

Using “Who Paved the Way?”

A Short Film Featuring ESOL Students Talking about Race

Kathleen Budway

“You can’t teach the truth unless you’ve lived it or admit to it.” —Willie Bonner

Before You Start, Examine Yourself:

If you are new to incorporating matters of race into your teaching, start by looking at yourself and asking questions which can also be used in your classroom:

- Who am I?
- How has race benefitted or obstructed me in my life’s journey?
- What kinds of conversations did my family, school or community have or not have about matters of race?
- Who do I surround myself with today and how does that impact my perspectives?
- What do I still need to learn? Why do I care?
- How do I want to use my classroom as a forum for change?

Before You Show the Film

- Share your objectives. These could include: learning U.S. history, expanding vocabulary, taking notes, conducting research, connecting history to current events, presenting research, and building community in the classroom.
- Go through Handout #1, “Get Ready to Watch,” with students.
- Give them Handout #2, “Take Notes While You Watch.” Ask them to study the chart on the page and to notice what they will be ex-

pected to take notes on, but explain that they will watch the whole film through *one time* without taking notes. The second time through, they will take notes.

After You Show the Film

- Give them Handout #3, “Take Notes After You Watch.” Work in pairs or small groups to answer the questions.
- Ask students to share what it was like taking notes. How did it affect their understanding?

Assign Research and Interviews

As seen in the film, students were assigned research categories. They presented their findings in class through a presentation which included a powerpoint, relevant film clips, and interview highlights with campus or community members.

- Use Handout #4 to help get them started thinking about their research.

Develop Authentic Audience

Collaborate with other classes or community groups to have real dialogue about these research topics. Invite members of the community to your school to hear the students’ presentations. Help students draw the connection between the past and the present.

Finally....Evaluate!

Make sure to take time to evaluate the lessons. What went well? What could have gone better? Did you meet your objectives? When students play an active role in evaluating a lesson, they think critically about their own learning styles, and they become more active in the learning process.

Find the Film Here:

Watch “Who Paved the Way?” on Vimeo: vimeo.com/40630589. Student voices from the film are captured on p. 41 of the Race issue of *The Change Agent*.

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Handout #1: Get Ready to Watch

Think about Stereotypes

Students in this film share *stereotypes* that they had of black people. According to merriam-webster.com, a stereotype means: to believe *unfairly* that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same.

List some examples of stereotypes:

Discuss

- 1) Look at your list of stereotypes. What makes them unfair?
- 2) Do people have stereotypes of you -- of your gender, your community, your sexuality, your race or ethnicity? How does it make you feel when people treat you as a stereotype?
- 3) "Who Paved the Way?" starts with quotes by Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. Share what you know about these two American leaders. Read the quotes in the box (right) and discuss.
- 4) Discuss the phrase "paved the way." What does it mean? What do you think this film will be about?

Martin and Malcolm

Read the quotes by Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X below. What do you think it means to "walk the earth as brothers and sisters"? What does it mean to be "thoroughly brainwashed"?

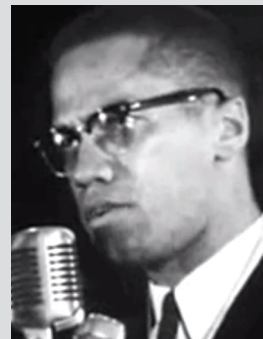


"When we look at modern man, we have to face the fact...that modern man suffers from a kind of poverty of the spirit, which stands in glaring contrast to his scientific and technological abundance. We've learned to fly the air like birds, we've learned to swim the seas like fish, and yet we haven't learned to walk the Earth as brothers and sisters..."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

"So we have to have a new approach... that is in tune with the reality of the conditions that we are in after having been thoroughly brainwashed."

— Malcom X



Handout #2: Take Notes While You Watch

Listen carefully for key points

Stereotypes

What are some stereotypes that students in this film had about black people? List them in the blank spaces below:

Jason
Jane
Amar
Tony

Accomplishments

The film mentions some accomplishments of black people in history. Next to their name below, write down the accomplishment:

Charles Drew
Vivien Thomas
Patricia Bath
Lewis Latimer

New Perspective

After studying black history, what are some new perspectives that students in this film developed about black people?

Jane
Aster
Jackie
Mila

Notice how students transform

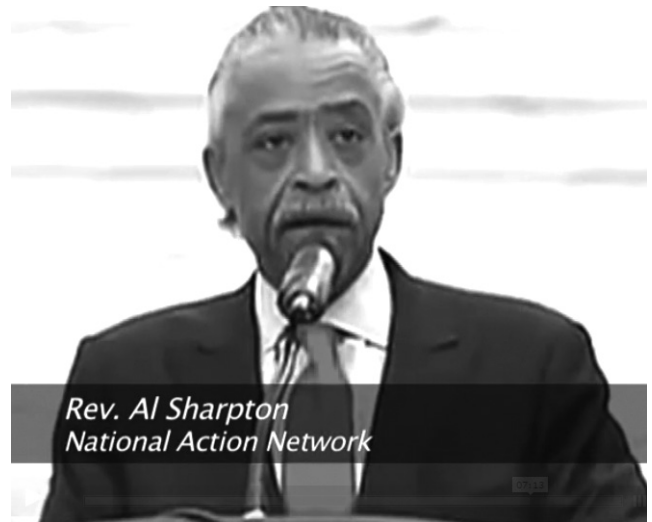
Take some notes about how students transformed after studying black history: _____

Handout #3: Take Notes After You Watch

Reflect on what you heard

Think about the Ending

The film ends with a short clip of Rev. Al Sharpton speaking. Take notes on what he says. Don't try to write down every word. Just capture the key points:



What surprised you the most?

Take some notes here about anything that surprised you. What would you like to learn more about?

Connect It to You!

How does the information in the film connect to your life today in the United States, or, if you grew up elsewhere, the situation in your home country?

Handout #4: Research Projects

Follow up on one of these topics or develop your own topic

Research projects

In the left column are some of the things students in the film studied to learn about black history. In the right column, develop some questions about these topics. What would you like to know more about? Research them. As you research, perhaps you will uncover something else you want to learn about.

Black Wall Street	
Tuskegee Airmen	
Medical experiments on black people	
Mass incarceration	
Doctors and Inventors	

Connect to the Present

How does the topic you researched connect to present-day issues? What does it help you understand about current events?

Resources for studying Black Wall Street:

“Black Wall Street” is the name given to a thriving black community in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In the early 1900s, this community was violently decimated by white race rioters.

RELATED FILMS: Documentaries – On Youtube: “Black Wall Street, Little Africa, Tulsa, Oklahoma”; feature film: “Rosewood” (not set in Tulsa Oklahoma but depicts one of many U.S. race riots where a false accusation was used as an excuse to destroy a successful black community); from the history channel (available on Youtube): “The Night Tulsa Burned.”

READINGS: *Magic City* – a novel by Jewell Parker Rhodes; *Death in a Promised Land*, a non-fiction account of the Tulsa riots by Scott Ellsworth.

INTERNET RESOURCES: If you google Black Wall Street you will find many links, but here is one that students found to be helpful as a starting point: <blackwallstreet.freesevers.com>.