



A Celebration of Black History: Teaching through Timelines, Lapbooks, Mini Units, a Novel and More

Mrs. Catherine McGrew Jaime, Mrs. Deirdre Fuller

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This large, reproducible book includes numerous resources to help teach students about this important topic! It includes Catherine's first Civil Rights book, *The Rocky Road to Civil Rights*, a Civil Rights Time-line Game, *Tales from the Troubled South*, and several lapbooks. A discussion ensued at my house while I was finishing this project – was it racist to continue to teach “Black History” separately? To have a Black History month? And is there anything to celebrate when we look at Civil Rights – or is it just a tale of tragedy and misdoings? The discussion certainly made me pause and think. Here are my brief answers to the questions, the way I see them at this point in American History: 1. No, it is not racist to teach Black History separately, as long as it is lacking in our regular History studies, which I think is still the case at the moment. 2. Ditto for having a Black History month. 3. There has certainly been no shortage of tragedy and misdoings on the rocky road to Civil Rights in this country, but there is much to be celebrated along the way. The larger portion of this book, *A Rocky Road to Civil Rights*, came initially from a lengthy study I did in preparation for a Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration many years ago. I was amazed at how much I didn't know of the events/people that fill its pages. It took me too many years from writing that book to turn most of the dates from it into a Time-Line Game. I had been writing time-line games on a number of historic topics for several years before I finally made the Civil Rights game. Part of me struggled with having a game on such a serious topic – but I finally realized that students often learn well from games, and it was too important a topic not to make into a game. The *Troubled Tales* book came out of a need to know more (and teach more) about the course of Civil Rights in the state in which I have resided for more than fifteen years. My hope is to eventually write several more in the series, on some of our neighboring states, but what happened in Alabama during the struggle for Civil Rights is important, even to those who don't live here. I only recently finished the Matching Game. It remained a “work in progress” for too many years. There are many more people who could be added to game, it is by no means complete. But I think it gives a good sampling of historic Blacks, many of whom are too often forgotten. My good friend Dee has graciously made the lapbooks of Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, and Jesse Owens. Again, the amount of information we didn't know about these three important men was rather staggering. My hope is that this topic will be studied more than one month per year and that someday all Americans will have a greater appreciation for the contributions throughout our history by minorities. The resources here can be used in any order, as stand-alone mini units, or incorporated into the appropriate places in an overall American History study. I also included several “fillers” that I think need to be included more in not just a Black History study, but any American History studies: the relevant portions of the United States Constitution, Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and a very small sampling of Phillis Wheatley's poetry.

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