

Thom and Strom: History is Not Always Black and White
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Curriculum Guide

Introduction:

This lesson plan was developed to cover a topic that is quite controversial. To make this lesson most effective, it must be approached using only facts and the teacher must be careful to avoid personal input. The idea is to have the students weigh the information and form their own conclusions. Open discussion should only follow **AFTER** the completion and delivery of the final assignment.

Supplies:

You will need the following items to most effectively deliver this lesson:

LCD Projector

Computer

Internet access for all students

Print outs of the Dan Rather and Essie Mae Williams Interview (See sources for link)

Print outs of the slide show for each student

Pencils/Pens

Paper

Example of a dialogue between two or more people

Video Camera: Optional

Length of Time for This Lesson:

3-5 Class Periods (45 Min Blocks)

Directions:

The first thing that you must do before attempting to deliver this lesson is to **READ IT OVER FIRST**. Familiarize yourself with the information that will be presented to each student. Take the time to double check that the links provided for further research are still good. Should you find any broken links, **REMOVE** them prior to printing the materials for the students. You may wish to add to the links should you find a source that would be beneficial.

Break the students into groups of no more than 5. You will first show the slide show to present the basic information about the relationships of the people involved. **Please do not read the slide show to your students**. Show each picture then allow each group time to read together the paragraphs that coincide with each slide. This will allow them to process the information more effectively. They can also highlight or circle any information that they feel particularly important.

When the slide show and basic information has been presented, the students need to be allowed time to research the links and gather more information about the people involved. ½ Class period is normally enough time if each student in a group takes a different link and then they regroup to share the information they learned from their particular link.

After finishing their basic research into the topic, they will read together the interview between Dan Rather and Essie Mae Williams. They should be sure to discuss how Strom Thurmond's family reacted to the news of Essie Mae and then compare that to the reaction of the White Jefferson's.

Their assignment is to create a fictitious dialogue between Dan Rather and Thomas Jefferson. They should use the printed interview as an example and guide to assist them in their task. You MUST be sure to set parameters so that students clearly understand what is appropriate and what would be considered inappropriate. This is where expectations must be clear. This portion of the assignment may take more than one class period, but should take no more than 2. You must set time limits for students, as they will need to come to a consensus on the overall questions and answers.

Students will then present their fictitious interview to the class. You may wish to video record the project while the students role-play and then present using the television.

Alternatives for This Assignment:

You may choose to assign the dialogue to be between other people such as the White Jefferson's and Sally Hemmings, etc. However, you must monitor to be sure the students are being accurate to history and, of course, school appropriate.

Grading Rubric:

Dialogue	50 points
Group Participation	20 points
Individual Participation	10 points
Presentation	20 points
Total:	100 Points