



African American Railroading Legacy

Pre-Visit Lesson

Grades: 8th, HS US History

Class Time Needed: 40 minutes

Big Idea African Americans have played an important role in the history of the railroad.

Maryland Curriculum Standards

Social Studies Framework

- Essential Question (8th grade): How did regional tensions challenge national unity?
- Essential Question (8th grade): How does war impact and change society?
- Essential Question (8th grade): How does a nation reconcile past injustices?
- Essential Question (HS US History): To what extent can individuals and groups change society?
- Essential Question (HS US History): Were the freedom movements successful in achieving equality for Americans?

Materials Needed

- Blank paper
- Coloring utensils
- Pencils
- Printed copies of "I Have a Dream" Speech (optional)
- Printed copies of KWL chart (optional)

Teacher Resources

- Word cloud examples



Teacher Resources Continued

- "I Have a Dream" word cloud image
<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/0d/df/32/0ddf32c9c142ba87d92132ebd4d542db.jpg>
 - Word cloud generator website <https://www.wordclouds.com/>
 - Audio of Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" Speech
<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm>
 - Video of Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream Speech"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch/3vDWWy4CMhE>
 - Ideaboardz link for KWL chart (digital option) <https://ideaboardz.com/>
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Lesson Procedure

Introduction:

Watch, listen or read the "I Have a Dream" speech (Optional: Pre-screen the speech and choose a 5 minute section to introduce the speech to the class). Ask students what words consistently appear throughout the speech or words you would use to describe the speech. Enter these words in the word cloud generator and discuss the purpose of a word cloud (An image composed of words used in a particular text or subject in which the size of each word indicates its frequency or importance). At this time, show other examples of word clouds to support understanding.

Direct Instruction:

Create a K-W-L chart with three sections ("What I Know", "What I Want to know", and "What I Learned") on the board. Explain that students will be creating their own word clouds using their knowledge of Slavery and the Civil Rights Movement. Use the KWL chart to brainstorm as a class what topics can be the focus of a word cloud (do not fill out the "L" section yet).



Student Activity:

Instruct students to create a word cloud (either individually or in groups) focused on Slavery or the Civil Rights Movement. Students can create word clouds using a paper and coloring materials or using an online generator. When finished, have students share their creations by asking the following questions: Why did you use certain words? Are specific words more important or prominent than others? Are there words that were used in multiple word clouds?

Conclusion:

Revisit the KWL chart and have students complete the “What I Learned” section. Allow students to express further questions about the topics discussed. Students can also record questions that might be answered during an upcoming field trip to the B&O Railroad Museum.



Name: _____



K-W-L Chart

Topic: _____

What I K now	What I W ant to Know	What I L earned