



### **Lesson Plan: Black Voices - Comparing Media Representations of Black Celebrities to Black Historical Figures**

Understanding media representation is crucial for students because it directly impacts how individuals and communities are perceived in society. Students will compare and contrast the media portrayal of Black historical figures with that of contemporary Black celebrities in popular culture. This lesson plan aims to foster critical thinking and media literacy skills while providing students with a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary media representation of Black individuals.

<b>Clips Overview</b> Use the following time codes to quickly find clips used in this lesson plan.	
<b>Clip name:</b> Quincy Stewart	<b>Time In Code:</b> 00:49 <b>Audio In Text:</b> "I'm famous in room 213..." <b>Time Out Code:</b> 06:16 <b>Audio Out Text:</b> "...through history."
<b>Clip name:</b> Mary Jackson	<b>Time In Code:</b> 08:36 <b>Audio In Text:</b> Full Screen Graphic - NASA Headquarters After Hidden Figure Mary W. Jackson <b>Time Out Code:</b> 09:56

	<b>Audio Out Text:</b> Full Screen Graphic - Street Sign Hidden Figures Way
<b>Clip name:</b> Eyes on the Stars	<b>Time In Code:</b> 22:44 <b>Audio In Text:</b> Blue Background with Opening Graphic and music <b>Time Out Code:</b> 25:31 <b>Audio Out Text:</b> "...his own Starship Enterprise."
<b>Clip name:</b> Zora Neale Hurston	<b>Time In Code:</b> 10:06 <b>Audio In Text:</b> "Zora Neale Hurston was the quintessential..." <b>Time Out Code:</b> 14:56 <b>Audio Out Text:</b> "...allow it to be better than silver and gold."

<b>Grade Levels:</b>	6-8	ELA MITECS
<b>Setting a Context:</b>	<p>This media literacy lesson is designed for 6th-8th graders. The focus is on exploring how Black individuals have been portrayed in the media over time, drawing connections between historical figures and contemporary celebrities in pop culture and pro-sports. The lesson looks at representation of specific Black individuals and provides some historical context to understand the evolution of media portrayal of various individuals.</p>	
<b>Curricular Standards:</b>	Michigan ELA	
	<b>Reading Standards for 6-12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of Knowledge and Ideas - bullet #7</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of Knowledge and Ideas - bullet #9</li> <li>• Craft and Structure - bullet #6</li> <li>• Craft and Structure - bullet #9</li> </ul> <p><b>College and Career readiness anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehension and Collaboration for 6-12 - bullet #2</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Reading Standards for Literacy in Science and Technical Subjects 6–12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of Knowledge and Ideas - bullet #9</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6–12</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texts, Types and Purposes - bullet #2a</li> </ul>	
<b>Curricular Standards</b>	<b>MITECS</b>	<b>Description</b>
Creative Communicator	MITECS.A4-7.GC.b	With guidance from an educator, students use technology to communicate with others and to look at problems from different perspectives.
Creative Communicator	MITECS.A12-14.CC	Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively for a variety of purposes using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media appropriate to their goals.
Global Collaborator	MITECS.A12-14.GC	Students use digital tools to broaden their perspectives and enrich their learning by collaborating with others and working effectively in teams locally and globally.
Knowledge Constructor	MITECS.A12-14.KC.d	Students explore real-world issues and problems and actively pursue an understanding of them and solutions for them.
<b>Curricular Standards</b>	<b>Michigan Social Studies</b>	
<b>Curricular Standards Michigan Social Studies</b>	PUBLIC DISCOURSE, DECISION MAKING, AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION (P3, P4)	<p>P3.1 Identifying and Analyzing Public Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly state a problem as a public policy issue, analyze various</li> </ul>

		perspectives, and generate and evaluate possible alternative resolutions.
	U6 USHG ERA 6 - THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL, URBAN, AND GLOBAL UNITED STATES (1870-1930)	<p>U6.2 Investigation Topics and Issue Analysis (P2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the historical perspective to investigate a significant historical topic from U.S. History Eras 3-6 that also has significance as an issue or topic in the United States today.</li> </ul>

Lesson Procedures	
<p>Use any or all of the following lessons in tandem with this episode of Extra Credit.</p> <p><b>Teaching Tips: Be sure to include</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Essential Question</i></li> <li>2. <i>Vocabulary List</i></li> <li>3. <i>Before viewing questions</i></li> <li>4. <i>During viewing questions</i></li> <li>5. <i>After viewing questions</i></li> <li>6. <i>Extension activity</i></li> </ol>	
<b>Essential Question:</b>	<i>How does the media represent historical figures compared to pop-culture celebrities?</i>
<b>Vocabulary List</b>	<p><b>Representation</b>   (n.) the act of portrayal, picturing, or other rendering in visible form</p> <p><b>Celebrity</b>   n.) a well-known or famous person; (now chiefly) <i>spec.</i> a person, esp. in entertainment or sport, who attracts interest from the general public and attention from the mass media</p> <p><b>Popular Culture/Pop Culture</b>   (n.) music, TV, movies, books, etc. that are popular and enjoyed by ordinary people, rather than experts or very educated people</p> <p><b>Portray</b>   (v.) to represent or describe someone or something in a painting, movie, book, or other artistic work:</p> <p><b>Iconic</b>   (adj.) relating to or characteristic of a famous person or thing that represents something of importance</p>

**Lesson 1 Procedure: Quincy Stewart and Mary Jackson****1. Before Viewing***Think & Write:*

Give students 2-3 minutes and ask them to individually quick-write a list of all of the Black celebrities they can think of on one side of a piece of paper. Tell them spelling and capitalization does not matter for this activity.

Again, give the students 2-3 minutes for a quick-write. This time, ask students to make a list of all of the Black historical figures they can think of on the other side of the same piece of paper.

Ask students to total their lists. Which side has more names?

*Discuss:*

Which side had more names? *(It is likely that many students will say the side with celebrity names will have more names.)*

Why do you think this to be the case?

*Students might give reasons like:*

- *They are popular*
- *We see them on the internet/in movies/ in sports*
- *They are paid (to do a job/perform/create)*

Ask students why they think historical figures who devoted time and/or provided service to the country, did not receive timely recognition or the same amount of recognition as celebrities?

**2. During Viewing**

Show: Quincy Stewart: 00:49-6:16

Show: Mary Jackson: 8:36-9:56

Have students watch and listen carefully for key points in the video that help answer the following questions. Have them take notes on the Notice/Wonder handout to share with the class after viewing.

**1. After Viewing**

Ask students:

- Quincy Stewart states, "I'm a Black man first, teacher second." Why do you think this statement is included in this interview?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quincy Stewart mentions his students have “gratitude for getting it now...outrage for not getting it before.” What does he mean by this? Can you think of a time where you had gratitude for learning something but wished you had learned it sooner?</li> <li>• Though Quincy Stewart does not meet the definition of a celebrity, he uses his platform as a classroom teacher to elevate the status of historical figures in Black History. What are your thoughts on this?</li> <li>• Quincy Stewart quotes Marvin Gaye’s lyric, “What’s Goin’ on?” He restates, “What IS GOING on” saying, “this is a question that will last throughout history.” Can you think of a song, a film, or even a meme, where you could apply that same song lyric?</li> <li>• How does the NASA slideshow use images and sound to honor Mary Jackson as an historical figure?</li> <li>• Using Marvin Gaye’s lyrical question, “What’s Goin’ on,” why is it important to elevate the work of Mary Jackson?</li> </ul>
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Lesson 2 Procedure: <i>Eyes on the Stars</i>	
<b>1. Before Viewing</b>	<p><i>Think</i> Ask students to read/explore some background information on Ron McNair. Here are some possibilities, but you should preview these materials to decide if they are appropriate for your students and/or supplement them with material you find on your own.</p> <p><a href="#">Carolina Snaps PBS Season 2 Episode 7- Ron McNair</a> - Length 1 Minute <a href="#">Astronaut Friday - Ron McNair</a></p> <p><i>Pair/Share</i> Ask students to get in small groups of 3-4. Each person should share a fact they learned about Ron McNair. This can be done in two-three rounds.</p>
<b>2. During Viewing</b>	Show: <i>Eyes on the Stars</i> : 22:44 - 25:31
<b>3. After Viewing</b>	<p>Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did pop culture programs like <i>Star Trek</i> and the celebrities who portrayed the roles of astronauts, help to influence Ron McNair’s career goals?</li> <li>• Though this episode was produced as an animation, how</li> </ul>

	<p>does the animator show the librarian does not like Ron throughout most of the film?</p> <p>Watch:  <a href="#">Star Trek Universe: The Star Trek Family Remembers Nichelle Nichols</a> Length: 2:32</p> <p><b>After Viewing</b>  Ask students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What characteristics might have drawn Ron McNair to <i>Star Trek</i>, and specifically to Lt. Uhura?</li> </ul> <p><i>Do:</i>  Have students complete the comparison activity which asks students to analyze some media representations of Uhura, the celebrity astronaut and some media representations of Ron McNair.</p>
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Lesson 3 Procedure: Zora Neale Hurston	
<p><b>1. Before Viewing</b></p>	<p>Have students read a short article called <a href="#">About Zora Neale Hurston</a> to gain historical background on Zora Neale Hurston.</p> <p><i>Think</i>  Ask students to make note of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What they learned about the city of Eatonville, Florida.</li> <li>2. What they learned about Zora Neale Hurston’s recognition as a writer.</li> </ol> <p>Optional background viewing: <a href="#">Who Was Zora Neale Hurston</a> Length: 3:14</p>
<p><b>2. During Viewing</b></p>	<p>Show: Zora Neale Hurston: 10:06 - 14:56</p>
<p><b>3. After Viewing</b></p>	<p>Ask Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Though Zora Neale Hurston made many contributions to literature, she did not achieve widespread celebrity status while she was alive. What are some reasons for that?  <i>Additional internet research might be necessary</i></li> <li>• Because of Zora Neale Hurston, the city of Eatonville, Florida is iconic. What other cities do you know that have become iconic because of a famous person?</li> <li>• Eddie Coleman, Mayor of Eatonville, is interviewed in this clip. Provide evidence which shows Coleman is proud that Hurston is a celebrity from his town.</li> <li>• If Zora Neale Hurston were alive today, what kind of social media presence would she have? Who would follow her?</li> </ul>

Who would she follow?

**Extension Activity**

Honoring a personal celebrity.

Have students create a slideshow to honor a person they consider a celebrity in their life.

Students can use the slide template or another format of your choice to create a visual representation which honors a personal celebrity in their life.