

The “5” Royales and the Birmingham Children’s Crusade
5th Grade Lesson Plan and Student Handout, DAY 2

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GRADE LEVEL/SUBJECT: 5th Grade Social Studies

LENGTH: 20 minutes

CONTENTS:

- Teacher Preparation (pp. 1-2)
- Step-By-Step Procedure (pp. 2-8)
- Student Handout (on p. 9)

I. TEACHER PREPARATION:

Materials:

- [“My Sugar Sugar”](#) (1959)
- Video: [Moments in Civil Rights History: The Birmingham Children’s Crusade](#)
- Student Handout – video question; writing activity

Objective: Students will learn about the Birmingham Children’s Crusade, a pivotal Civil Rights protest in the days of segregation, and about the “5” Royales’ eyewitness experience of it. (The protest is also called the “Birmingham Children’s March.”)

Historical Overview: From 1877 until 1964, many states and cities, especially in the South, were governed by Jim Crow laws. These laws provided separate and often unequal facilities for African Americans.

In 1963, Civil Rights leaders in Birmingham, Alabama, organized a protest with the goal of ending segregation in the city. This protest was different from other Civil Rights protests of the time because the marchers were children. By chance, the “5” Royales drove through Birmingham during the Birmingham Children’s Crusade. Around the world, television viewers watched the bloody scene that the “5” Royales watched first-hand: police and firefighters turning their dogs and fire hoses on peaceful child marchers. Images of injured and frightened children shocked millions, turning the tide of the Civil Rights Movement.

The first immediate effect of the Birmingham Children’s Crusade was that African Americans in Birmingham were allowed the same privileges as whites in terms of working and shopping in local department stores. Other rights in Birmingham and elsewhere followed, culminating in the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This federal law gave all Americans the right to use all public places and services, making Jim Crow laws and segregation illegal. The law was passed at the federal level but local implementation was slow.

NC Social Studies Standards:

5.H.1.1 Explain how the experiences and achievements of women, minorities, indigenous groups and marginalized people have contributed to change and innovation in the United States.

Teacher Background Resources:

[Let the Children March](#) by Monica Clark-Robinson (This is a 7 1/2-minute read-aloud you may want to share with students at another time.)

[The Intensity of the Children’s March](#) video

[Birmingham Children’s March: The Backstory](#) video

Authors Bios:

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Acknowledgement: The following “5” Royales descendants provided the authors with first-hand information about the group: Darryl Pauling, Karen Scales, Dr. Fred Tanner, Willard Tanner, and Janice Pauling Lucas.

II. STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

- Introduction
- Background: *Jim Crow laws, Chitlin’ Circuit*
- Vocabulary
- Birmingham Children’s Crusade Video
- Video Questions (Student Handout)
- Writing (Student Handout)

(In all discussions and written answers, be sure students provide evidence for their arguments.)

A: INTRODUCTION (whole class)

1. Play “[My Sugar Sugar](#)” (1959) in the background.
2. As the song plays, distribute the Student Handout. (pp. 9-10)

3. Hook:

- Project on the board photos of the Birmingham Children’s Crusade (pp. 3-4).
- Tell students the “5” Royales were driving through Birmingham, Alabama, on their way to a performance in Texas and they unexpectedly saw the protest.
- Ask students to comment about what they noticed most about the photo.

Birmingham Children's Crusade, May 3, 1963

These newspaper photos were seen by people around the country and world:



Photo by Bill Hudson/Ap 1963



Photograph by Charles Moore / Black Star

The Birmingham Children's Crusade, May, 3, 1963 (continued)



Photo by Bill Hudson/AP 1963

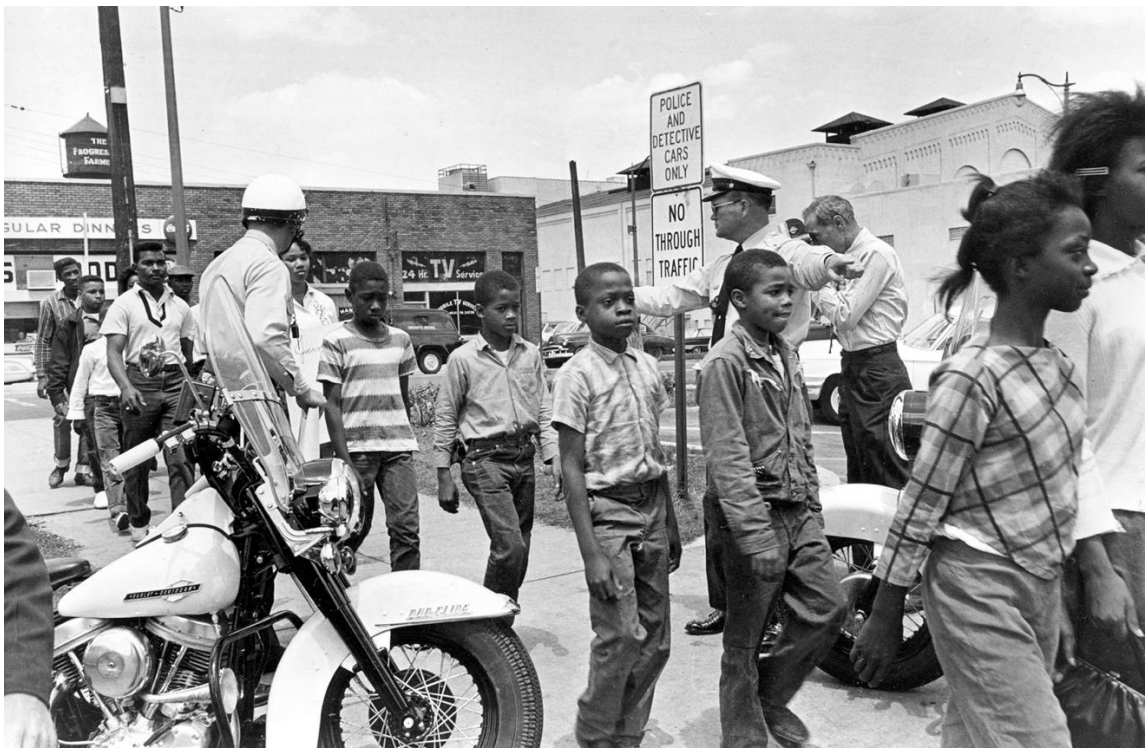


Photo by Bill Hudson/AP 1963

B. BACKGROUND: *Procedure: Project the following words and images on the board:*

Jim Crow Laws: a series of laws between 1877 and the mid-1960s in the South and other parts of the country that called for separate facilities for whites and for blacks. The most common types of Jim Crow laws ordered business owners and public institutions to keep their black and white customers separated. Jim Crow laws meant that African Americans were not allowed in most clubs, restaurants, theaters, bathrooms and other places and facilities as whites.



Examples of Jim Crow Laws:

Restaurants: It shall be unlawful to conduct a restaurant or other place for the serving of food in the city, at which white and colored people are served in the same room, unless such white and colored persons are effectually separated by a solid partition extending from the floor upward to a distance of seven feet or higher, and unless a separate entrance from the street is provided for each compartment. (*Alabama*)

Parks: It shall be unlawful for colored people to frequent any park owned or maintained by the city for the benefit, use and enjoyment of white persons...and unlawful for any white person to frequent any park owned or maintained by the city for the use and benefit of colored persons. (*Georgia*)

Restrooms: Every employer of white or negro males shall provide for such white or negro males reasonably accessible and separate toilet facilities. (*Alabama*)

Chitlin' Circuit: a group of clubs, theaters, dance halls, and other settings large and small where African Americans went to dance and listen to live music played by African American musicians. (The "5" Royales, seen below, performed on the Chitlin' Circuit.)



Photo from the Jimmy Baynes Collection/Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

C: VOCABULARY:

Procedure: Project these vocabulary words on the board. Read together and briefly discuss.

Note: Words marked with an asterisk (*) are optional items to do if time allows.

***Southern Christian Leadership Conference** (n.): A organization established in 1957 by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and other Civil Rights activists that uses nonviolent resistance to fight for full equality for African Americans in American life.

***crusade** (n.): a long and determined effort to achieve something that you believe to be right or to stop something that you believe to be wrong.

segregation (n.): the act or policy of separating people from different groups and treating them in a different way.

desegregate (n.): to end the policy of segregation in a place in which people of different races are kept separate in public places, etc.

Bull Connor (n.): a segregationist strongly against the Civil Rights Movement, Bull Connor served as Commissioner of Public Safety for Birmingham, Alabama, for over twenty years until 1963 and controlled the police and fire departments.

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D. BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S CRUSADE VIDEO (whole class)

Materials:

Video: [Moments in Civil Rights History: The Birmingham Children's Crusade](#)

Procedure:

- 1) Pre-Video Introduction: Explain to students that they are about to watch a short video about the 1963 Birmingham Children's Crusade (also called the Birmingham Children's March), which was a protest to end segregation in Birmingham, Alabama. Remind students that by chance the "5" Royales saw what was happening as they drove through the city during the march and were detained by police.

Tell students to pay attention to the actions of the children and those of the firemen and police.

Also ask students to pay attention to how people around the world reacted to seeing the photographs of child protesters being attacked by police dogs and fire hoses.

- 2) Play [Moments in Civil Rights History: The Birmingham Children's Crusade](#), twice if time allows.
- 3) Ask students the questions on their handouts. Students should read along, answer **orally**, and give evidence for their answers. For your convenience, below are possible answers *in red in italics*. Be flexible in accepting a wide range of answers as long as evidence is provided.
 - a) What were the organizers and marchers protesting and what did they aim to achieve? (*Protesting: segregation in Birmingham. Aim: desegregate Birmingham so that African Americans were allowed into the same places as whites.*)
 - b) On May 2nd and 3rd, what were the actions of the child marchers? What were the actions of the police and firemen? (*Child marchers: left their classrooms, met at 16th Street Baptist Church; marched downtown. Police and firemen: arrested marchers, threatened them with police dogs, sprayed them with fire hoses, sent them to jail.*)
 - c) What style of protest were the child marchers engaged in? Why do you think the organizers taught the children to march in this way? (*The children were trained in nonviolent protest. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference organizers used this strategy because it followed Christian principles of nonviolence. They did not want the children to be seen as aggressors, which could have been used to justify the police using violence against them.*)
 - d) What was the reaction of many people around the world who saw violent images of the march in newspapers and magazines and on television? (*Many people were shocked and upset that child marchers were being treated this way. The photos exposed unfair treatment of African Americans at the time and reflected poorly on America's image around the world.*)

- e) What did the Birmingham Children's Crusade achieve? *(It led to desegregation in Birmingham and in other cities around the country.)*

E: **WRITING** (individual; Student Handout, p. 9; may be completed as homework):

- 1) Project on the board the John Tanner's interview excerpt at the bottom of this page and read it aloud with students. (This is also on the Student Handout p. 9)
- 2) After you've done that, read with students the "Writing Activity Directions" on p. 9. The directions ask students to imagine that what happened to John Tanner and the other "5" Royales also happened to them: they were driving with their family through Birmingham, Alabama, and by chance came upon the Birmingham Children's Crusade and saw what was happening. (Students should write their response on separate paper.)

"5" Royales Lead Singer, John Tanner, Remembers the Day:

"I remember we went through Birmingham, Alabama, the day that they had these water hoses and dogs; [they were] putting them on these people, they were cornering them. ...And, [we] had New York tags on our car... We got hit in the window with this billy stick [held by a policeman]. 'Where you guys goin'?' And we said, 'We're tryin' to go to work! We're on our way.' And they said, 'No, you're not!'"

And they detained us, man, about two hours around there. And [what was] sadder was that they were shooting the water hoses at these people. You know, they had them live magazines [for guns], police dogs, and all that stuff."

--Interview with John Tanner by Elizabeth Carlson/Carolina Music Ways, Winston-Salem, 1999

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STUDENT HANDOUT
Birmingham Children's Crusade
Video Questions and Writing Activity

I. Birmingham Children's Crusade Video Questions: (Answer verbally.)

1. What were the organizers and marchers protesting and what did they aim to achieve?
2. On May 2nd and 3rd, what were the actions of the child marchers? Police and firemen?
3. What style of protest were the child marchers engaged in? Why do you think the Southern Christian Leadership Conference organizers taught the children to march in this way?
4. What was the reaction of many people around the world who saw violent images of the march in newspapers and magazines and on television?
5. What did the Birmingham Children's Crusade achieve?

II: Writing

"5" Royales Lead Singer, John Tanner, Remembers the Day:

"I remember, we went through Birmingham, Alabama, the day that they had these water hoses and dogs; [they were] putting them on these people, they were cornering them. ...And, [we] had New York tags on our car...We got hit in the window with this billy stick [held by a policeman]. 'Where you guys goin'?' And we said, 'We're tryin' to go to work! We're on our way.' And they said, 'No, you're not!'"

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--Interview with John Tanner by Elizabeth Carlson/Carolina Music Ways, Winston-Salem, 1999

Directions: Imagine that what happened to the "5" Royales also happened to you and your family: you were driving through Birmingham, Alabama, with your family and by chance came upon the Birmingham Children's Crusade and saw what was happening.

Write a short letter to a friend explaining at least 2 things you saw and what you thought. Write at least 5 sentences.

Give details and be specific.

1. What did you see?
2. What did you hear?
3. What was the mood of the march? How were the children feeling? Explain.
4. What did you see that made the biggest impression on you? Why?