

LESSON PLANS FOR THE UNIT ON MISSISSIPPI POLITICS

INTRODUCTION

The lesson plans are organized to be a combination of lecture and discussion, with a great deal of freedom given students to discuss his own ideas and pursue topics of interest to the class. For instance the sections dealing with party organization and historical aspects of the one-party system might be presented in lecture form with discussion afterward. Then hopefully, this factual material will be brought into the discussion in other places. Each of the lectures will be organized around one or more concepts that the student should be presented with through the material. Case studies, visual materials and in some cases field trips may be used to illustrate points discussed.

This is to be a general outline only. It is hoped that the teacher will be flexible enough to adapt the material to his own background and experience. There are excerpts from some of the bibliographical material used in preparation of the background which have been duplicated for the use of the teacher. It may be useful in providing illustrations for some of the points of discussion.

The lesson plan material is not divided into specific periods, i.e., it is topically arranged with questions and illustrative materials suggested at appropriate places. The teacher may use the plans in any way which seems best to suit the students interests. The arrangement does follow a natural train of development.

MATERIALS TO BE USED AS TEACHING AIDS

Campaign literature on Mrs. Hamer (to be passed out to all students)

Voter Registration forms --regular forms (to be passed out to all the students)

Freedom Registration forms (to be passed out to all students)

Sample Sections of the Mississippi Constitution (to be passed out to all students)

Pamphlet, "Why Vote--the ABC's of Citizenship" (to be passed out to all students) printed by S.C.L.C.

Film--"We'll Never Turn Back", on Greenwood Voter Project

Tapes of Mrs. Hamer conducting campaign and singing--obtainable from COFO office, 1017 Lynch St., Jackson, Miss.

Two sections of "Behind the Cotton Curtain" by Charles Pemsberg on the Republican party, and retaliation to the white community.

Report on the Greenwood Voter Project, printed in a larger report by The Southern Regional Council.

SNCC research staff, "Voter Registration Laws in Miss."

TOPIC: Mrs. Hamer's Campaign and the organization of Mississippi Political System.

CONCEPTS: (1) Importance of individual participation in politics and
(2) Fundamentals of political organization at local, state and national level.

PRESENTATION: Mrs. Hamer's story and the facts about her campaign

DISCUSSION: Discussion should center around why Mrs. Hamer is running. If the students have heard her speak they might discuss what her platform is and what they think of it. How does she differ from her opponent? Why is her campaign unusual?

Use Campaign lit.
on Mrs. Hamer

PRESENTATION: Process of how someone runs for office—how will Mrs. Hamer be different? Present Democratic Party Organization in state.

DISCUSSION

Play tapes of Mrs. Hamer's speeches and singing

PRESENTATION: Other ways that a individual can take part in politics other than voting or running for office. Present other political programs of COFO such as Freedom Registration Freedom Vote—ways of working for these programs for the students.

Pass out S.C.L.C.
Pamphlet "Why Vote"

DISCUSSION:

REVIEW:

TOPIC: COFO Programs and discrimination in voting.

CONCEPTS: (1) How discrimination works and (2) what is being done about it.

PRESENTATIONS

Voter Registration Campaigns—Freedom Days in Hattiesburg and Canton. Could use here the material on the Greenwood Project as a case study.

DISCUSSION:

Discussion should center around why Mrs. Hamer is running? If the students have heard her speak they might discuss what her platform is and what they think of it.

Film: "We'll Never Turn Back"

PRESENTATION:

Voter requirements in Mississippi—how this works to discriminate against the Negro. Specifics of how the registration form is filled out. Use here the regular and Freedom reg. forms to illustrate differences.

DISCUSSION:

Regular and Freedom
Registration Forms

PRESENTATION:

All aspects of COFO's Political Program, as a means of obtaining the vote for Negroes in Miss.

DISCUSSION:

If students have not already had experience canvassing, a field trip might be arranged in which the students and teacher would canvass for an afternoon or evening in order to use the knowledge they had gained about the registration process and also to give them a sense of participation.

If a trip is not feasible, the teacher should encourage students to participate in this way.

TOPIC: Historical Aspects of Discrimination and the Future .

CONCEPTS: (1) why discrimination exists (2) What political freedom can mean.

PRESENTATION: One party system, how it developed and why.

DISCUSSION

PRESENTATION: The effects of the one-party system. Citizens Council—untrue myths about Negroes—psychological effects on Negro and white. You could use here the excerpts from "Behind the Cotton Curtain" on Republican Party and retaliation to whites.

DISCUSSION:

PRESENTATION: How the vote can change the lives of people in Miss., what it cannot do that has to be done in other ways

DISCUSSION:

REVIEW: