



Say It Plain: Student Exercises : Answer Key

Segment 1: Tracing the Impact of African American Speechmaking

Tracing the impact of African American speechmaking: preaching, telling jokes and bearing witness to abuse, discrimination and brutality. Segment features Martin Luther King, Jr., comedian Dick Gregory, activist Fannie Lou Hamer, and historian James Horton. Also traces some of the earliest known recordings of African Americans, including the influential leaders Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey.

Reading Comprehension

Read the testimony by [Fannie Lou Hamer: Testimony Before the Credentials Committee, Democratic National Convention](#)

Answer the following questions:

1. What crucial piece of information did Fannie Lou Hamer learn at the age of 44?

She learned that she had the right to vote.

2. What consequences did Hamer face in 1962 when she tried to register for vote?

She and her husband lost their jobs and were evicted from the plantation where they worked.

3. What were the two central goals of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), of which Hamer was an active member in 1964?

The MFDP wanted to expand voter registration among African Americans and challenge the legitimacy of Mississippi's all-white Democratic Party.

4. What kind of treatment did Hamer and her colleagues receive when they were thrown in jail in 1963?

They were beaten and threatened by the state highway patrolmen. Hamer suffered permanent kidney damage because of the beating that she describes.

5. After she suffered humiliation in a Mississippi jail, what did Hamer do?

She traveled around the country telling her story and raising money for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).



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Key Terms and Topics

Terms

From *Fannie Lou Hamer's "Testimony Before the Credentials Committee, Democratic National Convention"*

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

an organization founded in 1960 as a student wing of the civil rights movement (pronounced "snick")

Sharecroppers

farmers who cultivate someone else's land in exchange for a portion of the crop; a common practice among poor southern African Americans throughout much of the twentieth century

Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

a secret white supremacist society that engaged in acts of terror to combat the civil rights movement

Impromptu

spur-of-the moment, spontaneous

Literacy test

a measure that southern states used to prevent African Americans from exercising their right to vote

Blackjack

a small, leather-covered bludgeon that is used as a weapon

Medgar Evers

a Mississippi civil rights leader who was assassinated in 1963