



Say It Plain: Student Exercises - Segment 3

Segment 3: Speeches from Positions of Power

In this last segment, we listen to African Americans as they moved into mainstream positions of power. Shirley Chisholm was the first black woman elected to Congress and Barbara Jordan was one of the representatives to sit on the House Watergate committee; Reverend Jesse Jackson formed the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and ran for President; Barack Obama gave a memorable speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention.

Listening Comprehension Questions

Read the following questions, then listen to the third segment of [*“Say it Plain”*](#) to find the answers.

Answer the following questions:

1. What is “the inquiry” that Jordan refers to in her speech?
2. When was the Constitution completed?
3. How does Ms. Jordan feel she, and other African Americans, have been included in the group that the Constitution refers to as “We the people”?
4. According to the Constitution’s description of the impeachment process, is the House of Representatives’ job to accuse the president or to judge whether the president should be removed from office?
5. Why does Jordan think that this division of roles is a good idea?
6. According to Jordan, why does the Constitution outline a process by which the president or other high-ranking officials can be impeached?
7. Which president said that impeachment should only happen when the “plain law of the land” is violated?
8. What things did Jordan say the president knew about on June 23, 1972?



Say It Plain: Student Exercises - Segment 3

Segment 3: Speeches from Positions of Power

In this last segment, we listen to African Americans as they moved into mainstream positions of power. Shirley Chisholm was the first black woman elected to Congress and Barbara Jordan was one of the representatives to sit on the House Watergate committee; Reverend Jesse Jackson formed the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and ran for President; Barack Obama gave a memorable speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention.

Critical Thinking Questions

These activities are based on the third segment of *“Say it Plain”*

Answer the following questions:

1. What are the parallels between the civil rights movement and the women’s rights movement pointed out by Shirley Chisholm? Why do you think women were not more prominent in the leadership of the civil rights movement?
2. What does Rev. Jesse Jackson mean when he compares American society to a quilt? Do you think this is an apt analogy? Why or why not?
3. Do you agree with James Cone’s claim that, there are fewer leaders who seem to transcend racial boundaries as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. did? Why or why not?”
4. Do you think there will be an African American president in your lifetime? What are the factors that make this more or less likely?
5. What does Senator Barack Obama mean by “red states” and “blue states” when talking about the United States? Do you think his examples of what happens in the various states are effective? Why or why not?



Say It Plain: Student Exercises - Segment 3

Segment 3: Speeches from Positions of Power

In this last segment, we listen to African Americans as they moved into mainstream positions of power. Shirley Chisholm was the first black woman elected to Congress and Barbara Jordan was one of the representatives to sit on the House Watergate committee; Reverend Jesse Jackson formed the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and ran for President; Barack Obama gave a memorable speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention.

Research Challenges

1. Do you know anyone who participated in the civil rights movement of the 1960s? If so, interview them to learn about their experiences during that era.
2. Select any of the speeches that are part of the Say It Plain Web site and research the speaker to learn more about his or her life.
3. Besides its powerful speeches, the civil rights movement also has a rich musical legacy. Find out what you can about the songs written and sung by civil rights activists.
4. Many civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King Jr., were also ministers in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church. Investigate this denomination to learn more about the connections between the religious sermons and speeches delivered by African American leaders.
5. Booker T. Washington's ideas are often compared to those of W.E.B. Du Bois, a scholar and activist who opposed many of Washington's arguments. Find out what you can about the similarities and differences between their arguments.
6. Alabama was the site of very significant civil rights struggles during the 1960s. Find out what you can about the 1965 march, led by Martin Luther King Jr, from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.
7. Read Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," which he wrote when he was imprisoned in 1963. How does this written document differ in content, tone, and style from the 1968 speech that is on the Say It Plain Web site?
8. Find out what you can about Marcus Garvey and his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association. How was his mission different from those of other African American leaders?
9. Mary McLeod Bethune and Fannie Lou Hamer are two women whose civil rights work is widely known. Find out what you can about the role of women in the civil rights movement, both as leaders and as participants.



Say It Plain: Student Exercises - Segment 3

Segment 3: Speeches from Positions of Power

In this last segment, we listen to African Americans as they moved into mainstream positions of power. Shirley Chisholm was the first black woman elected to Congress and Barbara Jordan was one of the representatives to sit on the House Watergate committee; Reverend Jesse Jackson formed the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and ran for President; Barack Obama gave a memorable speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention.

Key Terms and Topics

Terms

From *Barbara Jordan's Statement at the U.S. House Judiciary Committee Impeachment Hearings*

Amendment

Hyperbole

Impeachment

Inquest

Inquisitor

Juxtapose

Obfuscate

Perjury

Subpoena

Surreptitious

Thwart

Committee for the Re-Election of the President (*Jordan misspoke, the organization was actually named Committee to Re-elect the President*)

Separation of Powers

Watergate

From *"Say it Plain" segment 3*

Forthwith

Hierarchy

Liberation

Supremacy

Grand Jury

Rainbow Coalition

Women's Movement