

## **Lesson Plan #2 for the Genius of Freedom: Heroes of the Colored Race by Terry Ann Wildman**

**Grade Level:** Upper elementary or middle school

**Topics:** African American leaders

**Pennsylvania History Standards:** 8.1.6 B, 8.2.9 A, 8.3.9 A

**Pennsylvania Core Standards:** 8.5.6-8 A

***African American History*, Prentice Hall textbook:** N/A

**Overview:** What is a hero? What defines a hero in one's culture may be different throughout time and place. Getting our students to think about what constitutes a hero yesterday and today is the focus of this lesson. In the lithograph *Heroes of the Colored Race* there are three main figures and eight smaller ones. Students will explore who these figures are, why they were placed on the picture in this way, and the background images of life in America in the 1800s. Students will brainstorm and choose heroes of the African American people today and design a similar poster.

### **Materials:**

*Heroes of the Colored Race*, Philadelphia, 1881.

Biography cards of the 11 figures in the image (attached, to be printed out double-sided)

Smartboard, whiteboard, or blackboard

Computer access for students

Poster board

Chart Paper

Markers

Colored pencils

### **Procedure:**

1. Introduce the lesson with images of modern superheroes. Ask students to discuss why these figures are heroes. Decide on a working definition of a hero. Note these qualities on chart paper and display throughout the lesson.
2. Present the image *Heroes of the Colored Race* on the board. Ask what historic figures students recognize and begin to list those on the board. Add the remaining people to the list.
3. Divide students into small groups. Since there are 11 historic figures, students can be work in pairs or groups of three. For younger students, distribute biography cards of each person and ask students to read the bios and answer the following questions:

- A. What was this person famous for?
- B. Which qualities listed on the chart do you think this person may have had in order to accomplish the things they did in their lifetime?
- C. Do you think this person was a hero - why or why not?
- D. (Older students could research these historic figures and then continue with this part of the lesson.)

4. Students will share out their information on each figure. The class will discuss why they were placed on *Heroes of the Colored Race*. Ask students if there were any people from this time period that they would have added to the picture (for example, where are the women?).

5. Look again at the pictures of life in the 1800s. Ask students to describe each picture and think about why the scene was chosen for this picture. The pictures include a scene of slaves working in the cotton fields, a scene showing celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation, a scene of the Colored Troops during the Civil War, and a scene showing African Americans learning in a classroom. Ask students to think about pictures that they would include on a picture current day heroes. Note ideas on chart paper.

6. In small groups, students will choose up to five people living today who they would choose to design a hero's poster. They will choose four scenes that represent important events in our time period. Using poster board, markers or colored pencils, each group will create a poster.

7. As an alternative, students can create their own picture using images and scenes from the computer.



EX-SENATOR BRUCE

HON. FREDERICK DOUGLASS

EX-SENATOR REVELS

HEROES OF THE COLORED RACE.

RECEIVING THE NEWS OF THE EMANCIPATION

COPYRIGHTED BY G. W. WOODS, JR. PHILA. 1851

STUDYING THE LESSON

FROM THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS, BY W. L. G. BROWN, JR.

**Hiram Rhodes Revels** (1827-1901)

U.S. Senator (Republican) Mississippi, 1870-1871

Revels was born to free parents in 1827 in North Carolina, where he attended a school run by a free black woman. In 1844, he moved north to continue his education in theological studies and was ordained a minister in the AME Church the following year. During the Civil War, he served as a chaplain in the Union Army as well as helped recruit African American soldiers. In January 1870, Revels was elected to fill the Senate seat due to expire in 1871, making him the first African American elected to the U.S. Congress. After the expiration of his term, Revels returned to Mississippi to become the first president of Alcorn State College, a public school founded to educate the descendants of former slave.

**Frederick Douglass** (1818-1895)

Abolitionist, writer

After fleeing slavery in Maryland in 1838, abolitionist Frederick Douglass resided in several Northern cities including New Bedford, Massachusetts, and Rochester, New York. Douglass was heavily involved in the antislavery movement, speaking on the abolitionist lecture circuit in the United States and Britain, writing about his life during enslavement, and editing two antislavery newspapers. After the U.S. Colored Troops was established in 1863, he recruited African Americans, including his two sons, to fight in the Union Army. Following the Civil War, he remained committed to African American civil rights and held a number of positions in the federal government, including U.S. Marshall for Washington, DC and U.S. Minister to Haiti.

**Blanche Kelso Bruce** (1841-1898)

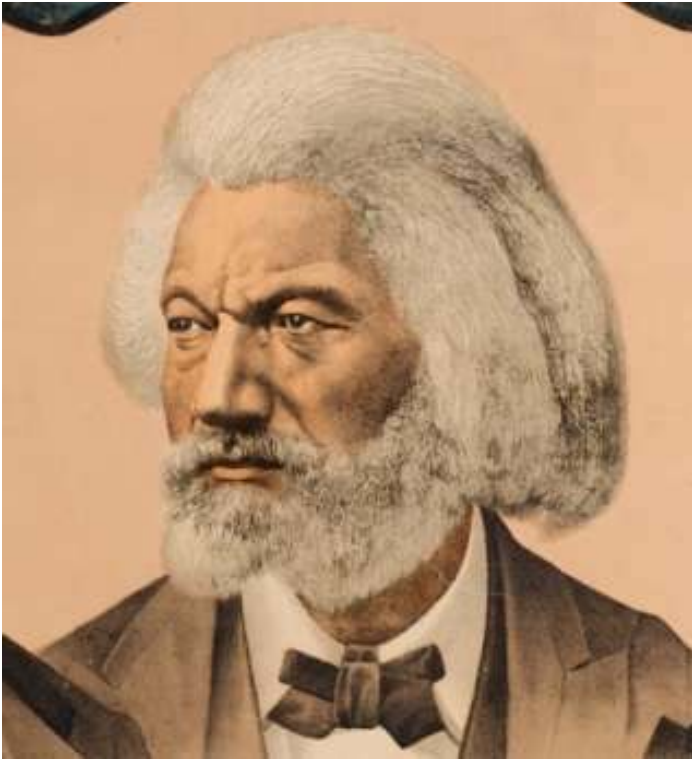
U.S. Senator (Republican), Mississippi, 1875-1881

Blanche Kelso Bruce was born in 1841 in Virginia to an enslaved woman and her owner. Shortly after the start of the Civil War, he fled slavery settling in Kansas. After the war, Bruce was inspired to enter politics after hearing a candidate speak in Mississippi. He was mentored by the state's white Republicans, leading to Bruce's appointment or election to many county and state offices. In 1874, the state legislature elected Bruce to serve as U.S. Senate, making him the second African American to hold that position and the first to serve a full term as senator. After Bruce, there were no black Senators elected to Congress until 1967 and none from the South until 2013.

**Abraham Lincoln** (1809-1865)

16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, 1861-1865

In 1809, Abraham Lincoln was born in a single-room log cabin in Hardin County, Kentucky. Lincoln has very little formal education but had a strong interest in books and learning. Lincoln served on the Illinois State Legislature for several terms. In 1861, he was elected the President of the United States. On April 12, 1861, the Civil War began just one month after he took office. On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves in the Confederate States. This Proclamation paved the way for the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which would free all of the slaves in 1864. Weeks after the Civil War was over, Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865, and died the next day.



**William Techumseh Sherman** (1820-1891)

Union General

William Techumseh Sherman was born to a prominent family in Lancaster Ohio on February 8, 1820. His father died when he was 9 years old and he was raised by a family friend, Thomas Ewing, a senator from Ohio. In 1861, Sherman was appointed colonel in the 13<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry. In 1864, Sherman took Atlanta and burned it to the ground. He understood that to win the war and save the Union, he would have to break the South's will to fight. He was instrumental in bringing about the Confederacy's surrender. African Americans also held Sherman in high esteem for his Special Field Order, No 15, which seemed to promise 40 acres and a mule to freed slaves.

**Ulysses S. Grant** (1822-1885)

Commanding General of the Union Army

Ulysses S. Grant led the nation to victory over the Confederacy. Born on April 27, 1822 in Point Pleasant, Ohio, Grant went on to train at the United States Military Academy at West Point at the age of 17. On April 13, 1861, when Confederate troops attacked Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, Grant volunteered his military services. Grant knew that in order to defeat the Confederates, he would have to defeat General Lee. On April 9 1865, Lee surrendered his army, marking the end of the Civil War. In 1868, Grant was elected the 18<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. Grant championed African American citizenship and sought to protect freed people from the terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan.

**John Brown** (1800-1859)

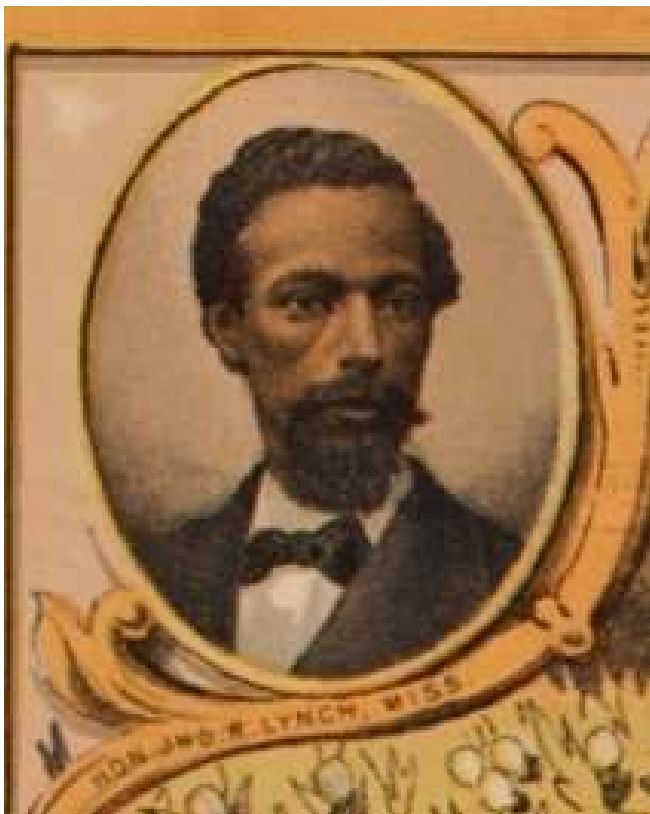
Abolitionist

In 1800, John Brown was born in Torrington, Connecticut. Traveling with his family through Michigan at the age of 12, Brown would witness an enslaved African American boy beaten which would haunt him for years to come. Brown was a deeply religious abolitionist who came to believe that violence was necessary to end slavery. In 1859, Brown unsuccessfully attacked the federal armory at Harpers Ferry with a small group of men. Brown intended to arm slaves with weapons seized from the arsenal, a plan, which he believed would lead to a violent mass uprising of slaves in the South. U.S. Marines overpowered the raiders, and Brown was quickly captured. He was executed later that year, but many African Americans held him in high esteem for decades as a martyr to the anti-slavery cause.

**John R. Lynch** (1847-1939)

U. S. Representative, Mississippi, 1873–1877, 1881–1883

John R. Lynch was born into slavery in Louisiana and was not emancipated until the end of the Civil War. Following the war, he settled in Mississippi and became active in the local Republican Party, leading to his election to the Mississippi State House of Representatives in 1870. Lynch enjoyed strong support from his constituents, resulting in a successful run for the U.S. House of Representative. As a congressman, Lynch promoted what eventually became the Civil Rights Act of 1875, which outlawed racial discrimination on public transportation and in public accommodations. Lynch served in Congress from 1873-1877 and again from 1881-1883. Following his tenure in Congress, Lynch remained active in politics as a member of the Republican National Committee and a delegate to the Republican National Convention. In 1913, he published *The Facts of Reconstruction* in response to the growing body of negative Reconstruction literature, which portrayed emancipated African Americans as unsuited for freedom or political office.



**Charles E. Nash** (1844-1913)

U. S. Representative, Louisiana, 1875-1877

In 1844, Charles E. Nash was born free in southern Louisiana, where he also attended public schools. Nash was working as a bricklayer in New Orleans when Union forces occupied the city in 1862. He enlisted in the Union Army in July 1863, and was promoted to sergeant. Nash was severely wounded during war, resulting in the loss of part of his right leg. Following the Civil War, his status as a wounded war hero helped win him the support of the local Republican Party. Local political appointments in New Orleans eventually led to Nash's successful election to the U.S. Congress in 1874, joining a record seven other black representatives in the House of Representatives. Democrats in Congress often denied Nash the opportunity to speak, for example by closing debate on an issue when it was Nash's turn at the podium. It was not until the close of his term in 1876 that Nash was finally given the opportunity to speak on the House Floor. He gave a memorable speech, calling for the support of public schools in the South; appealing for enforcement of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, and condemning the Democratic Party for harassing whites who supported black civil rights. Nash lost his bid for re-election to a Democratic candidate.

**Robert Smalls** (1839-1915)

U.S. Representative, 1875-1879 and 1881-1887

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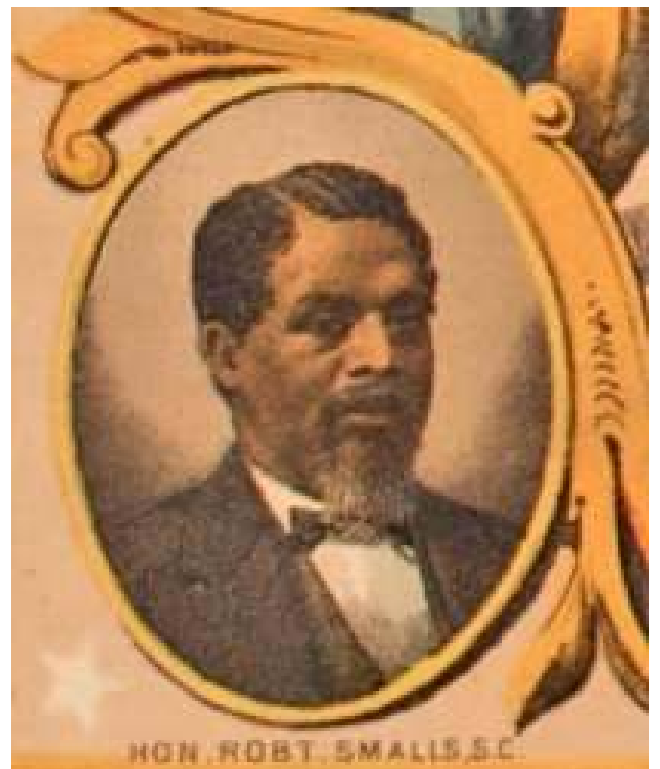
During this time, Smalls also became active in politics, acting as a delegate to the 1864 Republican National Convention. He became particularly well known in the Philadelphia black community when he was ejected from an all-white street car in the city in December 1864. Smalls used his celebrity as a war hero to lead a boycott of the streetcars, part of a series of protests that ultimately led to an 1867 law prohibiting discrimination on public transportation. In 1874, Smalls won his first term to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from 1875 to 1879 and 1881 to 1887. Despite his popularity, Smalls was unsuccessful in getting anti-discrimination legislation passed. He attempted to outlaw segregated units in the army and argued against the withdrawal of the federal troops who had been protecting African American rights in South Carolina.

**Joseph H. Rainey** (1832–1887)

U.S. Representative, South Carolina, 1870-1879

In 1832, Joseph H. Rainey was born to enslaved parents in South Carolina, but his father purchased the family's freedom during the early 1840s. Although free, Rainey was called into service by the Confederate Army when the Civil War broke out. He worked as a cook and built fortifications until 1862 when he and his wife escaped to Bermuda. Upon his return to South Carolina in 1866, Rainey rose within the Republican Party and held several local offices. In 1870, Rainey was nominated to fill the remainder of the term of a white South Carolina congressman who had resigned. Later that same year, Rainey was elected for a full term, making him the first African American to win election to Congress. Rainey supported Senator Charles Sumner's Civil Rights Bill of 1875, particularly its provisions to end school segregation. Rainey also served on the Committee on Freedmen's Affairs, where he argued for continued federal presence in the South to protect freed people from the terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan. He lost his re-election bid and retired from his seat in 1879.





## **Bios of the *Heroes of the Colored Race*:**

### **Three Main Figures:**

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