



What Do We Have in Common?



Grade Level: 3rd-5th

Pedagogical Objective: Using primary source interviews, understand why the civil rights movement was important.

MI Content Standards:

English Language Arts: Research; 7 & 8. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic and recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

Comprehension and Collaboration #1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Civic Participation Explain important rights and how, when, and where people can demonstrate their responsibilities by participating in government.

Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.2

Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.4

Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

Introduction: In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson. This act outlawed discrimination based on race, national background, and gender. Why do you think this was important? Those things make us different, but we really are very much the same. What do we have in common?

Materials:

- Marker or other writing utensil
- Poster board or other paper
- “Found” words (single words on small slips of paper)
- glue

Day One Instructions:

1. Break into small groups
2. Pass out poster board and marker to each group
3. Set a timer for a defined amount of time (5-10 minutes)
4. Each group is to discuss what they all have in common and identify at least 5 commonalities. Can be hobbies, music, interest, favorite foods, family traditions, etc. The more unique the items are, the better
5. Write your 5 commonalities on the poster board.
6. Have the groups share their items with the class. This can be done by each group reading off their items and discussing how they came to identify that is was a commonality.
7. Make certain to point out the fact that no matter what you may think or know about others, we all will have something in common with one another.
8. Have students use found words to describe their findings in a poem. Glue to a paper or onto the poster.
9. Display the poster in the room after the activity is complete

Day Two: Let’s look at our Common posters that we completed yesterday. What did we learn? We saw how we have many things in common with each other, right? We have a lot of things in common. What did we not have in common?

1. Get back into the same groups as yesterday with their poster and marker.
2. Distribute the pictures included here. These children are from Palestine, Prague, India, and South Africa. All over the world!
3. Ask children to take 10 minutes and write 5 things on their poster about the children and what they found to be just like the classroom or kids in your room.
4. Share with the class.
5. Ask for 3 things that are different in the picture. Then ask, if we have all of these things that are the same, do the differences really matter?
6. Discuss discrimination and its links to what is different.
7. After the Civil War, many southern states continued to treat African-Americans as second class citizens. They implemented laws that kept black people separate from white people. These laws became known as Jim Crow laws. They required separate schools, restaurants, restrooms, and

transportation based on the color of a person's skin. Other laws prevented many black people from voting.

8. Read *The Other Side*, by Jacqueline Woodson or watch the video by [clicking here](#).
9. After the video, ask the children what Clover and Annie had in common and what they didn't have in common. Ask what they meant by "someday someone will knock this fence down."
10. Have children put together a found word poem about why that fence should come down.

Day Three:

1. Summarize the past two days. What did they learn? Reread some of the poems.
2. Tell the children that this idea of having things in common has been around for a long time and that even adults feel that same friendship with people who may not look like them.
3. Go to Common Chords website and introduce your students to Matt Watroba and Rev. Jones of Common Chords: <https://www.commonchords.net/about> Listen to them talk about their friendship and why they call their band Common Chords: <https://www.commonchords.net/programs>
4. One song they sing and have everyone sing is "We Shall Overcome" which is an old gospel song. Listen to it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMYbd2ZhhjE>
5. What were some things you had to overcome this year?
6. Black Americans sang "We Shall Overcome" in many places, churches, meetings, etc. It was a song of hope. What were they trying to overcome?
7. The Civil Rights Act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964. This act outlawed segregation and the Jim Crow laws of the south. It also outlawed discrimination based on race, national background, and gender. Although there were still many issues, this law gave the organizations a way to fight discrimination in the courts.
8. Get in groups of 3 or 4 and write lyrics that describe what you had to overcome this year. You can use your found word poems or write a new poem. The song should be hopeful. It can be about something you are experiencing now (like the pandemic), about the new Juneteenth Holiday, or about the civil rights movements. Sing or speak the song for the class.

Assessment questions:

1. What sources did you review and how did you access them?
2. What were some of the main ideas of the sources that you reviewed?
3. What were some of the ideas that others in your group shared?
4. What was the Civil Right Act and who signed it into law in 1964?

Tips:

- For Pre-K through 1st grade, the adult in each small group should act a scribe and write down the items in common on the poster.
- For older classrooms 5th – 8th challenge the groups to not repeat any commonalities listed by other groups. This will help the conversation focus on more thoughtful items.
- Increase or decrease the number of items to identify depending on your groups' abilities and time allotment.
- This can also be used as an anti-bullying or bullying awareness activity.

References:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/civil-rights-center/statutes/civil-rights-act-of-1964>

https://www.ducksters.com/history/civil_rights/civil_rights_act_of_1964.php

<https://www.commonchords.net/about>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csay6Kv_q2U Woodsen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wMYbd2ZhhjE> We Shall Overcome



India



Palestine



Prague



South Africa