

# THE LOCKE SOCIETY

LIFE, LIBERTY & EDUCATION



*Unit*

**Special: Black  
History Month**

*Topic*

**The Words of Inspirational Figures**

## *Lesson Plan*

### *Aim*

To celebrate Black History Month by analyzing the words of inspirational figures across different time periods.

### *Rationale*

Black History Month presents a special opportunity for celebrating the Black men and women who overcame adversity and discouragement with incredible optimism, strength, and pride. It is the character of these men and women that children will admire and may replicate in their own lives as they face challenges. Each inspirational figure celebrated in this lesson faced struggles unique to their time period, their upbringing, and their goals, yet they found in themselves the strength to move forward, to dream, and to make their dream a reality. As students journey through the Civil War, World War II, the Civil Rights Movement, and present day, they will hear the stories of inspirational people who overcame the most discouraging challenges and whose uplifting words will motivate those who need encouragement to move beyond barriers to reach their own dreams.

### *Student Learning Objectives*

Students will be able to identify the main idea and supporting details of modified primary sources to learn about inspirational figures celebrated for Black History Month.

Students will be able to apply a civics connection to each inspirational figure by identifying how one person can change an economic, social, or political standing.

### *Civics Connection*

- How can one change, strengthen, or improve upon a social, political, or economic standing?
- Why is this topic one of particular importance for participation in a democratic society?

\*See the *Civics Connection Through Questioning* guide in *Civics* for more ideas.



## Vocabulary

Frederick Douglass Civil War Union/Confederacy	Charles McGee Tuskegee Airmen World War II	Martin Luther King Jr. segregation discrimination prejudice	Condoleezza Rice Secretary of State racism
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## Materials and Resources

### 1. Text: Document A - Frederick Douglass [Speech]

Source: Source: Douglass, Frederick. "Why Should a Colored Man Enlist?" *Douglass' Monthly*, April 1863, <http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/why-should-a-colored-man-enlist/>. *\*This text has been modified from its original version.*

### 2. Text: Document B - Tuskegee Airman Charles McGee [Interview]

Source: Source: McGee, Charles. Interview with Jon Guttman. "Tuskegee Airman Charles McGee: 'Do While You Can.'" *History Net*, 1999, <https://www.historynet.com/aviation-history-interview-with-tuskegee-airman-charles-mcgee-2.htm>. *\*This text has been modified from its original version.*

### 3. Text: (picture and Document place holder): Document C - Martin Luther King Jr. [Speech] (accessible at <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm>. *\*The teacher should modify any words necessary to reflect appropriate language in the classroom*)

Source: King, Martin Luther, Jr. "I Have a Dream." *March on Washington*, 28 August 1963, Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C. Speech. <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm>

### 4. Text: Document D - Condoleezza Rice [Interview and Speech]

Source 1: Rice, Condoleezza and Lynne Doughtie. Interview with *Motto*. "Condoleezza Rice: 'Don't Let Somebody Else's Racism or Sexism Be Your Problem.'" Feldman, Lucy. *Time*, 28 June 2017, <https://time.com/4837393/condoleezza-rice-talks-racism-sexism/>. *\*This text has been modified from its original version for select content from Condoleezza Rice.*

Source 2: Rice, Condoleezza. "Condoleezza Rice to Grads: 'Don't Let Anyone Else Define Your Passion.'" *Time*, 10 May 2016. <https://time.com/4323641/condoleezza-rice-high-point-university-commencement-speech/>. *\*This text has been modified from its original version for select content from Condoleezza Rice.*

### 5. Text: Backgrounds of Inspirational Figures

### 6. Handout: Graphic Organizer (Main Idea and Supporting Details)

### 7. Handout: Celebrating Black History Month Discussion Questions

## Procedure

### Do Now:

The teacher will ask students the following question:

Do you believe one person can make a difference? Explain why or why not.

### Lesson:

After explaining the Aim and discussing the Do Now, the teacher will review and explain the mini-biographies of the inspirational figures students will meet in the lesson. With each introduction, the teacher should ask students to share if they have heard of the individual, and allow discussion on what they already know before reading aloud each background summary. *The teacher will give directions for the activity and model:* The teacher will introduce the speeches/interviews that students will read and explain the directions for completing the graphic organizer (see Collaborative/Independent Work). The teacher will model an example using Document A. The teacher will also direct students to complete the discussion questions after completing the graphic organizer.



**Collaborative/Independent Work:**

Students will work in groups of 3-4 to complete the graphic organizer. Students will independently read and annotate the document, making note of their personal opinions on the highlights from the text. Then, the group will discuss and arrive at a consensus on what the best details were from the document (the teacher may set a number, such as the top 3 points made), and they will also summarize the main idea together to be recorded. Once each document has been read and analyzed, students will complete the discussion questions with their group working together on the first two questions and answering the third independently.

**Share:**

The teacher will ask students to share their responses to the discussion questions, and the class will discuss their different answers and opinions.

**Close:**

Students will independently record their answer to the following question:

How do these inspirational figures show that one can change, strengthen, or improve upon a social, political, or economic standing?

### *Modifications*

- The teacher may choose to use the documents in a jigsaw activity.
- The teacher may choose to modify the documents by adding or removing paragraphs.
- The teacher may provide details from each document and allow students to choose which ones are the best for the graphic organizer.
- The teacher may provide written main idea's, and students must select the best description for each figure.

### *Extension*

Option 1: Students may select one of the four figures to learn about in more detail. Students should create a mini-biography including interesting facts about their personal lives, careers, struggles, and achievements.

Option 2: Students may research a different inspirational figure for Black History Month (from any time period including present day) and create a mini-biography including interesting facts about their personal lives, careers, struggles, and achievements.

### *Notes*

*\*Use discretion for activities according to what is appropriate for your class.*





## Document A

### FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Source: Douglass, Frederick. "Why Should a Colored Man Enlist?" *Douglass' Monthly*, April 1863, <http://www.frederick-douglass-heritage.org/why-should-a-colored-man-enlist/>. \*This text has been modified from its original version.

This question has been repeatedly put to us while raising men for the 54th Massachusetts regiment during the past five weeks, and perhaps we cannot at present do a better service to the cause of our people or to the cause of the country than by giving a few of the many reasons why a [Black] man should enlist.

First. You are a man [...] whatever concerns man should interest you. He who looks upon a conflict between right and wrong, and does not help the right against the wrong, despises and insults his own nature, and invites the contempt of mankind. As between the North and South, the North is clearly on the right side and the South is flagrantly in the wrong. You should therefore, simply as a matter of right and wrong, give your utmost aid to the North. [...] you are mean or noble according to how you choose between action and inaction. — If you are sound in body and mind, there is nothing in your color to excuse you from enlisting in the service of the republic against its enemies. If color should not be a criterion of rights, neither should it be a standard of duty. The whole duty of a man, belongs alike to white and black.

Second. You are however, not only a man, but an American citizen, so declared by the highest legal advisor of the Government, and you have hitherto expressed in various ways, not only your willingness but your earnest desire to fulfill any and every obligation which the relation of citizenship imposes. Indeed, you have hitherto felt wronged and slighted, because while white men of all other nations have been freely enrolled to serve the country, you are a native born citizen and have been coldly denied the honor of aiding in defense of the land of your birth. The injustice thus done to you is now repented of by the Government and you are welcomed to a place in the army of the nation. Should you refuse to enlist now, you will justify the past contempt of the Government towards you and lead it to regret having honored you with a call to take up arms in its defense. You cannot but see that here is a good reason why you should promptly enlist.

Third. [Slavery proponents] in the land [regard] the arming of [Black men] as a calamity and [are trying] to prevent it. Even now all the weapons of malice, in the shape of slander and ridicule, are used to defeat the filling up of the 54th Massachusetts...regiment. In nine cases out of ten, you will find it safe to do just what your enemy would gladly have you leave undone. What helps you hurts him. Find out what he does not want and give him a plenty of it.

Fourth. You should enlist to learn the use of arms, to become familiar with the means of securing, protecting and defending your own liberty. A day may come when men shall learn war no more, when justice shall be so clearly apprehended, so universally practiced, and humanity shall be so profoundly loved and respected, that war and bloodshed shall be



confined only to beasts of prey. Manifestly however, that time has not yet come [...] The only way open to any race to make their rights respected is to learn how to defend them. [...] Enlist, therefore, that you may learn the art and assert the ability to defend yourself and your race.

Fifth. You are a member of a long enslaved...race. Men have set down your submission to Slavery and insult, to a lack of manly courage. They point to this fact as demonstrating your fitness only to be a servile class. You should enlist and disprove the slander, and wipe out the reproach. When you shall be seen nobly defending the liberties of you own country against rebels and traitors — brass itself will blush to use such arguments imputing cowardice against you.

Sixth. Whether you are or are not, entitled to all the rights of citizenship in this country has long been a matter of dispute to your prejudice. By enlisting in the service of your country at this trial hour, and upholding the National Flag, you stop the mouths of traducers and win applause even from the lips of ingratitude. Enlist and you will make this your country in common with all other men born in the country or out of it.

Seventh. Enlist for your own sake. Decried and decried as you have been and still are, you need an act of this kind by which to recover your own self-respect. You have to some extent rated your value by the estimate of your enemies and hence have counted yourself less than you are. You owe it to yourself and your race to rise from your social debasement and take your place among the soldiers of your country, a man among them. [...] He who fights the battles of America may claim America as his country — and have that claim respected. Thus in defending your country now against rebels and traitors you are defending your own liberty, honor, manhood and self-respect.

Eighth. You should enlist because your doing so will be one of the most certain means of preventing the country from drifting back into the whirlpool of Pro-Slavery Compromise at the end of the war, which is now our greatest danger. [...] If you mean to live in this country now is the time for you to do your full share in making it a country where you and your children after you can live in comparative safety.

Ninth. You should enlist because the war for the Union, whether men so call it or not, is a war for Emancipation. The salvation of the country, by the inexorable relation of cause and effect, can be secured only by the complete abolition of Slavery. The President has already proclaimed emancipation to the Slaves in rebel States which is tantamount to declaring Emancipation in all the States, for Slavery must exist everywhere in the South in order to exist anywhere in the South.

[W]hen grim visaged war has smoothed his wrinkled front and our country shall have regained its normal condition as a leader of nations in the occupation and blessings of peace — and history shall record the names of heroes and martyrs — who bravely answered the call of patriotism and Liberty — against traitors, thieves and assassins — let it not be said that in the long list of glory, composed of men of all nations — there appears the name of no [Black] man.





## Document B

### TUSKEGEE AIRMAN CHARLES MCGEE

Source: McGee, Charles. Interview with Jon Guttman. "Tuskegee Airman Charles McGee: 'Do While You Can.'" *History Net*, 1999, <https://www.historynet.com/aviation-history-interview-with-tuskegee-airman-charles-mcgee-2.htm>. *\*This text has been modified from its original version.*

[In] 1943...the first of a contingent trained at Tuskegee, Alabama, were formed as the 99th Fighter Squadron and shipped out to North Africa. That unit and the 332nd Fighter Group that followed would prove their worth in the last two years of World War II. Besides establishing an outstanding record for successfully defending U.S. bombers against enemy fighters, several of the Tuskegee Airmen went on to distinguished postwar careers in the U.S. Air Force. One of them was Colonel Charles Edward McGee, who shared highlights of his long career with Aviation History senior editor Jon Guttman.

**Aviation History:** Could you tell us something of your childhood and education?

**McGee:** [My father] was a [minister]. We never had a lot, but I never remember being hungry or not being clean. I don't have any recollections of specific actions of bigotry, except that schools were segregated...Also, because of the level of schooling for blacks in the South, when we returned to Cleveland, I had to repeat third grade. I became a Boy Scout in Illinois, and when my father's ministry took him to Keokuk, Iowa, in the mid-1930s, I spent my second through senior years of high school there. In the fall of my senior year, he returned to south Chicago and I graduated from Du Sable High School in 1938. My family didn't have the money to send me to college then, so I worked for a year with the Civilian Conservation Corps in northern Illinois, where I learned engineering and contour farming. I was then able to attend the University of Illinois in 1940. I took engineering and was also in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program and a member of the Pershing Rifles.

**AH:** When did you first become interested in flying?

**McGee:** I don't recall even seeing an airplane when I was young. It was about the time I was in college that the Army was beginning to recruit nonflying personnel—communications, engineering, armament and mechanics—for a [black squadron]. Word of that was spreading through the black community. Well, I already had a draft card, so I filled in that pilot's application. I was sent over to a couple of places in Indiana to take the examination, and when I passed that, in April 1942, I had to take a physical. [...] On October 27, I was sworn into the enlisted reserve, and a few weeks later, I got the call to go to Tuskegee.

**AH:** What were some of your first impressions of Alabama?

**McGee:** The trip down was my first real experience of the South. As the train left southern Illinois, you had to change your location in the car. We knew there were certain



barber shops or restaurants to go to in Chicago, but you could feel the change in atmosphere and approach as you entered the Deep South—you knew that whatever happened, the law was not going to uphold whatever your position was. When you were a black man from the North, you especially had to be careful what you said and did. You learned to be extra careful when stopping to fill up your car, and even avoid some filling stations. To a degree, the southern blacks were concerned about how a northern [Black man] was going to act, and a lot of conversations dealt with what you needed to know and where to go to keep out of trouble. One of my classmates happened to be from a well-to-do family who owned a drug store in Montgomery, Alabama, and he helped steer me into the black community, because you didn't go into the downtown area very much.

**AH:** What was the Tuskegee training facility like?

**McGee:** By the time I got to Tuskegee in the fall of 1942... At that time, too, Colonel Noel F. Parrish was the white commander. The previous commander, Colonel Frederick Von Kimble, was not very supportive of the program, but he was relieved and replaced by Parrish, who had been directing operations. He believed in the program and the people.

**AH:** How did your training go?

**McGee:** I entered preflight training as part of Class 43-G, but I was one of several who skipped upper preflight, perhaps because of my college studies, and ended up graduating in Class 43-F. [...] We did basic training in the Vultee BT-13A and advanced training in the North American AT-6.

**AH:** Where did you go from Tuskegee?

**McGee:** I left Tuskegee in August for squadron and group formation flying and aerobatics at Selfridge Field, Michigan, where the 100th, 301st and 302nd squadrons of the 332nd Fighter Group were being formed. We were fully combat ready...by October—and that's when the decision was made that the group was going to fly the Bell P-39Q. It had the engine in the back and had less horsepower than the P-40, but we young pilots just used to say, 'If the crew chief can start it, then I can fly it.' ...We left Newport News on a big convoy that zigzagged across the Atlantic and into the Mediterranean. My ship, with the 302nd Squadron, went to Taranto, Italy, then we trucked over to the Naples area, where we began flying from Montecorvino.

**AH:** When did you begin combat flying?

**McGee:** We began operations on February 14, 1944, patrolling Naples Harbor to the Isle of Capri, and we also did coastal patrol. The P-39Q was too slow and essentially a low-altitude aircraft—we flew at 10,000 to 15,000 feet, and by the time we reached even that altitude to intercept intruders, they were usually back in Germany. It was frustrating. Meanwhile, the men of the 99th were flying their P-40s with the 79th Fighter Group and shot down several aircraft over Anzio, earning the right to be called fighter pilots.



**AH:** What did you do later?

**McGee:** After Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945, the 332nd Fighter Group was disbanded and the 477th was preparing for the Pacific. At that time, the group was under a white commander, who told the black pilots that as trainees they could not use the officers club and he was designating a separate club for them. He ended up having 101 of the officers arrested for refusing to sign the paper stating that they had read and understood his directive on the use of clubs. The investigation that followed led to the commander's being relieved, and Colonel Davis was brought in.

**AH:** What were your duties after World War II?

**McGee:** I had gone to Atlanta, Georgia, to take the examination to become a regular officer. I never heard a thing from it, but I was enjoying the flying, so I stayed in the Air Force as a reserve officer. They told us that we couldn't fly all the time, so I picked the maintenance officer school at Chanute Air Force Base [AFB]. When I graduated, I got orders to go to my first integrated assignment—Smoky Hill AFB, at Salina, Kansas, as officer in charge of the base maintenance shops for the Boeing B-29 equipped 301st Bomb Wing of SAC [Strategic Air Command]. All the officers and technicians were white, but I got along perfectly fine with them. You wore your ribbons on your uniform in those days, and they knew I was a combat veteran.

**AH:** How long were you in Korea?

**McGee:** On February 20, 1951, I flew my 100th mission, then went back to the Philippines for assignment to the 44th FBS as operations officer.

**AH:** How long did you fly recon missions over Vietnam?

**McGee:** One year and 173 missions, predominantly over the northern part of South Vietnam.

**AH:** What did you do as a civilian?

**McGee:** [I retired on January 31, 1973.] I spent 8 1/2 years in business and became vice president of real estate for the Interstate Securities Company, where my administrative training in the military fit in perfectly. After the corporation was sold, I got a degree in business administration; then I became director of Kansas City Downtown Airport. After a second retirement, I was selected as a member of the Aviation Advisory Commission.

**AH:** I presume you've kept in touch with fellow Tuskegee Airmen?

**McGee:** I was national president of the association from 1983 to 1985, and was a charter board member when Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., was established in Washington, D.C., in 1972. I've attended all but two annual conventions since then. I also do church work and participate in the Air Force Association. My approach to life was, and still is, 'Do while you can.'



**Document C**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**



Source: King, Martin Luther, Jr. "I Have a Dream." *March on Washington*, 28 August 1963, Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C. Speech.

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm>



## Document D

# CONDOLEEZZA RICE

### Time Magazine Interview

Source: Rice, Condoleezza and Lynne Doughtie. Interview with *Motto*. “Condoleezza Rice: ‘Don’t Let Somebody Else’s Racism or Sexism Be Your Problem.’” Feldman, Lucy. *Time*, 28 June 2017, <https://time.com/4837393/condoleezza-rice-talks-racism-sexism/>. \*This text has been modified from its original version for select content from Condoleezza Rice.

**Interviewer:** There are still many barriers in place. What have you experienced in your careers in terms of being put down simply because you’re women?

**Rice:** To be perfectly honest, I grew up in segregated Birmingham, Alabama, and that was macro-aggression, so I don’t really get microaggression. I grew up in a family where I was told you have to be twice as good. They said it as a matter of fact, not a matter of debate. They said there are no victims — the minute you think of yourself as a victim, you’ve given control of your life to someone else. I remember specifically my father saying once it’s okay if someone doesn’t want to sit next to you because you’re black, as long as they move. So the message was don’t let somebody else’s racism or sexism be your problem. That’s what we have to say to women: When you walk into a room, if somebody tries to put you down, don’t take that on. Simply speak up for yourself. If you’re in a position where you feel you can’t do that, find mentors to help you navigate those difficult circumstances. The fact is life isn’t perfect and you are going to run into people who try to belittle you and put you down, and you simply have to be capable of not accepting that from them... Now, if you’re really denied something that you think you should have gotten, there are all kinds of means of recourse for that — and you ought to take them. But the everyday garden variety glance or interruption, you just can’t let that get to you. You’re just going to raise your blood pressure and be thrown off what you’re really supposed to be focusing on.

### Time Magazine: A Portion of Condoleezza Rice’s commencement speech at High Point University on May 7, 2016.

Source: Rice, Condoleezza. “Condoleezza Rice to Grads: ‘Don’t Let Anyone Else Define Your Passion.’” *Time*, 10 May 2016. <https://time.com/4323641/condoleezza-rice-high-point-university-commencement-speech/>. \*This text has been modified from its original version for select content from Condoleezza Rice.

Education is transformative. It literally changes lives. That is why people for centuries have worked so hard to become educated. Education, more than any other force, can help to erase arbitrary divisions of race and class, arbitrary divisions of culture, and to unlock every person’s God-given potential.



Your passion may be hard to spot. So keep an open mind and keep searching. And when you find your passion, it's yours. Not what someone else thinks it should be. There's no earthly reason that a black girl from Birmingham, Alabama, should be a Soviet specialist. But that's what I wanted to be. Don't let anyone else define your passion for you because of your gender or the color of your skin.

History is full of much cruelty and suffering and darkness. And it can be hard sometimes to believe that there's a brighter future. But for all of our failings as human beings, for all of our current problems, more people today enjoy lives of opportunity than in all of human history. This progress has been the concerted effort not of cynics but of visionaries and optimists and idealists who deal with the world as it is but who never stop working for the world as it should be. Here in America, our own ideals of freedom and equality have been borne through generations by optimists. There was a day in my own lifetime when the hope of liberty and justice for all seemed impossible. But because individuals kept faith with the ideal of equality, we see a different America today where "we the people" is more inclusive. It is your responsibility as educated people to help close the gaps of justice and opportunity—and yes, the gaps of freedom that still exist beyond our shores as well as within them.

[...]

When you encounter those who are less fortunate, you cannot possibly give way to grievance. "Why do I not have?" Or its twin brother, entitlement. "Why don't they give me?" Instead, you will ask, "Why have I been given so much?" And from that spirit, you will join the legions of optimists who are working toward a better human future.

Be passionate about what you choose to do in life. Use your powers of reason. Cultivate humility. Remain optimistic and always try to serve others as well as the goals of freedom and peace and justice.



## Backgrounds of Inspirational Figures

<p><b>Frederick Douglass</b></p>  <p>(1818-1895)</p>	<p>Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in Maryland. After learning the alphabet, he taught himself and others how to read and write. Eventually, Douglass escaped to freedom. He was a leader of the abolitionist movement, started a newspaper called <i>The North Star</i>, and advocated for equality and civil rights. During the Civil War, Douglass encouraged Blacks to fight for the Union. After the war, he held influential positions, and continued to share his inspirational story.</p>
<p><b>Charles McGee</b></p>  <p>(1919-present)</p>	<p>Charles McGee celebrates a military career that spanned three decades and three different wars. In 1943, he earned his pilot's wings as a Tuskegee Airman. At this time America was segregated, and black Americans were still struggling with equality amidst discrimination and prejudice. Segregation not only existed in communities including schools, transportation, and restaurants, but it was also present in the military. Black Americans were not permitted to fly planes in the military, but those who believed in themselves, and others who believed in them, ended that unjust rule.</p>
<p><b>Martin Luther King Jr.</b></p>  <p>(1929-1968)</p>	<p>Martin Luther King Jr. was an inspirational figure of the Civil Rights Movement. He advocated for peaceful protests in the fight for equality. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech was delivered at the March on Washington in 1963 in which he passionately and effectively impacted America's journey on becoming a "more perfect" nation. One year after his speech, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, and that same year he earned the Nobel Peace Prize. Sadly, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968, but his legacy remains a strong inspiration to all who hope for a better future.</p>
<p><b>Condoleezza Rice</b></p>  <p>(1954-present)</p>	<p>Condoleezza Rice is the first woman to become the United States national security adviser and the first Black woman to serve as Secretary of State. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Rice experienced racism and segregation in her early years. In her speeches, she often tells the story of her grandfather who overcame poverty and segregation in pursuit of education and a better life. This story appears to have inspired her, and now her story is the one inspiring others. In 1993, Rice became the first woman and first Black American to serve as provost at Stanford University. Currently, she is the Denning Professor in Global Business and the Economy at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, is the Director of the Hoover Institute, and the Senior Fellow on Public Policy.</p>



Name	Time Period	Highlights from Speech/Interview	Main Idea of Speech/Interview
Frederick Douglass			
Charles McGee			
Martin Luther King Jr.			
Condoleezza Rice			



