Lesson Plan for Tennessee State University Tour

Author: Jasmine Sears

Tennessee State University

This lesson plan was funded by the Mellon Partners for Humanities Collaboration. Partners include Tennessee State, Fisk, and Vanderbilt Universities.

Grade Level: 9-12

State Standards:
S.17 Explain how social institutions and cultures change and evolve due to historical changes, globalization, the Internet age, countercultures, and social movements

TN.54 Describe major agricultural shifts in Tennessee post-World War II and their impact economically and socially

TN.57 Identify major Tennessee figures involved in the Civil Rights Movement (e.g., Rev. James Lawson, Kelly Miller Smith

TN.61 Identify the contributions of influential Tennesseans of the era, including:

- Lamar Alexander
- Alex Haley
- Pat Summitt
- Howard Baker
- Dolly Parton
- Fred Thompson
- Al Gore, Jr.
- Wilma Rudolph
- Oprah Winfrey

US.80 Describe the significant events in the struggle to secure civil rights for African Americans, including:

- Montgomery Bus Boycott
- Marches, demonstrations, boycotts, and sit-ins (e.g., Nashville)
- Integration of Clinton High School in Clinton, TN
- March on Washington, D.C.
- Integration of Central High School in Little Rock, AR
- Birmingham bombings of 1963
- Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Freedom Riders
- Highlander Folk School

You can also find many ELA standards used:
https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/academic-standards/english-language-arts-standards.html

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to explain Tennessee State University's role in the Nashville Movement and identify key figures.
2. Students will be able to identify influential Tennessee State University alumni and their achievements.
3. Students will be able to identify important figures that contributed to the development of Tennessee State University buildings.
4. Students will be able to define and explain land-grant universities and the history of Tennessee A&I (today's TSU).

Essential Questions:

1. How has Tennessee State University influenced societal, political, or economic changes in Nashville? How has the university been affected by societal, political, or economic changes?
2. Who are some of the prominent TSU faculty, alumni, and administrators and how did they advance African American education and culture?
3. What were Tennessee A&I students' role in the Nashville Movement, and how did their leaders bring about change?
4. What is a land-grant university and why are they important to African American history and the history of higher education?
5. How has Tennessee State University influenced societal, political, or economic changes in Nashville? How has the university been affected by societal, political, or economic changes?

Materials:
Web and internet access (http://nashvillesites.org)
Smart phones for in-person walking tours
Laptop, tablet, desktop for virtual tours
Earbuds (optional)

Additional resources:

Ain't Scared of Your Jails (1960-1961)
https://www.pbs.org/video/aint-scared-of-your-jails-1960-1961-sktghc/

SNCC: Nashville Student Movement
https://snccdigital.org/inside-sncc/establishing-sncc/campus-affiliates/nashville-student-movement/

Tennessee State University: Distinguished Tigers
https://www.tnstate.edu/alumni/distinguishedtigers.aspx

The Bulletin of Tennessee A. & I. State Teachers College, December 1929
https://hbcudigitallibrary.auctr.edu/digital/collection/TSUL/id/505

National Women's History Museum- Wilma Rudolph
https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/wilma-rudolph

Lesson Plan:
To access the tour via Nashville Sites, go to http://nashvillesites.org. Scroll down and select "View All Tours." Select the tour from the alphabetized list. Read and accept the Terms of Use. Read and listen to the introduction.

Select "Take Tour" for in-person walking tour (and when prompted allow Nashville Sites to access your location to turn on GPS mapping directions). Select "Take Tour Virtually" to take the tour from your home or classroom.

Before lesson planning, check out the Teacher Tips at the end of the document as you adapt the lesson and tour to best meet your class's needs.

Before the tour:

Vocabulary: HBCU, PWI, Civil Rights Movement, racial integration, architecture, agriculture, land-grant college, Morrill Land Acts of 1862 and 1890, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, desegregation, sit-in

Engage the student: In groups discuss any prior knowledge they have of Historically Black Colleges and Universities? Do they already know of any major achievements or famous alumni of Tennessee State University? (Hint: Oprah Winfrey)

You can also have students watch Vice President Kamala Harris speak to the TSU Class of 2022 and connect it to her own experience at Howard University (HBCU in Washington DC). If you have limited time, you can start the video at 12-min mark: https://youtu.be/z83r3MXcWBE

A Note: In order to best teach the history of HBCUs in Tennessee, we suggest teaching the TSU lesson plan in tandem with the Fisk University/Meharry Medical College tour and lesson plan. This will allow students to consider the differences between private and public HBCUs, learn more about the Freedmen's Bureau and Morrill Acts, and the two models of Black higher education that emerged in the late 1800s: liberal arts (Fisk) v. vocational/technical (TN A&I).

This tour has more stops than many other Nashville Sites tours. As such, we would encourage you to combine or select specific stops to emphasize prominent themes in the tour.

During the Tour

Explore and Explain- Take the virtual tour (even if you do take the in-person tour). Before the tour, read the tour introduction with students. Below are possible activities your students can do after each stop. You can also choose to give these prompts to small groups of students after you have virtually or in-person done the tour.

Stop 1: Kean Hall
There are two parts to this stop. The first highlights the role of the armed forces in the careers of prominent TSU alumni and faculty. Watch this short video about the Tuskegee Airmen: https://www.doi.gov/video/remembering-tuskegee-airmen.

Have students pair and share as they discuss the video and these questions:
How did serving in the military impact the lives of General Lloyd W. "Fig" Newton, Lieutenant William McBryar, and Henry Arthur Kean?

For Part II of the stop, have students discuss why a college campus would be a good choice for the start of a protest march? What is a college's role in the community?

Stop 2: Floyd-Payne Campus Center and Bell Tower
Look at the university's seal. What stands out to you? What do you think it is representing about the university? Now, consider the TSU motto- Think. Work. Serve. Why is a motto important?

	At this stop, Dr. Williams says that the motto relates to TSU's history as a land-grant college. What is a land grant college? Why did the government pass this legislation? What was distinct about the Second Morrill Act in 1890? Students should use these primary sources to support their answer: 1) https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/morrill-act 2) https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/second-morrill-act-1890/

Create a motto or logo for yourself, and write a short paragraph explaining it. Why is creating a "brand" for yourself important?

Stop 3: Brown-Daniel Library
In two groups create a poster highlighting the lives of Martha Brown and Lois H. Daniel. How did they influence on TSU's library services, and why is having a university library important?

Stop 4: Clay Hall
Read the Tennessee Encyclopedia article on Robert E. Clay: http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/robert-e-clay/

Robert E. Clay worked with rural Tennesseans to improve education for African Americans. The Rosenwald Fund was started by Booker T. Washington, who believed in "educating the whole person" and access to education for all people.

Booker T. Washington was a proponent of technical/vocational education for African Americans. This contrasted with W.E.B. DuBois who believed African Americans should seek and deserved a liberal arts education. Both believed their vision would lead to greater racial uplift following the end of Reconstruction in 1877.

How does Clay's life and work factor into this historical debate? Why do you think that Robert Clay focused on founding schools in rural regions in Tennessee?

Stop 5: Strange Performing Arts Center
Watch a halftime from Tennessee State's Aristocrat of Bands: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZD5LmFvWBp4

What stands out to you in this performance? Why do you think they are called the Aristocrat of Bands? Why do you think they are so important to TSU's campus?

Stop 6: Hale Hall, Rudolph Hall, and Torrence Hall
Use the links provided to help you answer the following questions about Rita Sanders Geier's landmark case, *Geier v. University of Tennessee*.

- Tennessee Bar Association; A long Journey to Justice https://www.tba.org/index.cfm?pg=LawBlog&blAction=showEntry&blogEntry=29526
- Vanderbilt University Law School: The Named Plaintiff https://law.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/lawyer-vol36num1/news-geier.html
- University of Tennessee Knoxville: Geier Lawsuit and Consent Decree https://volopedia.lib.utk.edu/entries/geier-lawsuit-and-consent-decree/

What did Rita Sander's Geier discover about the funding for Tennessee State University?

How does this discovery relate to the 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education?*

What was the court's ruling, and how did it impact desegregation in higher education?

Stop 7: Boswell Science Complex and Black Greek Letter Organizations
Watch NBC news clip that introduces Black Greek-Letter Organizations, also known as the "Divine Nine." Google the following to learn more or click on linked names.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity	Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity	Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity	Zeta Phi Beta Sorority
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity	Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority
Iota Phi Theta Fraternity	

Which fraternity or sorority would you join based on visiting their webpages? List your top three choices and explain your preferences.

Stop 8: Holland Hall, Crouch Hall, and Mirrored Lakes
How, why was Mirrored Lakes important to the Black community at the height of racial segregation. Why do you think having a recreation space for TSU students is important?

Stop 9: Research and Sponsored Programs Building
TSU was founded as a research university and many of their faculty members have received support for their cutting-edge work, especially in science and agriculture. What is the difference between a research university and a liberal arts college? How would the differences impact the type of classes, colleges, and focus of the school? What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of each?

Stop 10: Elliot Hall, Women's Building, and Van Gordon Art Gallery
Plan a trip to visit the Van Gordon Art Gallery, which showcases several exhibits a year featuring TSU students, local artists, and traveling exhibits.

Optional: Watch a video showcasing the Hiram Van Gordon Gallery at TSU (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apK0Nq69xFE&feature=youtu.be).

Stop 11: Averitte Amphitheater, Love Building, and Davis Hall
Stop and sit as a class at the Averitte Amphitheater to complete the following activities.

Part I
Along with being played daily at the Bell Tower, the alma mater is played at the start or end of many athletic events at TSU. It was written by Laura Averitte—the namesake for this amphitheater.

Here are the lyrics for TSU's alma mater as inspiration, you can also watch TSU's famed marching band play the Alma Mater & I'm So Glad at the end of a football game.

In the land of golden sunshine
By the Cumberland's fertile short
Stands a school for greater service
One that we adore
Alma Mater, how we love thee,
Love they white and blue
May we strive to meet they mandates
With faith that's true.

—Laura M. Averitte

Part II

Walter S. Davis served at university president from 1943 to 1968, during which time Nashville experienced major social change because of the Civil Rights Movement. Write an essay that discusses TSU role during this period. Be sure to include the 1960s Nashville Sit-ins and Easter Boycott.

Use the links provided along with individual research to help with the essay. You can also check out our Civil Rights Sit-Ins and Civil Rights Driving tours on Nashville Sites for information.

Walter S. Davis

Nashville Sit-Ins (1959-1961)

Economic Withdrawal During the Nashville Sit-Ins

Stop 12: Harned Hall and Politics

This stop highlights the work of politicians, often white men, who showed continued support for Tennessee State University's development. How did the work of Jim Nance McCord, Frank G. Clement, and Ned McWherter impact TSU's fight for equal Federal Land Grant Funding?

Write a short biography of one of the governors listed and present to the class. Include: place of birth, years served, and important facts of their career.

Gov. Jim Nance McCord - National Governors Association

Frank G. Clement - Tennessee Encyclopedia

Gov. Ned Ray McWherter - National Governors Association

Stop 13: Goodwill Manor
This historic building, called Goodwill Manor, was designed by the oldest, most renowned Black-owned architecture firm in the nation. Watch and read the following then discuss the questions below.

Interview of Cheryl McKissack about the history of McKissack & McKissack:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOib_KYwilQ

Nashville Public Library article about history of McKissack & McKissack:
https://library.nashville.org/blog/2021/03/building-nashville-history-mckissack-mckissack-architecture-firm

- Which building most stands out to you out of those discussed in the video clip or article?
- What are some of the elements of the building's style? Use this architecture glossary to help you identify features and terms: www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/resources/dictionary.html
- What is the purpose of the building? How does the building's function relate to the story that Cheryl McKissack told about her family, their business, and their current endeavors?

Stop 14: Hankal Hall and Queen Washington Building
This building is named for longtime Dean of Women and professor Edna Rose Hankal.

Read these excerpts from "How 20th-Century Female African American Deans Changed the Higher Ed Landscape" written by Dr. Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant. Here is a link to the full article. Excerpts below.

https://www.diverseeducation.com/opinion/article/15290536/how-20thcentury-female-african-american-deans-changed-the-higher-ed-landscape

"In the 1920s, women students at Persistently White Institutions (PWIs), were approaching numerical parity with men, and by the 1940s, women would outnumber men at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Although such students brought in needed tuition dollars, many presidents of coeducational institutions were uneasy with their presence. As a result, they hired deans of women whom they hoped would minimize the cultural impact of women students. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, these administrative newcomers operated on upwards of 90% of US colleges and universities."

"Although often regarded as semi-professionals by men peers, deans of women viewed themselves quite differently. Understanding the power of the academic curriculum, they sought faculty rank, taught, and published. However, the core of their labors was the building of new institutional structures to foster curricular and co-curricular belonging for women students. [Dean Lucy Griggs Slowe of Howard University] and her colleagues pursued what historian Jana Nidiffer terms 'genuine access' for undergraduate women: the 'feeling that you are welcome in the entire community and not ignored, demeaned, harmed, treated as a social stereotype, or otherwise made to feel threatened or peripheral.'"

Have students get into smaller discussion groups and consider the following questions:

- Does this explanation align with what you guessed?
- Are you surprised that this type of position was necessary? Why or why not?
- Do you think that this position would still be helpful on campuses? Why or why not?
- If you were a Dean of Women, what types of activities, infrastructure, social events, or classes would you advocate for and why?

Stop 15-17: Gentry Center, Olympic Plaza and Statue, Hale Stadium and Field House
TSU has had many famous athletes pass through its campus including Wilma Rudolph, Ralph Boston, Richard Dent, Mae Faggs, Barbara Jones, Chandra Cheeseborough, and many more. Additionally, coaches Howard Gentry, Ed Temple, and John Merritt trained these athletes and made Tennessee State University an international name in sports.

The success of these athletes and coaches meant that they were representatives of HBCUs and some used this prestige to advocate for African American equality. In fact, Wilma Rudolph refused to participate in her homecoming parade unless it was integrated. How can sports serve as a means of social change?

Fun Fact: TSU athletes won a medal in *every* Olympic Games from 1952 to 1984—more than any other collegiate program.

Part I
Have students walk around the statue and choose a person to Google. Have students report out on each athlete's accomplishments.

Part II
Have students listen to relevant stops on our Women's Sports History tour: https://nashvillesites.org/tours/women's-sports-history.

Part III
Let's learn about the inspiring story of Wilma Rudolph as a track athlete, Olympian, and Civil Rights activist. In 1960, after winning the gold medal in the 100-meter race, Rudolph was dubbed the "Fastest Woman in the World." She was the first American woman to win three gold medals at the same Olympic Games. When she came home, she demanded that the parade intended to honor her was desegregated.

Read a short article from the Natl. Women's History Museum with her biography: https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/wilma-rudolph

Now let's analyze primary sources! Explore this online exhibit about women's sports, which includes a program for the parade honoring Wilma Rudolph in Clarksville, Tennessee. Have a class discussion about the landmark moments in women's sports. https://womenshistory.si.edu/herstory/sports

How did Wilma affect women's sports and civil rights? How have women's sports changed or not changed since the 1960s (and after passage of Title IX in 1972)?

Stop 18: College of Agriculture
Have you ever considered a degree in agriculture? For a university located in an urban area, you may be surprised that TSU's College of Agriculture is one of its most successful programs. Here is a 4-minute video for you to watch to learn more: https://youtu.be/t2hDA3iy2ME

Choose a concentration that seems most interesting, explain the concentration that you chose, and why you chose it. What are 3 possible careers in agriculture you find interesting?

Agriculture is also TSU's most historic area of emphasis. As you learned on the tour, Tennessee State University began as a land grant college under the name Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial Normal School in 1912. For many years, the food served on campus was grown exclusively by students and staff.

After the tour

Assessment #1 (summative):
Pick three of your favorite stops from the tour and reflect on how they connect to the larger story of Tennessee State University. How do the different people or places connect with one another? How do they represent TSU mission, vision, and history? Why are these your favorite stops and what did they teach you about the history of HBCUs?

Assessment #2 (analytical):
Have students reflect on the video of Vice President Harris that they watched at the beginning of the tour. Then, consider the major events and themes from the tour and write an essay reflecting on the role that Tennessee State University has played in the lives of African American students. How has it helped students reach their goals? What role has it played in the larger Nashville community and how has it supported African American progress in different fields?

Extending the Lesson:

Option #1: Arrange to have a student or faculty member from TSU speak to your class or email with the students. Students should prepare questions based on what they learned from the your and about the guest's experiences teaching at or attending the school.

Option #2: If you worked on this lesson plan and/or took this tour with the Fisk University tour, have students compare the two schools. What are the differences in their histories? How have they developed in both similar and different ways?

Assessment #3 (visual, chronological):
Create a promo poster that highlights the accomplishments and history of one of the following at TSU—include history, notable people, important programs, and current status:
Fraternities or Sororities
College of Agriculture
Architecture on Campus
Athletic Program

Alternative Assessment or Activities-

Post highlights or pictures of campus to social media (tag @NashvilleSites)
Create a board game of the campus highlighting the places and people on the tour
Conduct an interview with a student, staff member, or alumni
Create a trivia game, crossword puzzle, or Kahoot game
Design a poster board for a building or person on campus
Create an illustrated timeline
Role play important figures from the university as part of a "Living History" assignment

Teacher Tips:

If you are unable to walk the tour before bringing a class or student group, here are some suggestions for you, the teacher:

1. Before your visit, you should reach out to Campus Security. Call (615) 963-5171. All visitors (including classes and students) must be approved before entering campus. Check in with security at the entrance near the stadium.

2. Visitor parking is available in the front of the campus across from the fighter jet, where the tour begins. Depending on the size of your vehicle/bus, other parking arrangements with the university may need to be made prior to arriving. Keep in mind that the university is busy during operation hours, so parking may be limited.
3. Although the tour is an hour and a half, for students it will most likely take longer, especially if you wish to enter some buildings. Be aware that classes are in progress! Please minimize the noise level of the students before entering.
4. There is so much to see, especially for a child/student that has not been to a college campus. Be sure to keep track of the students, or institute a buddy system as the campus may get very busy. It may be beneficial to take the virtual tour ahead of time before visiting the campus so that you can focus on your class's safety.
5. Students will be able to purchase food from one of the on-campus dining options. For a larger group, it is best to contact dining services for pricing to utilize the buffet style cafeteria. There are outdoor seating options available in the courtyard outside the Floyd-Payne Campus Center or the Averitte Amphitheater.
6. Bathrooms are available in every building for emergencies, but we suggest students use the Floyd-Payne Campus Center upon arrival or during a lunch/snack break.