

## African Americans in the Lincoln Brigade – Lesson #2

This is a lesson for a 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> -grade US History class. Students will have previously studied the 1920s and 1930s.

### Overview - Methods and Strategies

This lesson requires three to five days with 50-minute blocks. This lesson utilizes ALBA's website module African American's in the Spanish Civil War; see online lesson [here](#).

Students will explore the reality of life in the United States for African Americans after World War I. Through the examination of primary sources and other sources provided on the site, the students will be able to identify the major factors that motivated 90 African Americans to violate the [Neutrality Act](#) and agree to risk their lives to join the International Brigades.

Students will work individually or in pairs (depending on number of computers) to produce illustrated slideshow presentations or [web pages](#). Each presentation will include information on at least three volunteers, maps of Spain, historical facts about the Civil War, introduction, transitions and concluding statement slides with graphics.

### Student Objectives

- Students will identify the major events and participants of the Spanish Civil War
- Students will identify the global and domestic response to Spanish Civil War
- Students will examine and present wartime experiences of **three** African American International Brigade members
- Students will create an illustrated slideshow presentation or web page demonstrating the three above objectives.

### Key Questions

- What were the key events in the Spanish Civil War?
- What was the world's response to this war?
- Why did African Americans participate in the International brigades?
- What were some of the experiences of some African Americans who participated in the International Brigades and fought in the Spanish Civil War?
- How did these experiences influence their lives when they returned to the United States?

### Materials

- Assignment and timeline for project
- Access to computers with internet and Microsoft PowerPoint
- Textbook and supplementary material

### Assessment

- Homework assignments
- Culminating project

### Lesson - Day 1

#### Journal: Why Fight?

Have journal on the board as students come in. Let them answer questions and then have students report back in the large group. Create list. Then ask them if they would volunteer to fight with the International brigades.

- Would you ever join a fight that you did not start? Why?
- Under what circumstances do you volunteer to join?
- What are the consequences of participating?

**Journal:** In the Spanish Civil War, which side is the underdog? Why? Give at least three reasons.

**Assignment:** Slide show presentation and websites

**Student handout:** [African Americans and the Spanish Civil War](#)

On Day 1 the students will use the ALBA site to investigate the experiences of African Americans fighting in the Spanish Civil War. On Day 2, they will examine African Americans' experiences when they returned home.

**Each student presentation or website must have the following:**

- Title page with graphic
- Map of Spain
- Timeline with important details of Civil War
- Concluding Statement - why this is important today?

**The presentation or website must include the following for each African American volunteer**

- Picture
- Short bio
- Their reasons for volunteering
- Description of experience during the war
- Description of their experiences after the war
- Quotes from individual

**The presentation or website will be graded on the following:**

- All requirements being met
- Accuracy of information
- Thoroughness of research
- Engaging narration of presentation
- Clarity of information presented
- Thoughtfulness and depth of concluding statement

**Part I: [The War in Spain](#)**

- Why were passports stamped "Not Valid for Spain" Be specific. This requires background knowledge from our previous lesson.
- Why was life so different for African Americans in Spain? Give examples.
- How did the Lincoln Brigade prove their bravery? Give examples.
- In your own words, why do you think Spain had such a strong impact of African American volunteers?
- Why did so many Brigade members think so highly of Oliver Law?
- What does Steve Nelson mean when he said, "ours is a very democratic army...?"
- What is the tone of Ernest Hemingway's [elegy](#) for the American dead? Do you believe Lincoln Brigades Vets were moved by it? Why or why not?
- Pick three African American Lincoln Brigade members and describe their experiences. List their most interesting or moving quotes.

**Part II: [After Spain](#)**

- After returning home veterans faced what James Yates referred to as, "another kind of warfare". What did he mean by that?
- Was Yates's experience at the hotel was evidence of what racial policy?
- Find the names of the three Lincoln brigade members you investigated in Part 1. List their experiences after the war.
- After WWII, many veterans continued to struggle for Civil Rights at home. Offer examples of the type of civil rights work the veterans were participating in.
- The Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade was one of the first organizations to support which movement in South Africa?
- How did Harry Haywood and [Vaughn Love](#) disagree in regards to fighting for civil rights?

**Part Three:** Use the text book and notes from other lessons to answer these questions

- What were the key events in the Spanish Civil War?
- What was the world's response to this war?

- Why did African Americans participate in the International Brigades?

**Part Four:** Why is this important?

Consider all the students have studied this week. Why is it important to study the Spanish Civil War today?

**Part Five:** Follow these steps to complete the presentations

- Now that you have collected your research you need to begin to layout your presentation.
- First, in your notebook, storyboard your presentation. In which order will you present your information and which graphics or pictures will you include?
- Conduct a search of the web and the sites listed for the assignments for graphics and pictures.
- Next, proceed to Power Point application or [Google Sites](#) and begin to transfer information.
- Once you have your information and graphics transferred you must map out your narrative.
- You should introduce and/or explain each slide. This narrative must be handed in with the presentation.

**Lesson - Days 2 through 5**

Students will need to work at their own stations throughout these days. Daily check-off sheets can be helpful in keeping larger classes on task.