

Steven Lindemann

EDU 6710 C15- The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution- Equality

### **Cesar Chavez- Hero of the Disenfranchised**

April 12, 2010

Grades 5 and 6

**Seminar Impact-** The seminar has only affected my project proposal with the emphasis on 20<sup>th</sup> century heroes. I say that because I missed the final two days of the July seminar. I found the lecture on the Haitian Revolution to be highly informative. The reading about the Greensboro "sit-ins" provided me with yet another example of the revolutionary feeling that was occurring during the tumultuous 1960s. The assigned reading about the life of Bella Abzug helped give me the historical perspective of all of the major social events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most helpful part of the seminar that relates to my project is the work on using primary sources, particularly photos, in teaching history. The other helpful part of the seminar was learning how to teach history via multiple intelligences and the challenge levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of learning.

**Proposal:** My goal with this brief unit is to expand on our school wide thematic study of Latin America that will occur in April and May by focusing on one of the United States greatest heroes of the disenfranchised (yet little known to most Vermont 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders), Cesar Chavez. Besides reading about Cesar Chavez using biographies and Internet sites, I will show the importance of this man through primary source documents such as a telegram from Martin Luther King, Jr., a US Congressional Resolution, photos of Chavez with Robert F. Kennedy and Jesse Jackson. After the students construct an understanding of the importance of this hero, they will perform a play about Cesar Chavez to the school. To show how the issues Cesar Chavez fought for today still exist, even in Vermont, the students will read about the current and controversial issue of illegal Mexican migrant dairy workers and their importance to the Vermont economy. A guest speaker will also come to the class and discuss this issue. For assessment, the students will create their own test about Cesar Chavez. Also, I will interview each individual student, and I will tape record his or her responses to the central and challenge questions listed below. Finally, students will create picture books of the life of Cesar Chavez.

#### **Central Questions:**

- Where do our fruit and vegetables come from in the United States?
- Who was Cesar Chavez?
- Why are fruits and vegetables, like grapes, oranges and lettuce, so inexpensive in this country?
- Why is Cesar Chavez important to Mexican-Americans?
- How did Cesar Chavez fight for people who did not have a voice or political power?

#### **Challenge Questions:**

- What impact has Cesar Chavez had on US history?
- What impact does Cesar Chavez have on America today?
- Why do you think Cesar Chavez was not as well known as Martin Luther King, Jr.?

**Lesson Length:** 10 class periods of 45-60 minutes each

#### **Key Ideas:**

- Cesar Chavez unionized migrant farm workers by creating the UFW so they would have many of the rights of US workers in other industries.
- Cesar Chavez led boycotts, went on hunger strikes, and did other non-violent acts in order to achieve social and economic justice for farm workers.
- Cesar Chavez’s actions made the majority of Americans aware of the plight of migrant farm workers.

**Intended Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will understand what life was like for migrant farm workers before Cesar Chavez took action.
- Students will understand why a union improves the lives of workers.
- Students will understand how non-violent actions (boycotts, protests, hunger strikes, sit-ins) can be used to achieve social, political and economic justice.
- Students will know the timeline of Cesar Chavez life.
- Students will know the impact Cesar Chavez had in the US, and is still having today.

**National History Standards:**

**STANDARD 4- The struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties.**

**Standard 4A-** The student understands the “Second Reconstruction” and its advancement of civil rights. *(Grade Level 5-12) Therefore, the student is able to evaluate the agendas, strategies, and effectiveness of various African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Americans, as well as the disabled, in the quest for civil rights and equal opportunities. [Explain historical continuity and change]*

**Vermont History Standards:**

**6.6 Students use historical methodology to make interpretations concerning history, change, and continuity.** This is evident when students:

*6.6.c. Collect and use primary resources (e.g., letters, diaries, artifacts, artwork, documents) in building original historical interpretations; and 6.6.d. Use oral history methods and data to understand the ways in which people assign meaning to their own historical experiences.*

**6.12 Students identify and evaluate the concept of human rights in various times in their local community, in Vermont, in the United States, and in various locations world wide.**

This is evident when students: *6.12.aa. Evaluate the impact of social choices (e.g. efforts to end hunger, finance health care, defend homelands) on human rights; and 6.12.b. Explain the importance to the individual and to society of personal rights (e.g., freedom of thought and conscience, freedom of movement and residence)*

**6.18 Students analyze the nature of conflicts, how they have been or might be resolved, and how some have shaped the divisions in various times of their local community, Vermont, the United States, and the world.** This is evident when students: *6.18.aa. Explain a conflict (e.g. Labor Issues, Revolutionary War) by recognizing the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those directly and indirectly involved in the conflict*

**Preparation for Teaching:** Students will need to know the following vocabulary: boycott, union, migrant, agriculture, hunger strike, strike, wage, protest, pesticides, herbicides, toxins,

toxic chemicals, minimum wage, child labor, protest march, labor intensive. Students will also need to know the western United States as well as Mexico on a map. It would be helpful if students knew the agricultural regions of Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington. It might also be helpful if students knew the crops grown in these regions.

### **Activities:**

The following activities will each be one class period and occur in the order listed. Besides these activities, the students will be reading *Voices from the Fields: Children of Migrant Farmworkers Tell Their Stories* and *Farmworker's Friend: The Story of Cesar Chavez*.

- 1.) Visual Thinking Strategies lesson of photos of Cesar Chavez
- 2.) Read about the life of Cesar Chavez through primary source documents such the US Congressional and California Congressional resolutions that honor the life of Cesar Chavez after his death in 1993
- 3.) Perform a play about Cesar Chavez and analyze a timeline of his life that includes other important civil rights and labor events from the time period
- 4.) Read about the lives of migrant children farm workers through their personal narratives
- 5.) Study maps of the western United States and Mexico that show migration patterns and the growing seasons of various agricultural crops
- 6.) Listen to speeches made by Cesar Chavez and watch video clips of him
- 7.) Read about Vermont dairy workers in Addison county from Mexico
- 8.) Make a picture book of Cesar Chavez
- 9.) Have a town meeting that focuses on the question, "Should we have migrant farm workers in Vermont?"
- 10.) Have a guest speaker to let the students know about migrant farm workers.

### **Assessment:**

For assessment, the students will create their own test questions about Cesar Chavez that will be used in a Jeopardy game made with PowerPoint. Also, I will interview each individual student, and I will tape record his or her responses to the central and challenge questions listed below. Finally, students will create picture books of the life of Cesar Chavez.

### Annotated Bibliography

### **Scholarship:**

Braun Levine, Suzanne and Thom, Mary Abzug: *How One Tough Broad from the Bronx Fought Jim Crow and Joe McCarthy, Pissed Off Jimmy Carter, Battled for the Rights of Women and Workers...Planet and Shook Up Politics Along the Way* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.

The title of this book says it all, and the authors use the life of US Representative Bella Abzug as a time line to describe some of the major political and social events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This book was assigned reading for the TAH course, and it provided with me with a greater understanding of the time that Cesar Chavez lived in. The information is accurate because it is from interviews with Bella Abzug and people who knew her. The authors worked with Bella

Abzug, and the information is current. This was a very entertaining book to read for the layman, and it easily could be used in a high school class or read for pleasure on a summer vacation.

Chafe, William H. *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom* New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

This book is a thorough analysis and account of “sit-ins” at a Woolworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina that helped begin a non-violent resistance movement in the struggle for civil rights. This book was assigned reading for the TAH course, and it provided me with a thorough understanding of a crucial event of the 1960s that I knew little about. I also think that this book helped understand that passive resistance was a useful strategy that not only was used by Cesar Chavez. Chafe does extensive research, and he luckily interviewed many, if not all, of the key players while the events were still clear to the participants. Although this book is not new, I have the feeling that it is the definitive work on this important event. This book is geared to a college audience in my opinion, and people who read history for leisure would enjoy reading this book.

Hakim, Joy *A History of US: All the People (Since 1945)* New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

This book is a history book of the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present that is written for students in grades 5-7. I found this book to be very useful and informative, particularly Chapter 31, because it gives a good accounting of Cesar Chavez. Hakim uses many quotes, photos, maps to help her get the content across, and she writes in a style that is very accessible to students of this age. This is a great resource for elementary teachers because it touches on all of the important social and political events that relate to the United States for this era, and I am sure high school teachers could use this book for students who need modified reading assignments. The election of Barack Obama is the only important event not mentioned, and I am sure a revised fourth edition will be arriving soon!

Powers, Ron *Mark Twain, A Life* New York: Free Press (Simon & Schuster), 2005.

This book is an amazing account of the life of Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), and it was required reading for the TAH course. This book was written for many purposes, but for the TAH course our focus was on how Clemens raised the issue of racism in his writing, in particular in his literary masterpiece Huckleberry Finn. I did not find this book useful for my research, yet I found it immensely informative for me on a personal level. Powers is very thorough in his research and it is a very current account. This book is appropriate for a college audience or a person intensely interested in this American icon. If I had more time, I would tackle this immense tome because Powers writes a convincing portrait of this incredible writer.

PBS Home Video- American Experience *Citizen King*. DVD. Social Studies School Service, 2004.

This DVD was required watching for the TAH course. This PBS film is about the last years of Martin Luther King Jr.’s life, and it retraces his efforts to recast himself by embracing causes

beyond the civil rights movement. King became an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War and he brought America's attention to the economic injustices the pervaded, and still pervades, America. The film contains film footage and eyewitness accounts from the time period, and it was very useful in understanding the theme of Equality in this year's TAH course.

**Primary Sources:**

Jensen, Richard J. and Hammerback, John C. *The Words of Cesar Chávez* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005.

This book is a very useful anthology of the major speeches and writings of Cesar Chávez, and it gives the teacher one location to cull samples of the major ideas espoused by Chávez throughout his life. The book organizes the speeches in to four time periods: Creation of the United Farm Works (1962-70), Years of Triumph for the UFW (1970-75), Years of Challenges (1976-83) and Chávez's Last Decade (1984-93). In particular, this book gives the reader the words of Chávez during his many fasts. The words in this book help bring Chávez alive to the student. Any teacher or researcher can use the easy-to-use format, and although the material of the book is geared towards adults, there are segments of many of Chávez's speeches that can be used to educate children in the intermediate grades.

I found a review for this book on-line during my research, and I purchased it for my project.

“Cesar Chávez, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Civil Rights” *Bringing Animal Issues Into the Classroom* < <http://www.TeachKind.org> >

This website gives the student and teacher more background for the non-violent stance taken by King and Chávez. The important part of this website gives two primary sources for the student. The first is a signed letter by Chávez (dated 12/26/90) to the organization Action For Animals that voices his solidarity about legislation to ensure humane treatment of animals during rodeos. The second primary document is the transcript of an interview with Chávez for the November 1985 issue of the publication The Animal's Agenda. This interview gives the reader the reasons why Chávez became a vegetarian. This website was relevant to my research because it helps the students see that Chávez was a very progressive thinker who exemplified non-violence. The website is helpful to all teachers studying Chávez.

I found this resource through Google.com. The search terms I used were Cesar Chávez, non-violence and animal rights.

“Education of the Heart: Cesar Chávez in His Own Words” < <http://www.ufw.org> >

This I feel is the mother lode of information on-line about Cesar Chávez because it is the website of the United Farm Workers. The website is essential for any educator doing a unit on Chávez in my opinion. There are many primary sources on the website, and I found the audio clips of Chávez and interviews of people who knew him to be of the most use. There was also a time line of UFW events and Chávez's life that was helpful. This website also has links to other websites that are useful in research. The website is easier to navigate.

I found this resource through Google.com. The search terms I used were Cesar Chávez and United Farm Workers.

Atkin, S. Beth *Voices from the Fields: Children of Migrant Farmworkers Tell Their Stories* New York: Scholastic, 2001.

This book is geared for grades 5-6. The author has interviewed ten Mexican-American children who are migrant farm workers in the United States, and the reader discovers their aspirations, their dreams and the daily struggle in their lives. There is tremendous optimism and heartbreak in these stories, and I feel that students will have a greater appreciation of the struggle led by Cesar Chavez. Besides the interviews of the children, Atkin includes poems written by migrant children. I highly recommend this book for elementary students, and it ties in well with the current issue of migrant Mexican dairy workers in Vermont.

I found this resource through Amazon.com. The search terms I used were Cesar Chavez and children's literature and farm workers.

Teaching Tolerance, *Viva la Causa: The Story of Cesar Chavez and A Great Movement for Social Justice* DVD Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008.

This 39-minute video documents the Delano grape growers strike in 1965, and tells the story of how the powerless farm workers stood up to the powerful fruit companies and gained victory using non-violent means. This documentary is geared towards seventh and eighth grade students, but it provides a visual record of Cesar Chavez for elementary students. Segments of the video can be shown to elementary students.

I found this resource through the Teaching Tolerance magazine that our school receives, and I ordered it for free.

The following URL addresses are for photos to use for the first learning activity, and they are all photos of Cesar Chavez:

<http://hnn.us/Pics2008/chavez-coffin.jpg>

<http://www.pasodelsur.com/image/volantemarcha.jpg>

<http://l3d.cs.colorado.edu/systems/agentsheets/New-Vista/grape-boycott/media/cesar-marching-with-workers.gif>

[http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/files/images/362\\_0.preview.jpg](http://www.reuther.wayne.edu/files/images/362_0.preview.jpg)

<http://cache1.asset->

[cache.net/xc/72431583.jpg?v=1&c=IWSAsset&k=2&d=4996399091E831868A53E10DDC5FCB67688C6CDC44E04CDD](http://cache1.asset-cache.net/xc/72431583.jpg?v=1&c=IWSAsset&k=2&d=4996399091E831868A53E10DDC5FCB67688C6CDC44E04CDD)

<http://cache4.asset->

[cache.net/xc/50675934.jpg?v=1&c=IWSAsset&k=2&d=4996399091E831860B451E1CFD6D0F047497451F39BA9143](http://cache4.asset-cache.net/xc/50675934.jpg?v=1&c=IWSAsset&k=2&d=4996399091E831860B451E1CFD6D0F047497451F39BA9143)

<http://www.solarcalendar.org/gallery/chavez/8.jpg>

[http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/img/01-06/0112liv\\_chavez.jpg](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/img/01-06/0112liv_chavez.jpg)

[http://blog.oregonlive.com/portland\\_impact/2009/05/chavez.jpg](http://blog.oregonlive.com/portland_impact/2009/05/chavez.jpg)

I found all of these images on the Internet. The search terms I used were Cesar Chavez, Robert F. Kennedy, fasting, death, boycott, Jesse Jackson, and picketing.

[http://chavez.cde.ca.gov/ModelCurriculum/Teachers/Lessons/Grade\\_4\\_Civil\\_Rights.rtf](http://chavez.cde.ca.gov/ModelCurriculum/Teachers/Lessons/Grade_4_Civil_Rights.rtf).

This website has a 1990 speech by Chavez that he gave in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. and it also contains a telegram from Martin Luther King, Jr. to Cesar Chavez from 1968.

I found this website on the Internet by using the keywords Cesar Chavez Day and California Senate Resolution.

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/C?c111:./temp/~c111jNqdxX>

**111th CONGRESS 1st Session**

**S. RES. 92-Honoring the accomplishments and legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez.**

**IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES March 31, 2009**

**Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BURRIS, Mr. REID, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary**

**RESOLUTION**

**Honoring the accomplishments and legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez**

This website link gives you the actual resolution from the 111<sup>th</sup> that honors Cesar Chavez, and it does a great job of summarizing his life.

I found this website on the Internet by using the keywords Cesar Chavez, 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, and Senate Resolution.

<http://www.lasculturas.com/lib/lawCesarChavezHldyCA.htm>

This website has the actual bill from the California Senate that enacted a Cesar Chavez Day in the state of California.

I found this website on the Internet using the keywords Cesar Chavez, California Senate Resolution, and Cesar Chavez Day.

<http://www.cesarechavezfoundation.org/page.php?code=00100200000000>

This website is the “mother lode” of all things related to Cesar Chavez and it is a great starting point for any teacher or student who wants to learn more about this amazing hero. Of particular use is the text of his speeches and audio clips of Cesar Chavez.

<http://www.paradigmproductions.org/voices/voices.html>

This website is a fantastic source of actual audio and video of people involved in “La Causa” with Cesar Chavez, such as Dolores Huerta, Richard Chavez and Robert Kennedy. There are also useful images, and other resources for the teacher and student. This website ties in with the film La Causa that the Teaching Tolerance organization puts out.

I found this site on the Internet by using the keywords Cesar Chavez, video, audio speeches and La Causa.

### **Secondary Sources:**

Eddy, Susan *Cesar Chavez* New York: Children’s Press (Scholastic), 2003.

This is a book geared for first and second grade students, and as a biography it gives the basic facts about the life of Cesar Chavez. I normally would not use a book with this low a reading level, but I needed to find an appropriate book for a student with a second grade reading level. This book does mention the Delano strike of 1965, and it contains many great pictures of Chavez and the farm workers protesting. Over all it is a good introduction, but I think it can be augmented with the websites mentioned above.

I found this book on Amazon.com, and I purchased a copy for my class. I used the words Cesar Chavez and children's books for my search.

Collins, David *Farmworker's Friend: The Story of Cesar Chavez* Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Press, 1996.

This book is appropriate for grades 4-6, and it gives a solid portrayal of the life of Cesar Chavez that can initiate a study of this important American. The biography starts out with Chavez's early life and it gives the reader and understanding of the reasons why Chavez fought economic and social injustice. The family photos of his early life in the book are a good addition to the other photos student will find in the other sources used in this project. Overall, I think this book provides a student with the essential knowledge about Chavez that s/he needs to know.

I found this book on Amazon.com, and I purchased a set for my class. The search terms I used were Cesar Chavez and children's books.

Schafer, Liza *Famous Americans: 22 Short Plays for the Classroom* New York: Scholastic, 1994.

This book is a great resource for the elementary history teacher because it gives students the opportunity to act out plays about 22 Americans throughout U.S. history. The thing I like about this book is that there are lesser-known Americans included in the anthology, such as Nellie Bly, Susan LaFlesche Picotte, Phyllis Wheatley, and Langston Hughes. The four-act play for Cesar Chavez focuses on his early years and then the grape boycotts. The play has roles for 12 student actors, and it provides students with a creative vehicle to learn about Chavez. This book is out of print, and I was able to find a used copy on Amazon. It is well worth the money if you can get it at a reasonable price.

I found this book on Amazon.com, and I purchased a copy for my class. The search terms I used were Cesar Chavez and children's books.

**Accommodations:**

The following accommodations will be made for students: books on tape for *Farmworker's Friend: The Story of Cesar Chavez*; graphic organizers; vocabulary lists; labeled maps of California, books at various reading levels, varying ways to respond to text to show understanding; scaffolding tasks; flexible groupings for tasks; and students will be given the United Farm Workers and Chavez Foundation websites to do research on Cesar Chavez.