

Freedom Unit
Compiled by Sabra Robbins

Essential Question: What is freedom and is there a most effective way to achieve it?
Social Studies Objective: Grade 5 NCSCOS 4.06 Evaluate the effectiveness of civil rights and social movements throughout United States' history that reflect the struggle for equality and constitutional rights for all citizens.

Part 1: Have a class discussion about freedom.

What does freedom mean to you?

How can freedom be achieved?

Is freedom always achieved through fighting?

Does fighting always involve weapons such as guns?

Explain to the class that you are going to learn about various events and strategies that people in the past have used to obtain freedom.

1. Revolutionary War
2. Civil War
3. Freedom from Slavery
4. Civil Rights Sit Ins, Boycotts, and Marches

Main Ideas:

Revolutionary War: Colonists vs. British

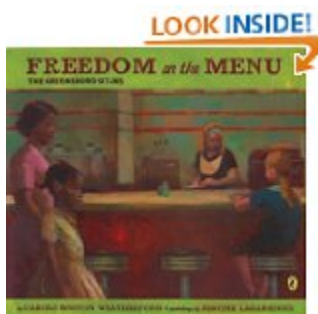
Colonists wanted to be free to create their own government and be free from British “taxation without representation”. They fought for this freedom.

Civil War: North (Union) vs. South (Confederacy)

Northern States were loyal to the Union and wanted to keep all states under one federal government. Southern States pulled away from the Union because they wanted to make their own laws (state’s rights). Most of the laws they were opposed to following were concerning slavery and the spread of slavery into new territories. They fought for this freedom.

Freedom from Slavery: Most slaves in the south were treated unfairly. Slaves were considered property, sold individually (apart from their families), beat and sometimes hung to death. They were not granted freedom and had no rights. Abolitionists, people who disagreed with slavery, fought to free slaves by helping them escape to the North through networks called the Underground Railroad.

Civil Rights: Once slavery ended, African Americans were not treated fairly. They were not given the same rights as others. They fought for equal civil rights through sit-ins, boycotts, marches, and other non-violent acts.



After discussion, read **Freedom on the Menu**. Ask students to relate the events in this book to the fights for freedom discussed earlier.

Have students compare the events in this book to the actual photographs and articles from the [Greensboro Sit-Ins](#) and complete the worksheet.

Have a closing discussion that allows students to share their thoughts and feelings about the effectiveness of non-violent protests.

Extension:

Choose another non-violent protest and create a children’s book that tells the story. You may use the sites listed below or choose your own.

Bus Boycott

http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_montgomery_bus_boycott_1955_1956/

March on Washington- CORE (Congress of Racial Equality)

http://www.core-online.org/History/washington_march.htm

Freedom Rides

<http://www.core-online.org/History/freedom%20rides.htm>

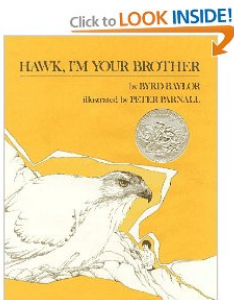
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Part 2: (optional)

Read the poem [Caged Bird by Maya Angelou](#). Analyze the poem using the questions from this [Caged Bird Analysis worksheet](#). Compare the freedom discussed in the poem to [Freedom on the Menu](#) using this [comparison worksheet](#). What connections can you make between the two writings?



Once students have made connections to different views on freedom, read [Hawk, I'm Your Brother](#) by Byrd Baylor and use a graphic organizer to compare the two writings about birds.

Use the worksheet link to analyze each of the 3 writings. <http://www.mrscassel.com/handouts/APPARTS%20Graphic%20Organizer.doc>

Each of the writings about freedom allows students to view the subject in different ways. Have students close the lesson by writing a brief essay expressing their thoughts on the most effective way to fight freedom and whether their effective strategy actually helps them gain equality. They should also compare it to the fight for freedom and state's rights during the Civil War. [Click here for an essay outline](#).