



Eradicating the Achievement Gap: History, Education, and Reformation

by Sharonda Allen

Connections to Middle School: It is important for students to prepare for college and career, and this lesson affords them the opportunity to do that while researching a historically black college or university (HBCU).

Goal: Students will gain knowledge about careers and college majors, as well as HBCUs. The students will have a portfolio with college major and career options as a goal for achievement through middle school into high school.

Objective: Students will be able to research college majors for career options and determine college choice based on major course offerings.

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Standards:

Teacher Expectations

- Assist learners in developing historical research capabilities that enable them to formulate historical questions, obtain historical data, question historical data, identify the gaps in available records, place records in context, and construct sound historical interpretations.
- Help learners analyze group and institutional influences on people, events, and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings: explain to learners the various forms institutions take, and explain how they develop and change over time.
- Challenge learners to evaluate the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change.



Warm-up (Anticipatory Set)

Inquire about students' knowledge of HBCUs. Inquire about career options the students may choose and the college majors that will lead to their desired careers. Give students background information about the establishment of historically black colleges and universities.

Activity 1: Career Exploration

1. Have students orally brainstorm careers.
2. Then, have the students use the Internet to go to www.collegeboard.com to search careers.
3. Instruct students to read all of the career options and definitions in the career section.
4. Students will choose three career options and find out and record the training required for each career, the skills required for the career, the duties, and the salary.

Activity 2: College Major Choice

1. Explain to students that in college, they must have a major area of study.
2. Have students research the college major options for their three career choices.
3. Then have students write a description of the topics to be studied for the major areas of study.
4. Instruct students to type and to organize data in a portfolio with three different career options to pursue and to work toward in high school.



Activity 3: Historically Black College or University Research

Assign each student a HBCU to research. Ask the students to answer the following questions:

1. Where is the college located (give the full address)?
2. What year was the college established?
3. What is the history of the college?
4. What are the admission requirements?
5. What are the tuition fees?
6. What is the total number of students enrolled?
7. What extracurricular activities are available on campus?
8. What sports are available for students to play on campus?
9. What are the graduation requirements?
10. Does your assigned HBCU offer any of your chosen major areas of study?

Assessment

The students will stand and orally present their findings about the HBCUs, as well as the careers and majors researched. The students will have portfolios with career goals to work toward as inspiration for being successful middle school students, successfully completing high school, and a plan for college attendance.

Teacher Resources

- Brown, M. Christopher and Kassie Freeman. *Black Colleges: New Perspectives on Policy and Practice*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004.
- United Negro College Fund, <http://www.uncf.org>