

[UTOPIA Lesson Plan Format]

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Subject: Social Studies

Grade level: 4

Rationale or Purpose: This lesson will help the students have a greater understanding of and appreciation for the celebration of Juneteenth.

Materials:

- access to the internet
- chart paper or posterboards for small group work within the class
- markers to write on posterboards
- lyrics to the hymn "Lift Every Voice and Sing" found at <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/l/i/liftevry.htm>
- CD of "Take me out to the Ball Game" or lyrics and music to same
- CD of "Lift Every Voice and Sing"
- CD or lyrics and music to your school song
- CD player
- Marker board, chalk board, or overhead with appropriate writing tools
- White drawing paper, markers, colored pencils

Lesson Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Objectives:

Social Studies 113.6 (17) (B) sing or recite "Texas, Our Texas"

Social Studies 113.6 (17) (D) describe the origins and significance of state celebrations such as Texas Independence Day and Juneteenth

Social Studies 113.6 (20) (B) identify customs, celebrations and traditions of various culture groups in Texas

Social Studies 113.6 (24) (A) students use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution

Activity:

Step 1: Before class begins,

- download and print off copies of the lyrics of the hymn “Lift Every Voice and Sing” found at <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/l/i/liftevry.htm>.
- Write down major holidays or familiar celebrations on slips of paper: Fourth of July, Birthday, Christmas, New Year’s, Thanksgiving.
- Make copies of the entry on Juneteenth from the Handbook of Texas On Line at <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/JI/lkj1.html>

Step 2: Open the lesson by playing or singing “Take me out to the ball game.” Invite the students to sing along. After a few bars, or the whole song, ask students what the song makes them think of...baseball games. Sing or play the song of your school. Invite the students to sing along. After a few bars, or the whole song, ask students what the song makes them think of...their school. Sing or play a few bars, or the entire song, of “Texas, Our Texas.” Ask the students to name things the song reminds them of.

Step 3: Help students draw come to the conclusion that songs/lyrics from songs are closely related to special celebrations and important social events in our lives.

Step 4: Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 students. Have each group draw a slip of paper on which a major holiday or familiar celebration is written. Ask each group to brainstorm songs that represent that specific holiday or celebration and then to decide on ONE song the group will sing to the rest of the class that will allow the rest of the class to guess accurately which holiday or celebration they chose.

Step 5: Student groups sing their songs out loud to the other groups, allowing other groups to guess their chosen holiday or celebration.

Step 6: Write the word “Juneteenth” on the markerboard or overhead. Ask students what they know about this special celebration. Record students’ responses on large writing surface.

Step 7: Pass out copies of text about Juneteenth from the Handbook of Texas On Line at <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/JI/lkj1.html>. Read through material with the students, discussing information as you go.

Step 8: Post or hand out lyrics to “Lift Every Voice and Sing” found at <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/l/i/liftevry.htm> . Read through lyrics of the hymn with the students talking about significant phrases or visual images brought to mind. Play song for students from web site or from CD.

Step 9: Play the song again, or read the lyrics orally, and invite students to draw a picture of a scene the lyrics bring to mind.

Modification: No modification needed for group work. Songs could be signed if necessary.

Student Product: Students will participate in a group brainstorming and problem solving session to determine the song their group will sing for the class. Students will draw a picture to represent a scene from the song “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”

Closure: How did life change for slaves in Texas after Juneteenth? Why is it important for us to celebrate this particular holiday?

Assessment or evaluation: Was group work done effectively and efficiently? Did students actively participate in group work and discussion? Were students able to articulate the importance of the holiday?

Extension: [optional] Make plans for a Juneteenth celebration in your classroom. Learn the lyrics to the song “Lift Every Voice and Sing” and perform it at your class celebration or for your school at an assembly.

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Words: James W. Johnson, 1899

Music: John R. Johnson

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered;
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou Who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee.
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee.
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

Kathy Dugat
St. Matthew’s Episcopal School