

7th & 8th Grades
Lesson Plan
Black History Month-Charles W. David, Jr.



Wreaths Across America

Lesson Plan

Teacher:	Date:
Grade: 6 th Grade	Lesson: Charles W. David, Jr., The Dorchester, and The Four Chaplains

<p>OBJECTIVES: CCSSI-ELA RI 7.3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).</p> <p>8. 7. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.</p>	<p>STRATEGIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Write/Pair/Share <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Questions <input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Large Group 												
MATERIALS:	Computer/laptop; internet (with access to YouTube); Smart Board; copies of the Write-Pair-Share; copies of a Brief Biography of Charles Walter David, Jr.; The Dorchester, copies of the Comprehension Questions-Brief Biography of Charles W. David, Jr.; Maze from the Hold to the Deck; copies of the Charles W. David Word Search												
Engage: Hook the students	<p>4-Chaplains Go Down With the Ship - Part 1 https://youtu.be/tJIOuQh7Ab0</p> <p>4-Chaplains Go Down With the Ship - Part 2 https://youtu.be/NEa5EQat-r8</p> <p>4-Chaplains Go Down With the Ship - Part 3 https://youtu.be/GLWEZ9oRqNY</p> <p>Hand out Write/Pair/Share Activity. Students will have 5 minutes to analyze the following: David Fox, Director of the Immortal Chaplains Foundation, talks about the heroic actions of Charles W. David, as the Dorchester was sinking. David died of exposure and pneumonia. What is the significance of Charles W. David going into the freezing waters pulling white men out of the freezing water? Why is it significant? At the end of 5 minutes, you will be paired with a partner, you will read your answer to your partner and they will read their response to you. Write on the back if necessary.</p>												
Explore: Students make sense of a concept through observations.	<p>Students will view the YouTube videos of The Four Chaplains Go Down With the Ship and read the Brief Biography of Charles W. David, Jr. Students will integrate the information from the video clips and the Brief Biography of Charles W. David, Jr. to answer the Comprehension Questions.</p> <p>Students will complete the Charles W. David, Jr. Word Search Puzzle and the Maze from the Hold to the Deck.</p>												
Explain: Teacher introduces formal vocabulary and language to students.	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">segregated</td> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">chaplain</td> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">exposure</td> <td>convoy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nazi</td> <td>Rabbi</td> <td>menial</td> <td>fate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U-boat</td> <td>Priest</td> <td>cutter</td> <td>succumbed</td> </tr> </table>	segregated	chaplain	exposure	convoy	Nazi	Rabbi	menial	fate	U-boat	Priest	cutter	succumbed
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Elaborate: Students apply what they have learned.	Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events). Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.												
Evaluate: assessment.	Teachers will choose which activities to use as formal assessments.												
Enrichment/Service-Learning Project	Students will brainstorm a way to serve their local community in honor of Charles W. David, Jr. and the Four Chaplains. See a list of potential projects on the last page.												

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Write-Pair-Share

You will have **5 minutes** to analyze the following: David Fox, Director of the Immortal Chaplains Foundation, talks about the heroic actions of Charles W. David, as the Dorchester was sinking. David died of exposure and pneumonia. What is the significance of Charles W. David going into the freezing waters pulling white men out of the freezing water? Why is it significant? At the end of 5 minutes, you will be paired with a partner, you will read your answer to your partner and they will read their response to you. Write on the back if necessary.

---cut here-----cut here-----cut here---

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A Brief Biography of Charles Walter David, Jr.

Charles Walter David Jr. was born on June 20, 1917, in New York, New York. In the 1930s and 40s, there were few economic opportunities for young African American men. In March 1941, Charles enlisted in the United States Coast Guard. Joining the Coast Guard would help him to provide for his wife and 3-year-old son. The United States military was still segregated in 1941, and Charles was assigned menial work in the ship kitchens. Nevertheless, he worked hard and was promoted to mess attendant first class.

After the United States entered World War II, Charles was assigned to the Coast Guard cutter USCGC *Comanche*. Aboard the *Comanche*, he was responsible for maintaining officers' quarters, but in his off-duty hours he entertained the crew by playing his harmonica.

On February 3, 1943, the *Comanche* was one of three cutters escorting three transport ships carrying US troops and civilian contractors from New York to a US military base in Greenland. 150 miles off the coast of Greenland, a Nazi U-boat torpedoed the USAT *Dorchester*, which was carrying more than 900 men.

The *Dorchester* started to sink immediately and panic spread among the soldiers aboard. Hundreds of men jumped into the frigid ocean because only two of the 14 lifeboats could be launched, the other 12 were frozen to the ship. Aboard the *Dorchester*, four Army chaplains—Reverend George L. Fox, Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, Father John P. Washington, and Reverend Clark V. Poling—guided soldiers trapped below deck to escape hatches. The chaplains handed out life vests and when the supply ran out, they gave their own life jackets to four men who did not have one. When the chaplains had done all they could do, they linked arms to pray and sing hymns as the *Dorchester* sank in the waves, less than 30 minutes after being hit by the torpedo.

Sailors aboard the other vessels in the convoy watched the tragedy unfold, including Charles W. David. The captain of the *Comanche* maneuvered his ship back to pick up survivors from the freezing waters.

Even so, hundreds of men from the *Dorchester* died within minutes from exposure in the cold water. The men aboard the lifeboats faced a similar fate if they could not be quickly hauled aboard the *Comanche*. The *Comanche's* crew lowered rope climbing



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nets to the lifeboats, but many of the *Dorchester's* survivors were too weak from the cold to climb to safety.

Witnessing the crisis, David and several other men voluntarily climbed down into the lifeboats where they helped lift the shivering men up onto the *Comanche's* deck. Even though David was one of the lowest ranking men on his ship and many in his own country considered him a second-class citizen, he willingly put his life at risk to save his fellow Americans.

During the precarious operation, the *Comanche's* executive officer, Lieutenant Langford Anderson, fell overboard. Without hesitation, David dove into the deadly waters to save Anderson. David then helped lift a second shipmate, Richard Swanson, back onto the *Comanche* when Swanson had grown too weak from helping other men. Swanson recalled that David was a "tower of strength" who shouted encouragement to his fellow sailors during the harrowing ordeal. Swanson was one of Charles David's closest shipboard friends. Swanson was a white farm boy from Nebraska who shared a love of music with David and the two of them often entertained their shipmates, David on harmonica and Swanson on saxophone. The two friends also liked socializing together on leave, but they had to pick their bars carefully to find one that would serve both blacks and whites. In addition to the two men whom David single-handedly saved, he and his shipmates successfully rescued 93 survivors from the *Dorchester*. Although the *Comanche* and other ships rescued a total of 230 men, nearly 700 others lost their lives.

Shortly after David's lifesaving heroics, he contracted pneumonia from his time in the icy water. Fifty-four days later, on March 23, 1943, he succumbed to the illness in a hospital in Greenland. His crewmates did not learn of his death until weeks later. The Coast Guard posthumously awarded David the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. David's widow and young son received the medal from Rear Admiral Stanley V. Parker and Lieutenant Anderson, one of the men David had pulled to safety. In 2010, the US Coast Guard named a Sentinel Class cutter in David's honor.



Remember-Honor-Teach

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Comprehension Questions-Brief Biography of Charles W. David, Jr.

1. Why did Charles W. David join the United States Coast Guard?
2. What job was Charles assigned in the Coast Guard? Why was he assigned that job?
3. When the United States entered World War II, what Coast Guard Cutter was Charles to?
4. What was the mission of the cutter?
5. What happened on February 3, 1943?
6. Who were the Four Chaplains?
7. What did they do?
8. What actions did Charles W. David, Jr. take to rescue sailors from the *Dorchester*?
9. Analyze the following statement: Even though David was one of the lowest ranking men on his ship and many in his own country considered him a second-class citizen, he willingly put his life at risk to save his fellow Americans.
10. What lessons could we all learn from the character of Charles W. David, Jr.?

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ANSWER KEY

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Comprehension Questions-Brief Biography of Charles W. David, Jr.

1. Why did Charles W. David join the United States Coast Guard? **Charles W. David, Jr. joined the United States Coast Guard because there were few job opportunities for African American men during that time period and he needed to provide for his family.**
2. What job was Charles assigned in the Coast Guard? Why was he assigned that job? **Charles was assigned to menial work in the kitchen. He was assigned to that job because the United States military was still segregated during the time he enlisted.**
3. When the United States entered World War II, what Coast Guard Cutter was Charles assigned to? **When the United States entered World War II, Charles was assigned to the USCGC Comanche.**
4. What was the mission of the cutter? **The Comanche was one of three cutters escorting three transport ships, including the USAT Dorchester that was carrying US troops and civilian contractors from New York to a US military base in Greenland.**
5. What happened on February 3, 1943? **On February 3, 1943, a Nazi U-boat torpedoed the USAT Dorchester 150 miles from Greenland.**
6. Who were the Four Chaplains? **The four Army chaplains were: Reverend George L. Fox, Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, Father John P. Washington, and Reverend Clark V. Poling.**
7. What did they do? **They guided soldiers trapped below deck to escape hatches and handed out life vests until the supply ran out, then they gave their own life jackets to four men who did not have one. As the Dorchester sank, the Four Chaplains linked arms, prayed, and sang hymns.**
8. What actions did Charles W. David, Jr. take to rescue sailors from the *Dorchester*? **David and several other men voluntarily climbed down into the lifeboats where they helped lift the men up onto the Comanche's deck.**
9. Analyze the following statement: Even though David was one of the lowest ranking men on his ship and many in his own country considered him a second-class citizen, he willingly put his life at risk to save his fellow Americans. **Answers will vary.**
10. What lessons could we all learn from the character of Charles W. David, Jr.? **Answers will vary.**

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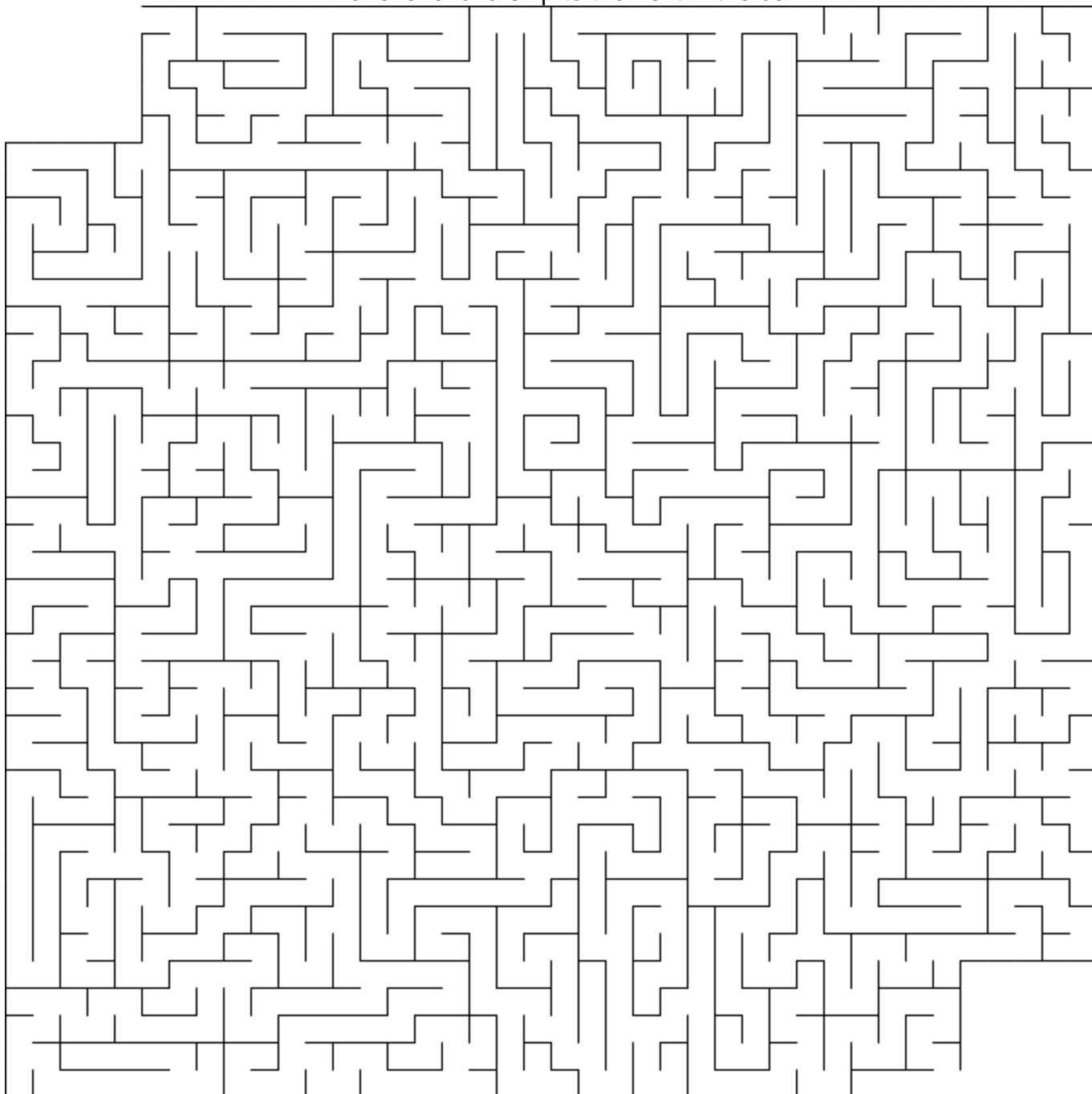
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The Dorchester, Maze from the Hold to the Deck

When the Dorchester was torpedoed, all of the lights on the ship went out. Try to imagine getting from one level of a ship to the next in the dark.



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The Charles W. David Word Search Puzzle

R	X	S	D	A	M	R	F	U	D	M	C	T	S	C
X	E	X	U	W	R	E	I	N	E	H	H	E	N	H
Q	V	T	O	B	B	M	A	R	R	N	A	K	I	A
Y	Y	F	S	R	M	L	Y	K	H	B	P	C	A	R
N	I	S	U	E	N	A	N	C	M	A	L	A	L	L
M	Y	A	F	E	H	V	R	F	F	D	A	J	P	E
A	R	N	E	T	K	C	Y	I	C	B	I	E	A	S
Y	B	R	T	Y	X	Q	R	T	N	E	N	F	H	W
A	G	F	T	A	S	U	F	O	I	E	S	I	C	D
C	I	T	N	A	L	T	A	W	D	A	Z	L	I	A
S	E	G	R	E	G	A	T	I	O	N	Y	R	O	V
A	C	I	N	O	M	R	A	H	V	N	V	T	H	I
B	Z	Q	T	O	R	P	E	D	O	E	Z	K	U	D
D	G	D	C	O	M	A	N	C	H	E	U	S	C	Q
N	O	S	N	A	W	S	D	R	A	H	C	I	R	K

Army
Chaplains
Dorchester
Life Jacket
USAT

Atlantic
Charles W David
February
submarine
harmonica

segregation
Comanche
Greenland
torpedo
Richard Swanson

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Answer Key

The Charles W. David Word Search Puzzle

R	X	S	D	A	M	R	F	U	D	M	C	T	S	C
X	E	X	U	W	R	E	I	N	E	H	H	E	N	H
Q	V	T	O	B	B	M	A	R	R	N	A	K	I	A
Y	Y	F	S	R	M	L	Y	K	H	B	P	C	A	R
N	I	S	U	E	N	A	N	C	M	A	L	A	L	L
M	Y	A	F	E	H	V	R	F	F	D	A	J	P	E
A	R	N	E	T	K	C	Y	I	C	B	I	E	A	S
Y	B	R	T	Y	X	Q	R	T	N	E	N	F	H	W
A	G	F	T	A	S	U	F	O	I	E	S	I	C	D
C	I	T	N	A	L	T	A	W	D	A	Z	L	I	A
S	E	G	R	E	G	A	T	I	O	N	Y	R	O	V
A	C	I	N	O	M	R	A	H	V	N	V	T	H	I
B	Z	Q	T	O	R	P	E	D	O	E	Z	K	U	D
D	G	D	C	O	M	A	N	C	H	E	U	S	C	Q
N	O	S	N	A	W	S	D	R	A	H	C	I	R	K

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