**Superior Experiences**

By: Jordan Kochevar

Subject: Social Studies (History)

Topic: African Americans: Looking at How We Feel

Grades: 2-4

Lesson Length:

Day One: 30 Minutes for Instruction

1 Day Special Treatment for One Table

3 More Days: Different Group Each Day is Superior

Learner Outline (Objectives)

1. Social Studies: **3.4.1.2.1** Students will examine historical records and stories to answer questions about why certain events took place in our history.
2. Social Studies: Students will ask and be able to answer basic questions about a past event in a family, school, local community, or country.
3. Students will learn the sacrifices Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and other African Americans made to fight for equality. Students will put themselves in their shoes with a superiority activity at the end of the lesson.

Lesson Preview:

This lesson focuses on two different things. First, the students will learn a few important events from the Civil Rights Movement. Students will learn highlights of the works of Martin Luther King Jr., and the bravery demonstrated by Rosa Parks. In the 2nd part of this lesson, students will experience how it feels to be superior, and how it feels to be the other. I did a bit of research of what Jane Eliot did with the “Blue Eyes, Brown Eyes” experiment. This will be a much less intense activity. Students will have a letter from the teacher that will explain the assignment to the parents, and give them the option to pull their student from the activity. I also would make sure the principal gives the ok, and is aware of the assignment.

Procedure:

* Show the students the following video clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6Au81aHuSg>
* Make sure students know who Martin Luther King Jr. was, the sacrifices he made for African Americans and equality, and how his life ended. Ask the students if we have made any progress since Martin Luther King Jr.
* Talk briefly about Rosa Parks. Explain the story of how she refused to move out of her bus seat for a white person on her way home from work one day.
* Talk about how there were drinking fountain for white students and different ones for black students. Talk about separate schools for whites and blacks as well.
* Have the students write down three facts they learned about Martin Luther King JR., three facts about Rosa Parks, and three challenges colored people had to face. Have the students bring that paper home to share with their parents, and explain how they feel about how people were not treated the same. The students will then have their parents sign that paper and return it to school.

Part Two:

* Get the OK from your principal before doing this activity. If he/she gives the OK, send a letter home to the parents explaining that the students will be experiencing what it was like to be an African American in school or the community during a time when people were badly mistreated. If they have a problem with their child participating, they must send a note back to the teacher explaining that.
* Divide students into groups of 4. One group will be chosen each day to be the superior group. They will be able to work together on homework, sit together, and help the teacher out with whatever he/she needs. The teacher will also give the group special things such as treats, crowns, etc. The other students will not get to participate as thoroughly, but will still be recognized. They will be seen as the African Americans. (The Purpose of this lesson isn’t to ridicule African Americans, but to show the majority (White/Caucasian) population what life a little bit of what life was like for African Americans.)
* Each day, choose a different group. (4 Days for 4 Groups)
* Ask the students to reflect upon how they felt on the 5th day of the lesson. Have them write down three things that they experienced from either being superior, or being the minority. Students should take this home and share with their parents. Parents are to sign and return this list.
* Explain that everyone should feel aware of what life was like for African Americans, and to be able to put themselves in their shoes.
* Show students part of a clip of Jane Eliot’s Experiment with Brown Eyes, Blue Eyes at the end of the lesson. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeK759FF84s>

Assessment:

* The students will write down 3 facts they learned about Martin Luther King Jr., 3 facts about Rosa Parks, and three challenges that colored people face. They must take this home, share it with their parents, and have them sign and return it.
* The students will reflect back upon their experience of being superior and being discriminated against. They also are to decide whether they think African Americans are being treated equal today in society, or not.

Resources:

\* MLK- The King and His Dream (YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6Au81aHuSg>

\* Brown eyes and blue eyes Racism experiment (Children Session) - Jane Elliott (YouTube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeK759FF84s>