

## **1955 Cannon Street All Stars Lesson Plans**

**Grade Level:** 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Subject:** Social Studies

### ***South Carolina State Social Studies Standard 8-7***

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the impact on South Carolina of significant events of the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries.

#### ***South Carolina State Social Studies Indicator 8-7.2***

Analyze the movement for civil rights in South Carolina, including the impact of the landmark court cases *Elmore v. Rice* and *Briggs v. Elliot*; civil rights leaders Septima Poinsette Clark, Modjeska Monteith Simkins, and Matthew J. Perry; the South Carolina school equalization effort and other resistance to school integration; peaceful efforts to integrate beginning with colleges and demonstrations in South Carolina such as the Friendship Nine and the Orangeburg Massacre.

### ***Common Core Social Studies Reading Standards for grades 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.
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

### ***Common Core Social Studies Writing Standards for grades 6-8***

Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content:

- a. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

## **Introduction**

The 1955 Cannon Street YMCA All Stars effectively demonstrates how the Jim Crow South affected children. As the only African American sanctioned Little League Baseball team, the Charleston Cannon Street YMCA Little League was continuously denied the opportunity to play against other Little League teams. In fact, all 61 of the eligible white Little League teams in South Carolina refused to play against the Cannon Street YMCA All Stars and organized a statewide boycott. These boycotts resulted in the Cannon Street YMCA All Stars being invited to Little League World Series. Even as chants of “Let Them Play” were being shouted from supporters in the crowd, they still were not able to participate in the Little League World Series. Fifty years later, the Cannon Street YMCA All Stars were inducted into Charleston Baseball Hall of Fame.

## **Objective:**

The student will be able to explain how the 1955 Cannon Street YMCA All Stars’ journey to the Little League World Series demonstrates how Jim Crow segregationist laws negatively affected young people in South Carolina.

## **Materials Needed:**

- 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary South Carolina African American History Calendar
- Article 1: Primary Source
  - The Baltimore Afro-American Periodical Article, “Dixie Threatens Kids’ Baseball” –August 2, 1955
- Article 2: Secondary Source
  - The Washington Post Periodical Article, “The Little League All Stars who were never beaten”—January 11, 2012
- Article Questions
- Let Them Play by Margret Theis Raven ***\*\*Optional\*\****
- Champions on the Bench by Carole Boston Weatherford ***\*\*Optional\*\****

## **Lesson Plan**

Before beginning the following activities, students should read the August “1955 Cannon Street YMCA All Stars” SC African American History Calendar synopsis. It is suggested that teachers and students read the summary together as a class to establish the general purpose of the lesson.

### ***Activity #1:***

Students will read the primary and secondary source documents and answer the questions provided. Then, the teacher will review key points of the articles and questions before moving on to the next activity.

### ***Activity #2 (Optional)***

The teacher will read to students Let Them Play by Margret Theis Raven and/or Champions on the Bench by Carole Boston Weatherford. After reading the stories, the teacher will engage students in a brief class discussion about the themes and images in the stories.

### ***Assessment:***

After completing above activities, students will complete the following assessment for grading. Imagine you are a young person living in the era of Jim Crow in South Carolina, and are a part of the 1955 Cannon Street YMCA All Stars. Write a diary entry after coming back from the 1955 Little League Championship in Williamsport, PA, and include answers to the questions below

- What are Jim Crow laws?
- Describe what happened when your Little League team tried to play other Little League teams in South Carolina and regional tournaments.
- Describe what happened when your Little League team traveled to the Little League World Series.
- How do you feel as a result of outcome of the events you describe in the questions above?
- How do you think your parents and community members feel about the outcome of the events you describe in the questions above?
- How do Jim Crow laws affect your life?

### **“Dixie Threatens Kids’ Baseball” Baltimore Afro-American Article Questions**

1. What is the title of this article? Who wrote this article? When was this article written?
2. According to the article, how many white Little League teams withdrew from the SC State Tournament?
3. Where was the regional Little League tournament the Cannon Street All Stars prepared to attend located? What was the response of the Regional Little League team?
4. Who was the Little League National President?
5. What 2 other places did the Little League National President say had “mixed colored-white completion” before?
6. Fill in the blank. “It’s a \_\_\_\_\_ this had to come up. This is a \_\_\_\_\_ program—not a \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ question.”
7. Do you agree or disagree with the quote above? Explain your answer.
8. In at least 2 sentences, describe how Daniel “Danny” Jones, the commissioner of the Little League Baseball in SC felt about the Cannon St. All Stars Playing with white Little League teams. Use a quote from the article to support your answer.
9. Did Robert Morrison, the President of the Charleston Cannon St. YMCA, agree or disagree with Danny Jones? Explain why or why not Morrison agreed or disagreed, and use a quote from the article to support your answer.

10. Is this article a primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.
11. How will this article help you to understand the 1955 Cannon Street All Stars?

**“The Little League All Stars who were never beaten” Washington Post Article Questions**

1. What is the title of this article? Who wrote this article? When was this article written?
2. At the time this article was written, about how old were 11 of the Cannon Street All Stars?
3. Why did Charleston cancel its Little League tournament in 1955?
4. Where was the Little League World Series located in 1955?
5. Fill in the blank. “For many of them, it was their \_\_\_\_\_ venture away from Charleston, \_\_\_\_\_ and a bit \_\_\_\_\_, because the \_\_\_\_\_ north passed through areas where the \_\_\_\_\_ was restive.”
6. In the quote above, what do the words “venture” and “restive” mean?
7. Why would the Cannon St. All Stars feel both “excited” and “worrisome?”
8. Why did the Dixie Youth Baseball come into existence?
9. What 3 events occurred during the same time as the 1955 Cannon Street All Stars Little League journey?
10. Is this article a primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.
11. How will this article help you to understand the 1955 Cannon Street All Stars?