

**TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES AND THE LOUISIANA DIGITAL LIBRARY****Louisiana Gumbo Lesson Resource**

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**STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE: LEO HAMILTON**

**Grade Level** 11  
**Subject** Social Studies  
**Time** 2 50-minute periods

**Overview**

Students listen to oral history narratives in the LOUISiana Digital Library to explore the civil rights struggle in Louisiana.

Leo Hamilton's interview covers 1969-era life at LSU. Hamilton discusses student activism, black and white reformers on campus, and civil rights groups such as the Martin Luther King Action Movement, SNCC, NAACP, and Harambe as well as national civil rights leaders.

**Note:** This lesson is designed for a one-computer classroom in which students do not have individual access to computers.

**Objectives:**

Students will

1. Demonstrate historical perspective by participating in a class discussion concerning the political, social, and economic context of patterns of historical change stemming from the civil rights era of American History;
2. Examine, compare and contrast multiple primary and secondary resources to determine the impact specific individuals had on the course of American and Louisiana history;
3. Use reading comprehension skills and available technology to locate, select, and synthesize information from primary and secondary sources to acquire and communicate knowledge about events, ideas, and issues related to the Civil Rights struggle in Louisiana

**Content Standards:**

**History: Time, Continuity, and Change** Students develop a sense of historical time and historical perspective as they study the history of their community, state, nation, and world.

**Benchmarks:**

**H-1A-H3** interpreting and evaluating the historical evidence presented in primary and secondary sources;

**Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs):****Historical Thinking Skills****Grade 9-12**

U.S. History: Evaluate and use multiple primary or secondary materials to interpret historical facts, ideas, or issues (H-1A-H3)

**Interdisciplinary Connections:**

English/Language Arts : Standard 1 Students read, comprehend, and respond to a range of materials, using a variety of strategies for different purposes.

**Educational Technology Standards:**

Use appropriate technology to locate, retrieve, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information for problem solving and decision-making.

**Lesson Materials and Resources:**

[Observation Form](#)

[Essay Rubric](#)

[Oral Presentation Rubric](#)

**Technology Tools and Materials:**

Hardware: Computer

Software: MS Word

Websites:

[Integration and the Black Experience at LSU](#)

[Hamilton, Leo C.](#)

[Hamilton, Leo C., 1951-](#)

**Background Information:**

Integration and the Black Experience at LSU is a unique collection that includes audio files and transcripts from interviews conducted from 1985 to 1998 of black students, faculty, and administrators at LSU during integration (1950-1970). Additional interviewees include lawyers and their clients who were involved in key lawsuits, as well as politicians and others who were vocal opponents or supporters of integration.

**Lesson Procedures:**

**Pre-Lesson Preparation**

Explore the [Integration and the Black Experience at LSU](#) collection to understand how to navigate the site. Download necessary players. Access the oral history transcripts for each interview; they can be used to locate significant portions of each interview. Experiment with locating the exact time of significant statements in the audio interviews—the RealPlayer location indicator on each narrative can be moved forward and backward to locate desired portions of the interview.

**Lesson Procedures**

1. Provide the class with appropriate background information concerning civil rights in 1960-era Louisiana.
2. Explain that students will listen to oral history interviews and transcriptions in the LOUISiana Digital Library to learn about Leo Hamilton's experience as an African American student at LSU during the late 1960s.
3. Divide class into 5 groups. Ask students to write a list of 5 general topics they would like to learn about Leo Hamilton's experience during the 1950s. These topics will guide their exploration of the interviews; guide students to considering topics such as family life, instances of discrimination, entertainment and social life, peer attitudes and behavior, significance of religion, laws and court decisions, strategies for making a change, personal liberty.
4. Assign each group one of the listed topics and explain that they will take notes regarding that topic and share their findings with the class.

5. Play the audio recording of the Hamilton interview, making certain all students can hear the interview.
6. At the end of the recording, ask students to summarize their topic and share their thoughts with the class.
7. Debrief. Discuss student reports, helping students identify significant information about Hamilton's experience. Ask students if they think the date (prior to the Brown v. Topeka decision) had an affect on Hamilton's experience at LSU.
8. **Culmination.** Ask students to write a reflective essay on Hamilton's life and struggles for justice during 1960s era Louisiana.

**Assessment Procedures:**

[Observation Form](#)

[Essay Rubric](#)

**Accommodations/Modifications:**

Accommodations/Modifications Built Into the Lesson

- Cooperative grouping
- Small class segments
- Whole class debriefing sessions
- Pre-teach vocabulary words
- Extensions/Explorations can be modified for individual needs
- Debriefing provides systematic feedback

**Explorations and Extensions:**

Search the Teaching with Primary Sources and the LOUISiana Digital Library lesson collection for additional lessons on school desegregation--Integration at LSU and the African American Experience

**Reflections:**

This lesson can be used as a springboard for a student investigation into how the Brown versus Topeka court decision and school desegregation helped shape contemporary society.

Before beginning the lesson, teachers should be familiar with the LOUISiana Digital Library, especially features of the LDL that enhance viewing of artifacts--enlargment feature, document and transcription, metadata page.

If this is students' first time using the LDL, the teacher may wish to illustrate how to navigate and read electronic documents in the LDL. See the *Technology Tip: Viewing Documents in the LOUISiana Digital Library (under Reproducible Materials)* for information.

