Lesson Plans

NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards Program
Lessons Learned from NEA's Social Justice Advocates

JERRY GORE
Carter G. Woodson Memorial Award

Objective(s)
- Students will be able to identify the significant social justice contributions of Jerry Gore.
- Students will be able to explain the impact of education as a tool to promote social justice.
- Students will analyze the experiences of those who suffered the terrible injustice of slavery and explain how sharing and learning about those experiences can impact how we can work to prevent the injustices of the present time.
- Students will be able to analyze the relationship between helping others and leadership and advocacy roles in promoting social justice and human and civil rights causes.
- Students will be able to apply map-reading skills as related to travel routes for the Underground Railroad.

Materials/Preparation
- Whiteboard and marker
- Blank white paper (one piece per student)
- Handout 1: Timeline Labels (print and cut one set)
- Handout 2: The 5 W’s Student Activity Sheet (make one copy per student)
- Handout 3: Human and Civil Rights Award Winner (make one copy per student)
- Handout 4: Jerry Gore Lesson Visuals (print and cut one set)
Materials/Preparation

1. Draw a long line across the top of the whiteboard to create a timeline added during class discussion; label the beginning with the date 1492 and the end with the current year (i.e., 2015).

2. Prepare to show the video segment http://freedomundergroundrailroad.com/media/.

3. Prior to teaching the lesson familiarize yourself with Jerry Gore’s background by reading the Lesson Information and Background and visiting freedomundergroundrailroad.com.

Suggested Grouping Structures

Whole group discussion, small group work, and independent reflection

Estimated total lesson time: 45 minutes

Opening the Lesson (5 minutes)

A Window into the Past

1. Call attention to the blank timeline posted on the whiteboard. Tell students that you want to have a brief discussion about general timeline of U.S. History in order to put the topic of today’s lesson into context for them. Tell them that you would like their help to add events to the timeline.

2. Explain to the class that United States history is typically characterized as major periods (sometimes called eras) centered on key events. Ask students if they can name the periods as you provide the dates (guide the discussion as necessary). Post the Periods in American History labels (on Handout 1) for the 10 major time periods.

3. Explain to students that within the periods there are specific and significant events to keep in mind. Add the light blue labels to the timeline and discuss each event. Say, “Let’s take a look at some of the events that fall into the major time periods of our early history.”
4. **Ask** students if they would like to add anything that they believe to be significant event. Have them discuss this question with a partner or small group. Distribute blank timeline labels (on Handout 1) to those who have something to add. Have students list the event and add the estimated (or exact if known) date. Add the additional labels to the timeline and discuss.

5. **Add** the Slavery Time Period labels (on Handout 1) to the timeline without explaining why you are doing so (note that some of the events you are adding, could possibly have been listed by students in the previous step, if so add the timeline label next to the students card).

6. **After** all of the Slavery Time Period labels, are added, call students’ attention to those labels and give them a moment to think about a connection between the events. (Prompt the answer: they are all related to Slavery and also make the connection to the time period header, “Civil War.”)
   - Missouri Compromise (1820)
   - Fugitive Slave Bill; Underground Railroad (1850)
   - Emancipation Proclamation (1863)
   - Thirteenth Amendment (1865)

7. **Explain** to students that slavery in the United States was a form of forced labor. It was a dehumanizing institution and sad aspect of our country’s history. Slavery made legal the ownership of one person by another. A slave was considered the property of his or her master, was forced to work for little if any compensation, and had no or very few legal rights. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in 1865.

8. **Ask** the class to share in small groups, what they know about slavery, how slaves were treated and how they would feel, if it were possible today for someone to take someone’s freedom away from them by declaring them a slave. Take a few moments to share some of each group’s responses and thoughts. Call on group members to respond.

9. **Ask**, “What would you have done if you had been a slave?” (Prompt the answer: try to get free.)

10. **Tell** students that one of the cards on the timeline includes a reference to the way that
slaves were able to courageously escape to freedom with the help of others, and in turn by helping others. Ask students which label refers to what you are talking about. Call on a volunteer or two. (Prompt the answer: the Underground Railroad.)

11. **Explain** what the Underground Railroad was (i.e., in the United States before slavery became illegal, slaves found a way to take their freedom back by bravely escaping to places where slavery was not allowed. One way a slave escaped was by something called the Underground Railroad, which wasn’t actually a railroad at all; it was a system of secret escape paths where the safe houses for slaves were referred to as stations). Show students on a map the general areas of the United States that were routes on the Underground Railroad.

12. **Tell** them they will learn about the Underground Railroad and a person today who has dedicated his time and efforts to helping others understand this significant part of our history.

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**Leading the Lesson (25 minutes)**

5 W’s about Underground Railroad

13. **Ask** the class what could be learned from visiting an Underground Railroad museum. Call on students to give responses.

14. **Distribute** Handout 2 and divide students in groups of three or four and give them five minutes to brainstorm/fill in general answers for each category related to the topic “If You Created an Underground Railroad Museum.” (Example: Who might you help you create the museum? What would the museum be about? What would you see there? Where would the museum be? When would a person visit the museum? Why would a person visit the museum?)

15. **Draw** a five column/two row chart on the white board or chart paper and write the words “Who”, “What”, “Where”, “When”, and “Why”

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| General direction of escape | Free state — slavery prohibited | Slave state — slavery permitted | Territories where slavery permitted by local decision | WV The state of West Virginia was created in 1863 as a free state |

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Source: National Park Service
http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/routes.htm
at the top of each column while the students are working. At the end of five minutes have students read answers to each category of questions, starting with “Who,” and share the answers. Paraphrase and record their answers on the chart in the top row.

16. **Post** Handout 4 (pictures of Jerry Gore) under the column header “Who.” Post the picture of Freedom Time Tours under the column header “What.” Explain that there have been many key people related to the Underground Railroad in the past and today. Tell them Jerry Gore has received a special award from the National Education Association called the Carter G. Woodson Memorial Award for all of his contributions in helping people learn from this time period and using that information to make positive changes to the world today.

17. **Tell** them they will watch a short video, which will help them to understand the work of Jerry Gore. Show the video [http://freedomundergroundrailroad.com/media/](http://freedomundergroundrailroad.com/media/).

18. **Direct** students to return to their small groups. Have them discuss what they can add to any of the five categories on their 5 W Handouts based on the new information learned in the video. Allow five minutes. At the end of five minutes, ask the class what else could be added to “Who” column and how that person relates to the Underground Railroad. (Prompt the answer: Jerry Gore). Paraphrase and record their answers on the chart in the bottom row. Continue with the remaining four columns.

19. **Ask** students why they think Jerry Gore would be so dedicated to helping others learn about slavery and the Underground Railroad and discuss. Direct students to return to their seats.

20. **Distribute** Handout 3 and ask students to read it independently. Explain that they are reading a copy of the handout given out about Mr. Gore at the 2012 National Education Association Human and Civil Rights Awards Ceremony. Once everyone has read the handout, have students find a partner nearby.

21. **Tell** them to underline or highlight reasons why Jerry Gore would want to devote so much time to this issue with a red crayon. Also tell them to circle any contributions he had made to Human and Civil Rights. Allow five minutes and then ask students to name Jerry Gore.
the contributions Jerry Gore made. List on whiteboard.

22. Ask students what they think Mr. Gore's purpose in establishing the museum could have been and discuss. (Prompt the answer: to advocate for Social Justice and Human and Civil Rights by educating others. Also ask students what they think Mr. Gore's personal motivation could have been and discuss. Prompt the answer: He had many descendants who used the Underground Railroad, including his great-great grandfather, a runaway slave in Kentucky named Addison White.)

23. Ask the class what makes a person an advocate and discuss. (Prompt the answer: A person who devotes himself or herself to making a difference for others; A person who stands up for an important cause often involving the rights or the common good of others).

24. Direct students think of an advocate they know and the reasons they feel that person is an advocate. (They can think of Mr. Gore or another person in their lives who advocates by teaching others or through another type of activism.) Pass out blank paper and have students write the word advocate in the center. Around the center of have students draw lines connected to circles with additional words that describe the person and his or her actions.

25. Post the completed concept webs and share and discuss as a class.

Assessment Suggestions
- Class discussion response
- Worksheet answers
- Writing assignment

Adaptations, Enrichment, Cross-curricular Opportunities
- Have students write a poem about freedom, using what they have learned in today's lesson.
- Have students create a bulletin board of Jerry Gore and the Underground Railroad Museum, working in groups to each do one part.
- Research and write a report on Addison White.
- If time is limited, do the activity as a whole group lesson.
Periods in American History

1492-1763
Colonial America

1764-1789
Revolutionary Period

1790-1828
New Nation
1829-1859
Western Expansion and Reform

1860-1865
Civil War

1866-1877
Reconstruction
1878-1889
Gilded Age

1914-1928
Great War

1929-1945
Depression and World War II
1946-present
Modern Era

Key Events in Early American History

1775
The 13 colonies rebel against the British.

1776
The Declaration of Independence is signed and the United States of America is formed.
1787
The U.S. Constitution is written.

1789
George Washington becomes the first President.

1917-1918
The U.S. fights in World War I.
Slavery Time Period

1619
First Slavery in America

1820
Missouri Compromise

1850
Fugitive Slave Bill - Underground Railroad
1863
Emancipation Proclamation

1865
Thirteenth Amendment
Blank Timeline Labels
freedom time tours

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:
Poet Rita Dove once wrote:

What’s invisible
sings, and we bear witness.

Jerry Gore helps us hear the voices of slaves who risked everything to achieve their freedom, and he helps us bear witness to those who helped the slaves on the Underground Railroad. Retired from Morehead State University where he taught Black History, Jerry Gore established an Underground Railroad Museum in Maysville, Kentucky, called Freedom Time.

Mr. Gore has unearthed much of the Underground Railroad history of Maysville, Kentucky to Ripley, Ohio, across the Ohio River. He created Pictorial History of Maysville, Kentucky, Washington County and Ripley, Ohio. And he has brought all that he has learned to life by creating a Freedom Time Tour. As the Tour’s informational flier states, it allows you to “retrace the path to freedom for human justice and dignity and explore the secret hiding places and trails used by enslaved Africans and conductors of the Underground Railroad.”

The Freedom Tour has had a major impact on students who have only read about the Underground Railroad. One Kentucky Education Association Diversity Committee Member reports that “Mr. Gore’s tour was life changing.” Mr. Gore has mentored many students from Morehouse State University. “Education is key to a better life and a better world if people are soundly educated in the fact,” says Mr. Gore. “We try with all our heart and soul to have a clear understanding of history and relationships in history, including life and social issues.”

Moreover, Jerry Gore is more than a local historian. He has designed a Multicultural Curriculum that is aligned with the Kentucky Program of Review Standards. He is a consultant on the history of the Underground Railroad to the U.S. National Park Service. And he coordinated the Bi-National Underground Railroad Field Study for Parks Canada and the U.S. National Parks Service. He served on the International Underground Railroad Association Advisory Board and on the Board of Directors of Pathways, Inc., a not-for-profit human services organization.

In West Africa, the storyteller, or “griot,” is a revered figure who links the past with the present, enriching people’s everyday lives. Jerry Gore is an African American griot.
Jerry Gore

Middle School

Grades 6-8

LESSON PLAN HANDOUT

Jerry Gore Lesson Visuals

Jerry Gore

Social Justice Advocate

Freedom Time
Underground Railroad
Tours and Experiences

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