Suggested Biographies and Historical Fiction for Younger Readers

- *Bryan, Ashley. (2016). *Freedom Over Me*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Clark-Robinson, Monica & Morrison, Frank. (2018). *Let the Children March*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- *Coles, Robert & Ford, George. (1995). *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. New York: Scholastic Inc.
- *Colins, Luke. (2014). *Mae Jemison*. North Mankato, Minnesota: Capstone Press.
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(Books marked with asterisk (*) were utilized in lessons.)

Resources for Children suggested by the Ohio Episcopal Area

As United Methodists examine ways to end racial injustice, offering resources about racism to children can help a younger generation be part of the solution. The resources below can aid in introducing this challenging topic to elementary school-aged children.

- *God's Dream* by Desmond Tutu, a South African Anglican cleric and theologian known for his work as an anti-apartheid and human rights activist.
- *A Kid's Book About Racism* by Jelani Memory was written to be an introduction for kids on the topic of racism, what it is, how it makes people feel when they experience it, and how to spot it when it happens.
- *Deep Blue Life: Faith and Culture - Anti-Racism* (free download from Cokesbury website) Teaches children about empathy, culture, race, and prejudice using three sessions teaching about "Prejudice and Stereotypes," "Curiosity and Empathy," and "Colors and Cultures."
- *Brown Sugar Babe* by Charlotte Watson Sherman is a message of self-love. When a little girl has doubts about the color of her skin, her mother shows her all the wonderful, beautiful things brown can be!
- *Magnificent Homespun Brown* by Samara Cole Doyon, as told by a succession of exuberant young narrators, is a story -- a song, a poem, a celebration -- about feeling at home in one's own beloved skin.
- *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman follows a group of children through a day in their school, where everyone is welcomed with open arms.
- *Hands Up!* By Breanna J. McDaniel recasts a charged phrase as part of a Black girl's everyday life – hands up for a hug, hands up in class – before culminating in a moment of resistance at a protest march.
- *I Walk with Vanessa* by Kerascoet is a picture book based on real events that tells the story of one girl who inspires a community to stand up to bullying.
- *Honeysmoke* by Monique Fields tells of a young biracial girl's experiences in looking around the world for her color.
- *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson a poignant, yet heartening book about finding courage to connect, even when you feel scared and alone.
- *Tips for talking to Children About Race and Racism* by Erin Winkler, Associate professor of Africology and Urban Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
- *Talking About Race and Racism* by Ijeoma Oluo. Follow up discussions with an additional article and video.
- *Let's Talk About Race* by Julius Lester explores what makes each of us special and emphasizes that race is just one of many facets of a person.

- *Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for Desegregation* by Duncan Tonatitu tells the 1944 story of Sylvia Mendez being denied enrollment to a "Whites only" school and the lawsuit her parents won that led to the end of segregated education in California.
- *Desmond and the Very Mean Word* by Desmond Tutu is a touching story about compassion and forgiveness based on his real life experience as a child.
- *White Flour* by David LaMotte is based on true events and uses vivid rhymes and colorful illustrations to tell the story of a whimsical and effective response to a Ku Klux Klan rally in Knoxville, TN in May 2007.
- *Lillian's Right to Vote* by Jonah Winter tells the story of 100-year-old Lillian telling her family's tumultuous voting history as she slowly makes her way up a hill to the polling station to vote.
- *Ruth and the Green Book* by Calvin Alexander Ramsey tells of Ruth and her family realizing as they go on a trip in their new car in the early 1950s that black travelers are not welcome everywhere.
- *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up* by Sitting Down by Andrea Davis Pinkney is a compelling picture book that uses dynamic illustrations and poetic text as a great starting point for conversations about racism and discrimination.
- *The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson uses expressive watercolor illustrations and a lyrical narrative to tell the touching story of two girls who form a friendship meeting across a fence during segregation.
- *Shining Star: The Anna May Wong Story* by Paula Yoo tells the rags-to-riches story of the Chinese American Hollywood star in the 1930s and 1940s who broke new ground for future generations of Asian American actors.
- *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman tells of resistance Grace met when she wanted to play Peter Pan in the school play. The book uses expressive watercolor illustrations and a strong main to tell an engaging story about challenging gender and racial stereotypes.
- *The Soccer Fence: A Story of Friendship, Hope, and Apartheid in South Africa* by Phil Bildner uses simple text and expressive pencil and acrylic illustrations to tell a story of hope and change.
- *The Case for Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage* by Selina Alko is an inspiring story about a couple who changed the world for interracial couples and opened people's eyes to the unfairness of any law that restricts whom you are allowed to love.
- *If A Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks* by Faith Ringgold tells of Marcie learning about Rosa Parks during a magical bus ride to school.

For full list and other resources go to: <https://www.eocumc.com/standagainstracism/childrensresources.html>.

Resources for Kids suggested by The United Methodist Church

Go to: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/books-about-racism-for-kids> for full list.

The conversation about race should not be limited to adults. Bringing children into calm, educated discussions can help a younger generation confront the reality of racism and be part of the solution in ending racial injustice. The following books were recommended by our friends at the General Commission on Race and Religion.

- *The Snowy Day*: One of a series, this book by Ezra Jack Keats, features a Black boy who experiences the joy of a snowy day in his city. First published in 1962, the book is lauded for breaking the color barrier for mainstream children's literature. Other titles in the series are *A Letter to Amy*, *Hi, Cat!*, and *Whistle for Willie*. (Recommended for ages birth to 3 years old.)
- *Hair Love*: The book that inspired an Oscar-winning short film, *Hair Love* tells the sweet story of author Matthew A. Cherry, a Black father, learning to do his daughter's hair for the first time. (Recommended for ages 3 to 5.)
- *The Youngest Marcher*: Cynthia Levinson tells the true and shocking story of 9-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks, who, in 1963, was jailed for a week along with hundreds of other children following a Birmingham civil rights march. (Recommended for ages 5-8.)
- *Resist: 35 Profiles of Ordinary People Who Rose Up Against Tyranny and Injustice*: Veronica Chambers, a senior editor at The New York Times, gathered inspiring stories from the past 500 years, each with a lesson for our kids about how to fight injustice in their own lives. (Recommended for ages 9-12.)
- *All American Boys*: The book, written by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely, looks at the effects of police brutality from the perspective of two teenage boys, one white, the other Black. Written in tandem, the story recounts the complications that spin out of a violent moment, causing reverberations throughout families, school and a town. (Recommended for ages 12 and older.)