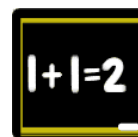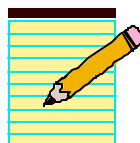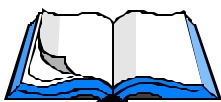# Who's Who In Black History

A comprehensive unit plan for students in grades 4-12 that incorporates areas of Technology, Language Arts, History, and Math.

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Program Outline

Grade: 8 (This project could easily be adapted for grades 4-12.)

Students: The activities and lessons for this unit were designed for students with learning disabilities. The activities allow students to work in small groups, to practice new skills, and to work one-to-one with teachers. Because of its open-ended structure, students who have varied abilities can engage in the activities and research at different levels. For students with reading and writing problems, a smaller set of research questions can be developed. Students with greater abilities in reading and writing can extend their research accordingly.

Major Goals and Overview

Many contributions by Black people in America have gone unnoticed. There is not enough time spent on recognizing the accomplishments of non-white people throughout American history. Hundreds of Black people fought in the American Revolution; invented and improved tools and machines; represented the U.S. in government, sports and the arts; and farmed this country for years as slaves without proper pay.

This unit includes important Black Americans in history. There are six sections in this collection of Black Americans: Blacks in Art and Education, Blacks in the Military, Blacks in Politics, Blacks in Sports, Blacks Working for Rights and Equality, and Discoveries by Blacks.

Students will be required to learn about these people. They will create and play a game called "Who's Who in Black History" that will familiarize students with the important accomplishments Black Americans have made throughout history. Students will also be completing a research paper on a person from Black History. They will use a variety of sources to gather information. Encyclopedia CD-ROMs, Web pages, and word-processing programs will be used throughout the unit. Students will learn how to type using a typing program/game.

At completion, students will have learned about the diverse and outstanding accomplishments of Black Americans throughout history. They will have skills in writing and organizing a research project. Students will learn how to type efficiently. They will be able to use Claris Works and the Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROM. Students will also be able to search for information using the World Wide Web.

Timeline

February is "Black History Month," so this unit is designed for the months of January and February. The following is a basic outline of the activities and lessons included in this unit.

Week 1: (Early January) Begin introducing students to the computers. Teach them how to type, using the "Mavis Beacon Typing for Kids" CD-ROM. You may want to graph the students' progress.

Week 2: (Mid-January) Show students how to research using the CD-ROM "Grolier Encyclopedia." You may want to also include some lessons on note-taking from other references, such as encyclopedias and books.

Week 3: (Mid-January) Show students how to use the "Claris Works Word Processing Program." Demonstrate how to begin a new document, open a document, save a document, and print a document.

Week 4: (End of January) Begin unit. Start with the first lesson, "What are 'Accomplishments?" (Lesson 1)

Week 5: (Beginning of February) Prepare for "Who's Who in Black History Game" (Lesson 2). Play game (Lesson 3)

Weeks 6 and 7: (Middle of February) Work on Research Project (Lessons 4 and 5).

Week 8: (End of February/Beginning of March) Present Research Projects. Display Projects.

Please Note: Many New York City schools have Winter Break in the middle of February. Students can work on their research projects over this break. The research project may be completed in March, depending on the progress of the unit in your class.

Types of Assessment Used

Assessments are included in all of the lesson plans. The assessments fall into two categories: 1) authentic performance assessment, in which student work is judged against a list of criteria for that type of work, and 2) process assessments, in which students and teacher reflect on, evaluate, and find ways to improve on their process of work and discovery. During this unit, students and teachers meet to conference on the work going on in the classroom. Conference worksheets are included in the unit plan.

Lesson Plans

Pre-Unit Activities:

1. **Typing** You should familiarize students with the keyboard and finger placement.
?? Create a drawing of the keyboard.
?? Highlight the "home keys."
?? Have students work in pairs to name the letters that each finger may hit.
?? Have students practice finger placement on keyboards when the computer is off, and when it is on.
?? Have students type a business letter (either they or you can write one). See how much time it takes for them to type the letter. Graph the seconds it takes to type the letter. Have a contest to name the "most improved typist," the "fastest typist," etc.

2. **Using the "Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROM" and other research materials**
?? Demonstrate how to do a search on the "Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROM". Type in a name of someone the students know (Martin Luther King, Jr.) into the "search" window.
?? Show students how to print out a picture from the "Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROM." (Enlarge the picture by clicking on the "enlarge" button. Go to the file menu and push "print."
?? Print out an article from the "Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROM". Show students how to highlight important information in the article. (Use the 'who, what, when, where, why, and how' question words to identify important information.)
?? You may want to have students take notes from a few articles and excerpts from various books, Web sites and/or encyclopedias.

3. **Using the "Claris Works Word Processing Program"**
?? Demonstrate how to start a new document, save a document, open an existing document, and print a document using the "Claris Works Word Processing Program." (All of these functions are located in the file menu of the program.)
?? Have students type letters or stories into the computer using "Claris Works."

Unit Plan
 Lesson #1
Introduction to Unit-What are "Accomplishments"?

Objectives: Students will be able to define the term "accomplishment."
Students will be able to name at least five accomplishments in their lives.
Students will be able to list categories of possible accomplishments for all people.

Materials: Dictionary (1 for each group of 3)
Lined paper

Pens
Chart Paper and Markers (for teacher)

Motivation:
1. Group students in groups of 2-3.
2. Ask each group to look up the word "accomplishment" and write a definition for the word on lined paper.
3. After about five minutes, ask each group to share their definition. Encourage students to give examples of what it means to accomplish something. Share stories of accomplishments with the students.

Developmental Activities:
1. Have students come up with a list of some of their accomplishments. Share these with a friend or group member.
2. Ask students why these accomplishments were important. Ask: "What do you hope to accomplish in the future?"
3. Tell the class that they will be studying Black people in history. These people come from many different backgrounds and have accomplished many different things.
4. As a class, come up with "categories of accomplishments" and list these on chart paper. Possible categories should include Art and Education, Military, Politics, Sports, Rights and Equality, Inventions, and Discoveries.

Homework/ Assessment: Give each student handout #1 and ask them to categorize the people according to their accomplishment.

Lesson #2
Who's Who in Black History -Preparation

Objectives: Students will be able to identify the accomplishments of three Black people in history. Students will be able to find pictures of people using the "Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROM computer program."

Materials:
Lined paper
Pens
Handout #1 (Divide the people listed on this handout among class members.)
Large index cards

Demonstration:
Put "Grolier Encyclopedia" CD-ROM into the computer's D-drive. Type in the last name of one of the people on the handout. The article and photo of the person will come up on the screen. Click "enlarge" near the photo and print a copy of the photo.

Developmental Activities:
Have students work in groups of 2-3 (depending on computer availability) to practice looking up people using the Grolier Encyclopedia.

Print pictures for as many people on the handout as possible. Students will be using these as part of the "Who's Who in Black History" game.

Homework/Assessment:
Have students take home about 8-10 large index cards. Assign each student in the class about four people to write about. Students will write two accomplishments (one on each note card) for each person they are assigned. These cards will be used as part of the "Who's Who in Black History" game.

Teacher Directions: Using the copy machine, Take reduce the printed photos to the size of a large index card. They will be used in the "Who's Who in Black History" game.

Lesson #3
Who's Who in Black history

Objectives: Students will be able to match picture cards and fact cards of Black people who have contributed to American life.
Students will be able to work collaboratively in groups of four to play a game.

Materials:
One deck of cards including 16 picture cards of Black Americans, and 32 fact cards for each of the 16 people.

Demonstration/ How to play the game:
To Begin: Shuffle all cards and deal each player seven cards. Put the remaining cards face down on the table.
To Play: Each player takes a turn by asking one of the other players whether she/ he is holding a given card. If the player has the requested card, the card must be given to the player asking. The player who is taking his/her turn may continue asking other player until a player asked does not have the requested card. If a player answers "no" after being asked for a card, the player whose turn it is, ends the turn by drawing from the face-down card pile. As long as a player continues to receive the cards requested from other players, the turn continues.
The winner: The winner is the person with the most matched sets after a player runs out of cards. Remember, a matched set must include the three different cards naming the same person.

Developmental Activities:

1. Have students work in groups of four.
2. There should be enough cards for three games.
3. Teachers can develop a tournament among players in the class.

Homework/Assessment:
Have students study for a "Who's Who in Black History" test. On the test, give names and accomplishments, and have students fill in the blanks. (It's a good idea to give a practice test 1-2 times before the "real" test, so that students have time to internalize the information.)

<u>**Lesson# 4**</u>
<div align="center"><u>**Choosing a Person to Research**</u></div>

Objective: Students will be able to choose a person from Black History to research. Students will be able to create a K-W-L chart on the person that they choose to research.

Materials:
Lined paper
Pens
K-W-L Chart (Handout #3)
Chart paper/Markers

Demonstration:
Tell students that they will be researching a famous Black American in history. They must choose one person to research. This person should be interesting to the student.

Show students how they will fill out a K-W-L chart using chart paper.
K-What you know; W-What you want to know; L-What you have learned (to be completed at the completion of the research paper)

Developmental Activities:
Have students work individually to fill out the K-W-L chart on the person in Black History they want to study.

Homework/Assessment:
Instruct students to ask family members and friends what they know about the person in Black History who they want to study. Write down any information given.

<u>**Lesson #5**</u>
<div align="center"><u>**Writing a Research Paper**</u></div>

Objectives: Students will be able to use questions to guide research on a person in Black History.
Students will be able to create an outline of their research paper.
Students will be able to search and use library books, CD ROM Encyclopedia's, and the World Wide Web to access information on a person in Black History.
Students will be able to document sources used during their research project.

Materials:

Lined paper	Computer Supplies:
Pens	Grolier Encyclopedia CD-ROMs
Access to Library	Student disks
File Folders (1 for each student)	Claris Works
Highlighters/Post-its (for note taking)	Internet access
Centimeter paper/Markers (for recording typing progress)	

Part 1: Organizing the research:
1. Students will come up with "Requirements for the report." (An example of this list is attached.)
2. Ask students what information they might want to find on their figure.
3. Categories may include life stories and accomplishments.
4. Be sure that the report requirements are outlined clearly for students to follow before they begin research.

Part 2: Beginning the research:
1. Students will work on the research project daily for about two weeks. (Some students need longer or shorter amounts of time.)
2. During research periods, some students will be using the computers, while others will be using books and other written materials.
3. Lessons were given on note taking during the first few days of research work. Give the students highlighters and Post-its to help them organize main ideas within text.
   > A. Put a sample text on chart paper or on an overhead projector
   > B. Show students how to use the highlighters and Post-its by highlighting important information with in text.
   >
   > C. After the demonstration, have students work in pairs to highlight important information within another sample of text.
   > D. Give students feedback as they begin to take notes for their own research projects.
4. Keep all work for the project in research folders. When everything is kept in one place, the work is easier to find!
5. A lesson was also given in documenting sources.
   > A. Students are shown how to document the sources that they will use to gather information. (Only basic documentation is necessary.)

B. A Book—Author's last name, first name. <u>Title.</u> Publisher's name; city published in, copyright date. Pages used.

C. An Article—Author's last name, first name. <u>Magazine Title</u> "Article title".

Publisher's name, city published in, copyright date. Pages used.

D. A Web Page—Web address, <u>Title of page</u>.

E. Students are also shown how to use quotations if they use the words of an author in their report.

Part Three: Writing the first draft

1. Students are asked to write the first draft of their report in ink. Pair up students so they can help each other with spelling and editing.
2. After the first draft is written, students meet with a teacher to edit their work.

Part Four: Writing the second draft

1. Before students go on the computer, they are given a series of typing lessons using the program, "Mavis Beacon."
2. Students record their progress on graphs that are made from centimeter paper.
3. Students are able to record how many *words per minute* they are able to type during a fifteen-minute session. Students are taught how to find the *average* words per minute from five different typing sessions.
4. Students type their final drafts on the computer using Claris Works. All work is saved onto IBM-formatted disks.

Part Five: Sharing the report

1. When the reports are typed and printed, students share them with the class.
2. The reports are displayed for the remainder of the month in the classroom.

Table of Contents-Handouts

Resource List

People:
Librarian--Because there is no Internet access in my room, students used the library's computer to access information for their reports. Students also spent time checking out books and looking at encyclopedias in the library. They had about three class periods to spend in the library, and many spent lunch or after school time there.

Push-in/Team Teachers--The ESL teacher pushes into our class one period a week. She made herself available to help students to read difficult books and/or articles, to organize ideas, and to write reports.

Materials:
Handouts--I created a series of handouts that facilitate certain lessons and homework opportunities during the unit.

Chart Paper and Markers--I created a variety of charts with information generated during lessons.

Student Folders/Lined Paper/Pens--Each student had a large folder with lined paper. This folder was used throughout the unit to keep all work and handouts. Students were also provided with pens to do the writing work.

Large Index Cards --These were used to play the "Who's Who in Black History" Game—about 100 were used.

Books/Magazines:
A. Philip Randolph (Black Americans of Achievement)
by Sally Hanley, Nathan I. Huggins (Editor). Paperback (April 1989)

African American Military Heroes (Black Stars Series)
by James Haskins, Jim Haskins. Hardcover (August 1998)

The African American Family Album (American Family Albums Series)
by Dorothy Hoobler, Thomas Hoobler (Contributor). Hardcover (April 1995)

African American Women Writers (Black Stars Series)
by Brenda Wilkinson, Jim Haskins (Editor). Hardcover (February 2000)

Black Cowboys (African American Achievers)
by Gina De Angelis. Library Binding (September 1997)

Black Diamond : The Story of the Negro Baseball Leagues

by Pat McKissack, et al. Paperback (September 1998)

The Black Arrow : A Tale of the Two Roses
by Robert Louis Stevenson, N.C. Wyeth (Illustrator). School & Library Binding

Black Eagles : African Americans in Aviation
by Jim Haskins. Paperback (February 1997)

Black Frontiers : A History of African American Heroes in the Old West
by Lillian Schlissel. Paperback (January 2000)

****Black Heritage Brain Quest Extra : African American History in 850 Questions & Answers
by Veronica Robertson. Paperback (December 1996)

Black Heroes of the American Revolution
by Burke Davis, Edward W. Brooke. Paperback (January 1992)

Software/Equipment:
Mavis Beacon Typing for Kids- A program that enables students to learn the basics of typing. The program allows students to practice proper hand/finger form and encourages efficiency.

Grolier Encyclopedia CD ROM-An encyclopedia program that has articles and interactive components on many subjects. The program is simple to use and allows students to access information on research topics.

Claris Works-A word-processing program that allows students to type in papers and save them to a disk. Editing features are also available. Students used spell-check, margin adjustment, and different fonts in their reports.

Floppy Disks-Each student had a floppy disk assigned to him/her. This was used to save work from the Claris Works program.

Computer Paper—Used to print information from the Grolier Encyclopedia and from Claris Works.

Bibliography/Teacher-Student Resources

Web Sites:
The Encyclopedia Britannica Guide To Black History
http://blackhistory.eb.com/
Examines nearly 400 years of African-American history through five distinct time periods, from the struggles of slavery through the successes of the Civil Rights Movement.

The Internet African American History Challenge
http://www.brightmoments.com/blackhistory/
Quiz yourself to see how much you know, or don't know, about important events and figures in African American history.

AFRO-American Almanac
http://www.toptags.com/aama/
Includes African American facts, folk tales, and commentary.

Lest We Forget
http://www.coax.net/people/lwf/
A newsletter providing information and resources regarding African American history and culture.

Images of African Americans from the 19th Century -
http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/images_aa19/
Digital Schomburg: The New York Public Library Digital Library Collection.

Books:
African-American Almanac (African-American Reference Library)
by Jay P. Pederson(Editor), Kenneth Estell (Editor). Hardcover (August 1994)

The African-American Experience on File (Facts on File Library of American History)
by C. Carter Smith(Editor), Inc Facts on File. Hardcover (February 1999)

African American Breakthroughs : 500 Years of Black Firsts (African American Reference Library)
by Jay P. Pederson, Jessie Carney Smith (Editor). Hardcover (November 1994)