

Lesson 1:

The Urban League

Goal: The lesson is designed to help students become familiar with the National Urban League.

Lesson or Content Question(s):

1. What is the Urban League?
2. What is the purpose of the Urban League?
3. How have the Urban League's goals and programs changed over time?

Objectives:

Students will be able to explain and discuss the overall concept and role of the Urban League and its role in the African American community.

Hook or Introduction (10 min)

1. Teacher begins class by asking: Do you know anyone who has had difficulty buying a house, finding a job, getting quality education, and/or getting treated equally because of the color of their skin? We are going to investigate an organization whose very existence is to fight these types of difficulties, especially for African Americans.
2. Ask students to pair/share and then open up to whole class discussion. Encourage students to share personal experiences or stories they have heard from others.

Time Needed: Two 45-minute class periods or one 90-minute block.

Materials Needed:

- Computers
- Internet access
- Paper
- Pens
- Projector
- Projector screen

Handouts:

- Urban League Facts
- Video Guide
- Vocabulary Terms (regular and modified)
- Websites:
 - National Urban League at 95-Part 1 (10 min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gSI5-S03J4>
 - National Urban League at 95-Part 2 (6:36 min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gSI5-S03J4>

Background knowledge or skills students need prior to lesson: Basic understanding of historic discrimination against African Americans including in employment, housing, and civil rights.

Instruction

1. Teacher hands out vocabulary list and instructs students to listen for definitions during videos and class discussion, filling in definitions as they hear them (1 min). (Note: pause throughout the lesson to review vocabulary terms. There are two vocabulary lists: one is shorter for students who need modifications)
2. Pass out video notes worksheet (1 min.)

3. Show *National Urban League at 95* parts 1 and 2 videos. Instruct students to take notes on the two videos as they listen. (17 min.)
4. At end of videos, ask students to share their video notes on *National Urban League at 95* with a partner. Then call on students to report out. Add information to the Video Guide and display information for all students to see (15 min.)
5. Hand out Urban League fact sheet to half the class (Note: this is an easier reading. You may consider giving this handout to students who require modifications). Hand out the National Urban League excerpt from the Internet to the other half of the class (requires stronger reading skills).
6. Model how to annotate (underlining, highlighting, writing points of interest directly on the handout). (10 min.)
7. Students do silent reading and annotate one of the two articles. (15 min.)
8. As student pairs complete the reading, ask them to share the main ideas of their articles with each other.
9. Call on students to report out key ideas about the National Urban League and the changes in the organization's focus and programs over time. (10 min.)
10. If applicable, inform students about the Urban League of Portland guest speaker scheduled for the next class. (1 min)
11. Ask students to write down three questions to ask the guest speaker based on readings, videos, vocabulary, and items of interest. (5 min.)
12. Collect student questions. (1 min)

Closure:

- Clarify student questions and/or concerns.
- Exit slip: List and briefly describe two roles of the National Urban League and how that role affects the African-American community. Students hand in as they leave. (10 min)

Assessment of Student Learning:

Vocabulary definitions, video guide, exit slip, and student participation in small group and class discussions.

Modifications and Extensions:

Students identified with a 504/IEP will be given a shorter vocabulary list, shortened assignment.

Students identified as ADHD will be given breaks as needed and assigned to work with a supportive partner.

Attention to Literacy:

Vocabulary terms, reading annotation, and video notes.

Resources

Articles

- Emerson, Will. 2000. "Urban League Elects Chair: Daniel Bernstine Ready to Take the Nonprofit Out of the Dark Ages." *The Skanner*, Jan 19, 1. (<http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/docview/370569945/fulltext/4CC96823C1594A70PQ/1?accountid=13265>)
- Posey, James L. 1999. "IN MY CORNER: Urban League of Portland Woes Reflect Weak Black Self-Reliance." *The Skanner*, Oct 13, 4. (<http://bpareport.com/pdf/urbanleague.pdf>)
- "Carter Resigns from Urban League Post: The Organization Plans to be Thorough in Search for New President." 2002. *The Skanner*, May 15, 1. (<http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/docview/370559262/fulltext/D46BD967F0AA4AA0PQ/1?accountid=13265>)

Jim Crow Stories

URBAN LEAGUE FACTS

Introduction | People | Narratives | Events | Organizations

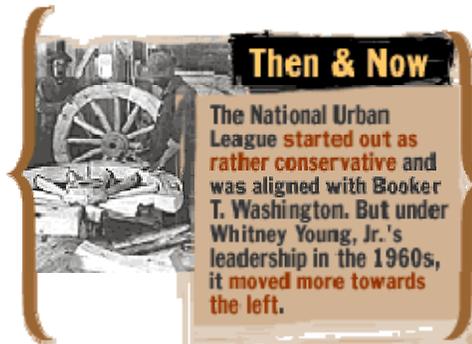
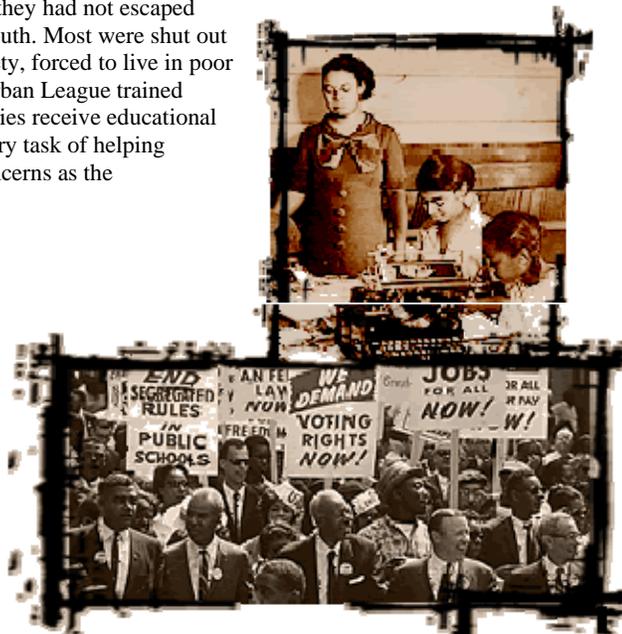


In 1911, three organizations -- the Committee for Improving the Industrial Conditions Among Negroes in New York (founded in 1906), the League for the Protection of Colored Women (founded in 1906), and the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (founded in 1910) -- merged to form the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. By 1919 the organization called itself the National Urban League. From its founding, the League was interracial. Its goal was to help rural Southern blacks migrating to the North find jobs and housing and adjust to city life.

Migrants to the North quickly discovered they had not escaped racial discrimination when they left the South. Most were shut out from all but menial jobs in the larger society, forced to live in poor housing and in run-down ghettos. The Urban League trained black social workers to help migrant families receive educational and employment opportunities. The primary task of helping migrants gradually evolved into larger concerns as the organization grew.

By the end of World War I, the Urban League had set up operations in 30 cities. The League dedicated its energies to find jobs for blacks the boom years of the 1920s, and the hard times of the Great Depression. Firms that refused to hire blacks were boycotted and picketed; pressure was put on schools to provide job training for young people.

In the 1930s, the League pressured government officials to include blacks in



the New Deal recovery program. The Urban League also fought to get segregated labor unions to accept blacks. Under Whitney Young's leadership (1961-71), the League emerged as a major player in the Civil-Rights struggle. It hosted the planning meetings of A. Philip Randolph, Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders for the 1963 March on Washington. Under Young's successor, Vernon E. Jordan, Jr. (1971-81), the League turned its attention to causes as environmental protection, energy conservation, and the general problems of poverty.

-- Richard Wormser

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_org_urban.html

National Urban League

Written by [The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
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National Urban League, American service agency founded for the purpose of eliminating [racial segregation](#) and [discrimination](#) and helping [African Americans](#) and other minorities to participate in all phases of American life. By the late 20th century more than 110 local affiliated groups were active throughout the [United States](#). It is headquartered in [New York City](#). The Urban League traces its roots to three organizations—the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions Among Negroes in New York (founded in 1906), the National League for the Protection of Colored Women (founded 1906), and the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (founded 1910)—that merged in 1911 to form the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. The new organization sought to help [African Americans](#), especially those moving to New York City from rural locations in the South (*see* [Great Migration](#)), to find jobs and housing and generally to adjust to urban life. The model organization established in New York City was imitated in other cities where affiliates were soon established. By 1920 the national organization had assumed the shorter name, National Urban League.

From its founding, the league has been interracial; the organization's very establishment was led by George Edmund Haynes, the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Columbia University, and Ruth Standish Baldwin, a white New York City philanthropist. The Urban League's primary task of helping migrants gradually evolved over the years into larger concerns. The organization emphasized employment rights for African Americans during the directorship of Eugene Kinkle Jones (1918–41); and his successor, Lester Granger (1941–61), emphasized jobs for African Americans in the defense industry and attempted to breach the colour barrier prevalent in labour unions during World War II. It was during the presidency of [Whitney M. Young, Jr.](#) (1961–71), that the league emerged as one of the strongest forces in the American civil rights struggle. Under his successor, [Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.](#) (1971–81), the league broadened its vision by embracing such causes as environmental protection, energy conservation, and the general problems of poverty. The league's interests at the turn of the 21st century included the concept of achievement as it relates to racial identity, international issues such as globalization and its economic effects on the African American community, and education.

<http://www.britannica.com/topic/National-Urban-League>

Video Guide:

Fact

Why is it important?

National Urban League at 95 (part 1)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1gSl5-S03J
Conditions faced by African Americans:	
Early leaders of Urban League:	
Original goals of the Urban League:	
How did the goals and programs of the Urban League change in the last 25 years?	
National Urban League at 95 (part 2)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn7MESO3JXo
Goals of the National Urban League today under the new leader, Mark Morial:	
Policies the Urban League is promoting today:	

Name:

Vocabulary Terms

Activist

Civil Rights

Community

Discrimination

Diversity

Movement

Non-Profit

Parity

Political Organization

Power

Self-Reliant

Social Service

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