

7th–8th Grades Lesson Plan
Keep Moving Forward
The Tuskegee Airmen



WREATHS
across
AMERICA

Wreaths Across America

Lesson Plan

Teacher:	Date:
Grades: 7-8	Lesson: Keep Moving Forward; The Tuskegee Airmen; Black History; Veterans Day

<p>OBJECTIVES: National Curriculum Standards For Social Studies: 1. Culture 4. Individual Development & Identity 5. Individuals, Groups & Institutions 6. Power, Authority & Governance 10. Civic Ideals & Practices CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</p>	<p>STRATEGIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <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
<p>MATERIALS:</p>	<p>Computer/laptop; internet (with access to YouTube); Smart Board; copies of Write/Pair/Share; copies of “Black Airmen Turn Racism, Bigotry into Opportunity”; copies of Writing Analysis of “Black Airmen Turn Racism, Bigotry into Opportunity”; copies of Concrete Poem Activity.</p>
<p>Engage: Hook the students</p>	<p>Hand out Write/Pair/Share Activity- Pair the students with a partner. Explain the W/P/S directions. Students will have 5 minutes to analyze the following passage: “People who never grew up during segregation can’t realize how rigid it was,” said Tuskegee Airmen Dr. Roscoe C. Brown Jr. “You could go as high as you could in the black community, but you couldn’t go nearly as high in the white community. Opportunities were denied to you, and you had no recourse...That was the struggle the people of my generation went through.” 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>
<p>Explore: Students make sense of a concept through observations.</p>	<p>Play the YouTube Video, We Dare Not Fail: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen-The FDR Library https://youtu.be/czeDYyAin7E Hand out “Black Airmen Turn Racism, Bigotry into Opportunity”. Read silently or aloud. Hand out Writing Analysis of “Black Airmen Turn Racism, Bigotry into Opportunity”. Allow students time to complete the assignment. Hand out Concrete Poem Activity. Allow students time to complete the assignment.</p>
<p>Explain: Teacher introduces formal vocabulary and language to students.</p>	<p>Teacher will assign vocabulary.</p>
<p>Elaborate: Students apply what they have learned.</p>	<p>Students will develop a greater understanding of the Tuskegee Airmen, their hardships, and contributions to the success of United States Army Airforce during World War II. Students will cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources and determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</p>
<p>Evaluate: assessment.</p>	<p>Teachers will select which activities to use as formal/informal assessments.</p>
<p>Enrichment/Service-Learning Project</p>	<p>Just as the Tuskegee Airmen served their country during World War II, students will brainstorm a way to serve their local community in honor of the Tuskegee Airmen. See a list of potential projects on the last page.</p>

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Write-Pair-Share

You will have **5 minutes** to analyze the following passage: "People who never grew up during segregation can't realize how rigid it was," said Tuskegee Airman Dr. Roscoe C. Brown Jr. "You could go as high as you could in the black community, but you couldn't go nearly as high in the white community. Opportunities were denied to you, and you had no recourse...That was the struggle the people of my generation went through."

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

Name _____

Write-Pair-Share

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“Black Airmen Turn Racism, Bigotry into Opportunity”

<https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/473251/black-airmen-turn-racism-bigotry-into-opportunity/>

- Published Feb. 4, 2014
- By Randy Roughton
- Air Force News Service

TUSKEGEE, Ala. (AFNS) --

This year's National African American History Month observance celebrates 50 years since President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. But for the Air Force, an important evolution on the road to equality for African Americans can be traced more than two decades earlier with an experiment from senior leaders to train black pilots at the famed Tuskegee Institute.

As the 13 young African American men stepped off the train in this small central Alabama town on a July day in 1941, their first impression was the oppressive heat that immediately hit them in the face. With no breeze, the stifling hot air could be practically cut with a knife.

When they stepped off the bus at the nearby airfield, their first collective thoughts were – where's the airfield? In front of the young men, who were there to learn to fly, was an open field that over the next several years would become a bustling training base. They would take an experiment by senior Army leadership to see if blacks were “teachable” to fly airplanes and turn it into the ultimate experience for African Americans to do something that until then was strictly off limits.

Eventually, Moton Field, named for the former Tuskegee Institute president Robert Moton, would consist of two aircraft hangars, wooden offices, storage buildings, a locker building, clubhouse, vehicle maintenance area, and a control tower. However, in the first few years of the war, riggers hung parachutes from the hangar trusses to dry because the field's tower wasn't built until 1943.

Cadets first completed their primary flight training there before they advanced to basic and advanced training at Tuskegee Army Airfield.

Some Army leaders considered training in Tuskegee during World War II “an experiment.” But African American pilots saw it as an opportunity, with one surviving Tuskegee Airman calling it the “Tuskegee Experience.”

Surviving Tuskegee Airmen say the standard was higher for them than it was for white pilots, and that the training was “an experiment designed to fail,” with many qualified African American pilots washing out during basic and advanced training. Of the 3,000 who trained to fly at Tuskegee, only 1,000 graduated. About 650 were single-engine pilots, with the remainder qualified as bomber pilots who never saw combat. Cadets faced racism and segregation at Tuskegee and other training bases such as Selfridge Field, Mich., and Walterboro Army Airfield, S.C.

“We just loved the airplane, but we knew segregation at that time was the rule of the world,” said Dr. Roscoe C. Brown Jr., a Tuskegee Airman who graduated on March 12, 1944, and later became commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron and one of three Tuskegee Airmen who shot down German Me-262 jets from the P-51 Mustang.

“People who never grew up during segregation can't realize how rigid it was,” said Brown. “You could go as high as you could in the black community, but you couldn't go nearly as high in the white community. Opportunities were denied to you, and you had no recourse. That was why the NAACP and the civil rights movement got started back in the 1920s and '30s. That was the struggle the people of my generation went through.”

But, according to Brown, “excellence is the antidote to prejudice.”

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Only six of those original 13 cadets survived all four phases of training to earn their wings on March 7, 1942. That initial class included Capt. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., who would go on to become the Air Force's first African American general.

Because construction on Moton Field was delayed by rain, the class started training at Kennedy Field, where chief flight instructor Charles A. ("Chief") Anderson took first lady Eleanor Roosevelt on her heavily publicized flight on March 29, 1941.

According to historical documents, if many military leaders had their way, the effort to train African American pilots for combat would have been a failed experiment. As late as 1925, an Army War College study referred to African Americans as "mentally inferior subspecies of the human race," with "smaller brains that weighed 10 ounces less than whites."

Much of the leadership believed blacks lacked the intelligence, leadership or coordination to be pilots, much less fighter pilots. "Experiments within the Army in the solution of social problems are fraught with danger to efficiency, discipline, or morale," wrote Gen. George C. Marshall, Army chief of staff, in a letter in 1941. Just a year earlier, he had also written that the military wasn't the proper place to change the segregation policy prevalent in American society.

Fortunately, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was concerned about the black vote in the 1940 presidential election, and announced after the Civil Pilot Training Act passed in 1939 that African Americans would be trained as military pilots in the Army Air Corps.

The Tuskegee Institute was already training African American civilian pilots, and in 1939, the Civil Aeronautics Administration approved the school as a civilian pilot training institution. The Army Air Forces allowed the 99th Fighter Squadron to become the first African American flying unit to deploy to North Africa in the spring of 1943. Tuskegee pilots were initially limited to flying patrols along the coast and on shipping targets, but would go on to become one of the most successful escort groups within the Army Air Corps.

But by the end of the war, Tuskegee Airmen in the 99th Fighter Squadron, part of the 332nd Fighter Group, had flown about 1,500 missions, destroyed 260 enemy planes, and were instrumental in the destruction of many enemy targets.

Not too long ago, many Americans were unaware of the role African Americans and their training in Tuskegee played during World War II. Most of the Tuskegee Airmen, like intelligence officer 2nd Lt. Ted Lumpkin, kept their experiences to themselves.

"There was no real recognition that we had been overseas, other than our immediate family and friends," Lumpkin said. "It eventually got to the point where most of us just did not talk about the experience at all, because no one really believed you, and it became a secret."

Dr. Daniel C. Haulman is the organizational histories branch chief at the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. and co-authored the book "The Tuskegee Airmen: An Illustrated History: 1939 – 1949." He explained that for about two decades after the war, important documents, histories and mission reports on the Tuskegee Airmen remained classified. But beginning in the late 1950s, several important steps led to the Tuskegee Airmen finally being recognized for their service, struggles and accomplishments.

"It was not until the documents were de-classified and people could read them that the Tuskegee Airmen slowly came to the attention of the public," said Haulman, "The first step was the one that gave them their name, Charles Francis' book, 'The Tuskegee Airmen,' first came out in 1955. The second step was the formation of Tuskegee Airmen Inc., which formed to publicize what they accomplished during World War II. The third step was the HBO movie (also called 'The Tuskegee Airmen') in the 1990s that helped increase the publicity the Tuskegee Airmen got."

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The Tuskegee-trained pilots went on to earn their place in U.S. military history, but some historians are skeptical of the role they played in President Harry S. Truman's decision to desegregate the military on Feb. 2, 1948. Haulman has a much different view.

"Not everyone agrees with me, but I believe they did have an influence on Truman's decision," Haulman said. "The Air Force was already moving toward desegregation even before Truman issued Executive Order 99801. The first secretary of the Air Force, Stuart Symington, was well aware of the Tuskegee Airmen record, and he was long an advocate of desegregation of the Air Force.

"There are those who believe Symington helped Truman draft the executive order because the Air Force was already moving toward desegregation. (Col.) Noel Parrish wrote a thesis advocating the desegregation of the Air Force right around the time the Air Force was born. I think Parrish influenced Symington, and Symington influenced Truman."

Lumpkin, now 94, sometimes uses his lessons from overcoming prejudice to serve his country during World War II to help prepare young people for their "own Tuskegee experience."

"I think one of the things the Tuskegee experience can do for youngsters is to help them to realize that, because the Tuskegee Airmen were able to do their best on a day-to-day basis, these kinds of actions accumulate," Lumpkin said. "And as they do, they build a strength which connects with other people and also strengthens the person going through this experience.

"Tuskegee was a challenge for the Tuskegee Airmen. I think this is important for youngsters to know that they are going to have their own Tuskegee experiences because those things come up in life. But if they do their best, each and every day, the accumulation of that effort will show itself in a positive way in their lives and help them to be better citizens and be more comfortable in their life activity."

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Writing Analysis of "Black Airmen Turn Racism, Bigotry into Opportunity"

1. Who published the article and who was the intended audience?
2. What type of article is this (eye-witness account, straight news article, feature article, editorial, column, reader contribution)?
3. Is place relevant to this article? How?
4. Are one or more dates listed in the article? Was this article written at or around the same time period that the text relates to?
5. Does the title of the article accurately disclose the content of the article? Why or why not?
6. Are there any photos or illustrations? What additional information or explanation do they provide?
7. What does the text describe, explain, or provide an opinion on?
8. What is the main idea of the article? List 4 facts or arguments that support the main idea of the article.
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9. Is this article a news story or an opinion piece? Is the article trying to inform or persuade? How do you know?
10. Are there details that reference other people or events of the time period?
11. What was happening during this time period?
12. Why do you think the article was written?

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13. What might have been the author's or publisher's purpose? What evidence supports your theory?
14. Who was the intended audience for this article? What evidence supports your conclusion?
15. What source or sources does the author quote or refer to in the article?
16. Do you think these sources are reliable? Why or why not? What evidence supports your conclusion?
17. What did you learn from examining this article?
18. Does any new information you learned contradict or support your prior knowledge about the topic of this article?
19. What questions does it make you ask?
20. How did the Tuskegee Airmen turn adversity into victory, not just for themselves, but for African Americans across the United States?

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Tuskegee Airmen Concrete Poetry Activity

Concrete poetry—sometimes also called ‘shape poetry’—is poetry whose visual appearance matches the topic of the poem. The words form shapes which illustrate the poem’s subject as a picture, as well as through their literal meaning. **Outline Poems**-A common way to make the visual structure reflect the subject of the poem is to fill an outline shape that relates to the topic of the poem. The words in this type of poetry, unlike traditional poetry, do not have to rhyme.

Write a concrete poem about the Tuskegee Airmen using the information you learned in the video clip and the article.