**LESSON TITLE: The Detroit Housewives’ League**

|  |
| --- |
| **Lesson Overview** |
| This four-part, inquiry-based lesson focuses on the Detroit Housewives’ League, an organization formed in 1930 as a response to the Depression. To understand the historical context of its formation students first analyze a poem by Langston Hughes and a series of paintings by Jacob Lawrence focusing on the Great Migration of African Americans in the South to industrial cities of the North. Students then learn about some of the effects this mass movement of people had on Detroit. Next, using what they have previously learned about the Depression as foundational knowledge, they read a secondary source on the effects of the Depression on African Americans in Detroit. In session two students work in small groups to analyze a set of primary sources in order to identify the purpose and goals of the DHL. In session three students extend their investigation of the DHL by using primary sources to identify activities of the organization and discuss how these activities helped the DHL meet its goals. In the final session students continue their investigation of DHL activities by exploring a set of newspaper articles. Then, lesson content is reviewed through a guided discussion based on the compelling and supporting questions of the lesson. A PowerPoint has been included to guide teachers through the various sessions of the lesson as well as offer additional information relating to lesson content |
| **Compelling Question** |
| **Did the Detroit Housewives’ League meet its goals?** |
| **Supporting Questions** |
| * What was the Detroit Housewives’ League? * When and why was the Detroit Housewives League formed? * What were the goals of the Detroit Housewives League? * What activities were carried out by the Detroit Housewives League? |
| **Objectives** |
| Students will   * describe the purpose and goals of the Detroit Housewives’ League. * explain when and why the Detroit Housewives’ League was formed. * evaluate the success of the Detroit Housewives’ League in meeting its goals. * analyze secondary and primary sources to investigate a compelling question. |
| **Social Studies Standards** |
| **6.1.3**  **Urbanization** – Explain the causes and consequences of urbanization, including:   * the location and expansion of major urban centers and their link to industry and trade * internal migration, including the Great Migration * the development of cities divided by race, ethnicity, and class, as well as the re­sulting tensions among and within groups   **7.1.2 Causes and Consequences of the Great Depression** – Explain and evaluate the multiple causes and consequences of the Great Depression by analyzing:   * the economic and social toll of the Great Depression, including unemployment and environmental conditions that affected farmers, industrial workers and families |
| **ELA Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies** |
| **Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 9-10**   * Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. * Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. * Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.   **Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 9-10**   * Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content. |
| **Time Required** |
| 4 class sessions |
| **Recommended Grade Level** |
| High School |
| **Instructional Resources for Lesson** |
| * Teacher Background Information Sheet on the DHL * Documents #1 – 12 * Interactive Notes Sheet for Session 1 * Investigating Document 4 analysis sheet for Session 2 * Document Analysis Sheet for Session 2 * Group Summary Sheet for Session 2 * Session 2 Teacher Information Sheet * Session 3 Teacher Information Sheet * Newspaper Articles 1 – 6 * Newspaper Articles Group Analysis Sheet * Optional Lesson Assessment and Sample Answer Sheet |
| **Lesson Preparation** |
| Read the “Teacher Background Information Sheet” on *The Detroit Housewives’ League*  **For Session 1:**   * Print 1 copy of the **“Interactive Notes”** sheet, “**Document 1”** and “**Document 3”** for each student. * Print 1 copy of “Document 1” for each student or pair of students.   **For Session 2:**   * Print 1 copy of the “**Investigating Document 4”** sheet and the “**Document Analysis”** sheet for each student. * Print 1 copy of “**Documents 5 – 8”** and 1 copy of the “**Group Summary”** sheet for each group of 4 students.   **For Session 3:**   * Print 1 copy of “**Documents 9 – 12”** for each group of 4 students.   **For Session 4:**   * Print 1 copy of “**Newspaper Articles 1 – 6”** for each group of 4 students, cut them out and clip them together. * For Optional Gallery Walk: Print 2 sets of the full size “Newspaper Articles 1 -6” and post them at stations or on walls in the classroom. * Print 1 copy of the “Newspaper Articles Group Analysis” sheet for each group of 4 students. * Optional: Print 1 copy of the “Lesson Assessment” for each student. |
| **Lesson Instructional Sequence** |
| **Session 1:**   1. Display **SLIDE 2** which shows the “**Interactive Notes”** sheet and distribute one sheet to each student. Explain that students will be completing the sheet during Session 1. 2. Distribute “**Document 1”** (Langston Hughes poem) to either individual students or pairs. Ask students to identify what kind of document it is and their supporting evidence. 3. Have students read “**Document 1”** independently or in pairs and answer the appropriate questions on their “Interactive Notes” sheet. Note that these two documents are shown on **SLIDE 3.** Give students time to complete the activity and then discuss the poem using the questions. Make sure to explain the term “Jim Crow’ if necessary. If necessary guide students in understanding that the poem was describing what is often called the Great Migration. 4. Using **SLIDE 4** review the concept of “push and pull factors” as they impact human migration. Refer students back to the poem and have them identify push and pull factors described in the poem. 5. Discuss the push factors in the poem (Jim Crow laws, lynching, cruel people.) Guide students in understanding that no pull factors are explicitly described in the poem. Then, pose the following question: What pull factors can be inferred from the poem? Discuss their answers. Note that possible answers include: opportunity, jobs, and the lack of Jim Crow laws. 6. Display **SLIDE 5** to review the push and pull factors you have identified. 7. Display **SLIDE 6** and explain that students will now be examining a series of paintings by Jacob Lawrence describing the Great Migration. Explain that as they view the paintings and the accompanying text they should identify push and pull factors that are being described and list them on Part 2 of their **“Interactive Notes.”** Use one of the following options for the activity. Make sure to use the 1993 captions at the website regardless of what option you choose.  * Just click on **SLIDE 6** which should take you directly to the website. Share the paintings and text with the whole class. * Have students access the website and individually go through the paintings and text. * Note: The Paintings can also be viewed at this website: <https://lawrencemigration.phillipscollection.org/>  1. Guide a discussion of the paintings and text using the following questions:  * What push factors were described? * What pull factors? * How did many of the migrants travel northward? * For most of these African Americans migration meant a change from rural life to urban life? How might this have been a challenge?  1. Display **SLIDE 7** and refer back to the Hughes poem and the fact that Detroit was a major destination for African Americans migrating from the South. Ask students what factors likely pulled migrants to Detroit. 2. Display **SLIDE 8** and discuss how the automobile factories, especially the Ford factory, were a major pull factor. 3. Display **SLIDE 9** and ask students to answer the question on the slide at Number 3 on their **“Interactive Notes”** sheet. Then, discuss their responses. 4. Display **SLIDE 10** and explain that one main impact of the Great Migration on Detroit was a large increase in the African American population. 5. Display **SLIDE 11** which shows “**Document 2”**. Explain that this document and others like it describes a response to the rapidly increasing African American population in Detroit. Have students read the document and answer the question at Number 4 on their **“Interactive Notes.”**  Note that “**Document 2”** has also been included in the Instructional Resources if you choose to have students read a printed copy Discuss student responses. 6. Using **SLIDE 11** discuss the restrictive covenant and guide students in understanding housing covenants like this were designed to keep African Americans out of certain areas of Detroit whether or not they could afford to live in them. Explain that in 1926 in a case called Corrigan and Buckley, the U.S. Supreme Court tacitly affirmed the legality of these covenants. They were not ruled unconstitutional until 1948. Pose the following question: According to this covenant under what circumstances were African Americans allowed to live in Palmer Woods? Discuss student responses and guide students in understanding that African Americans who worked as live-in maids, butlers, etc. were allowed to live in the area. 7. Display **SLIDE 12** and explain that as a result of these restrictive covenants and other factors such as real estate codes and racial prejudice the majority of African Americans were forced to live in an area known as Black Bottom. This area had previously been primarily the home to European immigrants. It had been named by French farmers early in Detroit’s history because of the rich black soil of the original area. 8. Point out the area labeled Paradise Valley on the map and explain that this African American neighborhood was primarily a commercial area and home to a bowling alley, several small hotels, lively bars, a couple of supper clubs, restaurants and other businesses. 9. Using **SLIDES 13 and 14** explain that the increasing demand for housing allowed landlords to charge exorbitant rent for units often in need of repair. Families were often forced to take in boarders leading to even more crowded conditions. Explain that these historic neighborhoods were demolished in the early 1960s in the name of urban renewal. 10. Using **SLIDES 15 and 16** explain that many African American newcomers had found jobs in Detroit. However, they were often the most unskilled and most undesirable jobs such as foundry positions, paint sprayers and janitors. As a result they often had the lowest pay, the highest accident rates and the largest number of health hazards. 11. Display **SLIDE 17** and explain that it was against this backdrop that Detroit began to experience the effects of the Great Depression. Note that it is assumed that you have already covered the Great Depression in the course and this lesson will allow you to focus on the effects of the Depression on African Americans in Detroit. 12. Display **SLIDE 18** and lead a short discussion by asking students to hypothesize about answers to the question on the slide. Then, display **SLIDE 19** and distribute a copy of “**Document 3”** to students. Explain that students should read the text as homework and highlight answers to the question from **SLIDE 18**.   **Session 2:**   1. Display **SLIDE 18** again and discuss the answers students found in the assigned text. Note that effects of the Depression on African American Detroiters included loss of jobs, unemployment, lower wages than white workers, crowded conditions, homelessness, a rise in crime, a rise in the number of school dropouts, a rise in juvenile delinquency and lack of access to governmental relief. Explain that students will now be investigating a group that was formed to try and meet some of the challenges African Americans faced during the Depression. 2. Divide students into pairs and give each pair a copy of the **“Investigating Document 4 Analysis Sheet.”** Remind students that primary sources reflect the terminology of the time they were created. Explain that the primary sources students will investigate in the rest of this lesson including Document 4 may include terms such as “Negroes’ and “colored” to refer to African Americans, terms now viewed as unfavorable. 3. Have pairs analyze “**Document 4”** by completing the analysis sheet. Then, display **SLIDE 20** and discuss the document using the questions on the analysis sheet. Note that possible answers are shown below:      1. Expand the discussion of the DHL using the following questions:  * The Detroit Housewives’ League was formed in 1930. Why do you think it was formed that year? (in discussing this question guide students in understanding that the DHL was formed to help African American families and businesses survive the Depression) * Who made up the membership of the Detroit Housewives’ League? * What was the main purpose of the Detroit Housewives’ League?  1. Display **SLIDE 21** and go over the compelling and supporting questions for the lesson. Note that you may find it useful to refer back to this slide as the lesson progresses. 2. Divide students into groups of 4. Give each group member a copy of the “**Document Analysis Sheet’** and a copy of one of the following **Documents: 5, 6, 7, or 8**. Using **SLIDE 22** explain that students should read their assigned document and identify goals and other important information about the DHL described in their document. Give students time to complete the assignment. 3. Note that **Document 5** is a document of “The National Negro Housewives’ League.” You may wish to share with students the fact that the success of the DHL led to the development of similar organizations in other cities. These groups were united in a national group in 1933 with Fannie Peck as the first president. 4. Give each group a copy of the “**Group Summary Sheet”** shown on **SLIDE 23** and assign a group recorder. Explain that each group member should take a turn sharing what he/she learned about the goals of the DHL from the assigned reading. Group members should then work to synthesize the information into a single list of goals and record their ideas on the “**Group Summary Sheet**.” The group should then repeat the process by sharing and synthesizing other important information about the DHL they gathered from the documents. Note that a **“Teacher Information Sheet”** showing possible answers from the documents has been included for reference. 5. Lead a discussion on the goals of the DHL by having groups share the information from their **“Group Summary Sheets”**. Note that you may wish to make a master list of goals by synthesizing from the group lists. Repeat the process with the additional information groups gathered from the documents. 6. Display **SLIDE 24** and as an exit activity have students write an answer to the question.   **Session 3:**   1. Display **SLIDE 25** and explain that the DHL was founded by Fanny Peck who also became the first president of the organization. 2. Display **SLIDE 26** and explain that Fanny Peck was the wife of Rev. William Peck, pastor of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Detroit and founder of the Booker T. Washington Trade Association. This organization was founded in 1930 by Rev. Peck and a small group of African American business and professional men. Like the DHL its purpose was to support and create more African American businesses as well as more employment opportunities. In many cases this association and the DHL worked together on projects such as trade fairs. 3. Display **SLIDE 27** and discuss the rapid growth of the DHL. Pose the following question: What factors do you think led to this rapid growth? Discuss student responses. Note that possible answers include the strong leadership of the League, the organizational structure and successful activities. 4. Display **SLIDE 28** and ask students to analyze the photograph. Then, pose the following question: What activity designed to promote African American businesses might this photo suggest? Discuss student responses. Then, guide students in understanding that members of the DHL held luncheons at African American restaurants as a way to promote business for the restaurants. 5. Display **SLIDE 29** which shows the exit question used at the end of Session 2. Have students discuss their answers to the question. Then, explain that they will now examine a set of documents in small groups in order to discover some of the activities of the DHL. 6. Divide students into groups of 4. Give each group member a copy of one of the following **Documents: 9, 10, 11 or 12.** Explain that students should read their assigned document and identify activities of the DHL designed to help carry out the goals of the organization. Students should record the activities on lined paper. Give students time to complete the activity. 7. Assign a group recorder for each group. Explain that each group member should take a turn sharing what he/she learned about the activities of the DHL from the assigned reading. Group members should then work to synthesize the information into a single list of activities which the group recorder should write down. Note that a **“Teacher Information Sheet”** showing possible answers from the documents has been included for reference. 8. When small groups have completed the task have them share their lists in the whole group. Discuss the various activities of the DHL and guide students in connecting them to the goals of the DHL. 9. Review the compelling question of the lesson: Did the Detroit Housewives League meet its goals? Note that this can be done by reviewing **SLIDE 21**. Ask students to look back at their assigned document for evidence of successes of the DHL in meeting its goals. Have students share what they find. Note that possible evidence has been listed on the **“Teacher Information Sheet.”**   **Session 4:**   1. Review the DHL activities discussed in the previous session. Then, place students in small groups and give each group a set of the six **“Newspaper Articles**” and a copy of the **“Newspaper Article Group Analysis Sheet”.** Note that it is highly suggested that the newspaper articles be cut apart instead of keeping them on the two sheets. This will allow group members to split up the articles for analysis. Encourage students to practice the skill of scanning by looking specifically for information regarding activities of the DHL instead of doing a close reading of the articles. Give groups time to complete the task and then discuss the activities they have listed on their charts. Note that possible answers are shown below:      1. **OPTION:** As an alternative instructional strategy for the newspaper article activity print out two sets of the full-size newspaper articles located in the Instructional Resources. Post them around the room or create 12 stations using desks or tables. Divide students into pairs or groups of 3 and have them do a Gallery Walk moving from one news article to another and completing the “**Newspaper Article Group Analysis Sheet”** Note that two sets of the articles are suggested to keep the size of the groups to pairs or groups of three. 2. Draw attention to the two newspapers from which these articles were derived. Explain that *The Tribune Independen*t was an African American newspaper published in Detroit from 1933 – 1935. Its successor was *The Detroit Tribune* which was published from 1935 – 1966. It is important to note that articles mentioning the DHL in other Detroit newspapers such as the *Detroit Free Press* or *Detroit News* during the 1930s through the 1950s are virtually non-existent. You may wish to discuss causes and effects of this reality. 3. Display **SLIDE 30** and explain that the DHL continued to be active into the late 1960s. Historians point to a series of factors which led to its eventual dissolution including its aging leadership and changing times. Using **SLIDE 31** explain that the 50th Anniversary of the DHL was celebrated in 1980. Using **SLIDE 32** explain that this provided an opportunity to celebrate the many accomplishments of the organization. 4. Display **SLIDE 33** and discuss the legacy of the DHL as reflected in the quote from founder Fannie Peck. Then, use the compelling and supporting questions on **SLIDE 34** to conduct a closure discussion. |
| **Suggestions for Lesson Assessment** |
| * Assign students the **“Lesson Assessment”** included in the Instructional Resources. Note that a sheet showing sample answers has also been included. * Have students write a formal, reasoned argument answering the compelling question of the lesson: Did the Detroit Housewives’ League meet its goals? * Based on what students have learned in the lesson have them conduct research to locate a current project in Detroit that would meet one of the DHL’s goals. * Have students work in small groups to prepare a presentation on the DHL. |
| **Possible Enrichment/Extension Activities** |
| * Have students investigate additional primary sources relating to the DHL at the following website: <https://digitalcollections.detroitpubliclibrary.org/> * Have students read the article about the DHL published by the Historical Society of Michigan at this website: <http://www.hsmichigan.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/housewives.pdf> |
| **Teacher Resources for Additional Information** |
| * Walcott, Victoria. *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit.* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001 * Hine, Darlene Clark. *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History.* Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, Inc, 1994 * Bates, Beth. *The Making of Black Detroit in the Age of Henry Ford.* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012 * Miller, Karen. *Managing Inequality: Northern Racial Liberalism in Interwar Detroit*.New York City, NY: NYU Press,, 2014 |