

# Trailblazers in Opera: Marian Anderson

## LESSON PLANS

### MATERIALS

- [One-pager about Marian Anderson](#)
- Edpuzzle.com account
- Pencils, Crayons or Colored pencils
- Speakers and Projector/Smartboard

### CONTENT VOCABULARY

- Trailblazer
- Contralto
- Jim Crow Laws
- Northern Migration
- Daughters of the Confederacy
- Civil Rights Movement

### PRE-LESSON STEPS

1. Create a free account with Edpuzzle.com (This step will give your students access to the video assignments.)
2. Please write these essential questions on the board or display in your online meeting space. (Please adapt wording to fit your students' reading level.)
  - a. What does it mean to be a trailblazer?
  - b. What are Jim Crow Laws? And how did they affect progress for African Americans in the early 20th century?
  - c. What is a "contralto?"
3. Write the following "bell ringer" up on the board: "What does it mean to be a trailblazer? "

## ACTIVITY STEPS

### Day One: Who is Marian Anderson?

1. Introduce: Ask the students to describe what the word “trailblazer” means to them.
  - a. Give the students 5 minutes “writing time” about the question.
    - i. Have them journal about it. This can be your bell ringer for the day.
  - b. Begin with writing student responses on the board and start guiding their responses to two important thoughts “leading by creating a path for others to follow” and/or “being persistent in your goals and not allowing others to keep you from achieving them.”
  - c. Ask the students if they know who Marian Anderson is. Provide a brief explanation of the moments that lead up to the Lincoln Memorial concert.
2. Show the video of the performance and introduction at the Lincoln Memorial.  
(3 mins)
  - a. After watching the video have the student read a brief history of Marian Anderson’s life.
  - b. After reading the history, have the students fill in a worksheet about her historical accomplishments.
3. Homework before the next day of class: Watch one or both videos about her life including examples of her singing style. (Use Edpuzzle to answer questions about the video while watching.)
  - a. Option One - Historical Context of Marian Anderson
  - b. Option Two - Vocal Selections of Marian Anderson

## ACTIVITY STEPS CONT'D

### Day Two: Historical Context and Timeline comparison of Marian Anderson's life against U.S. History (1897-1993)

1. Ask the students why they think Marian Anderson's achievements are historically significant?
  - a. Again give them time to journal about it. 5 minutes or so. Please play one of her recordings while you are waiting for the students to complete the journal entry.
2. Discussion: Ask your students to discuss with you their thoughts and feelings on the journal topic.
3. Use this [Timeline](#) to discuss Marian Anderson's life in comparison to the roadblocks created by racism in U.S. history.
  - a. Take careful note of Jim Crow era laws, The Daughters of the Confederacy, and the performance at the Lincoln Memorial.
4. Give Students a chance to show what they know with a Choice Board Assignment.

### Choice Board Assignment

Have the students choose one of the following assignments to showcase their learning about Marian Anderson:

#### Choice One:

Draw a picture about the Scene at the Lincoln Memorial. In your drawing try to share what that day might have felt like from Marian Anderson's perspective, What might have felt like for the people who gathered to watch? Share your Picture with the class .

#### Choice Two:

Write a speech: Imagine that you are in charge of introducing Marian Anderson to the Lincoln Memorial crowd. What would you say? What details about Marian's life would you include to help the crowd who might not know who she is? Or why this day is important? Share your Speech with the class.

#### Choice Three:

Write a Journal Entry : Imagine that you are Marian Anderson and today you are going to sing at the Lincoln Memorial... What are you thinking about? Are you nervous? What thoughts are going through your mind? Share your journal entry with the class.

#### Choice Four:

Analyze "My Country 'Tis of Thee." Marian Anderson sang this song as her first offering during the concert at the Lincoln Memorial. Why? What lyrics of the song stick with you after listening to her singing it on that day? Why might that be the case? Share your thoughts with the class.

# STANDARDS

## Missouri Fine Arts GLEs

## National Standards

MU: Re7B.8b (pg. 11)

FA 3, 5

Identify and compare the context of programs of music from a variety of genres, cultures, and historical periods.

MU: Cn10A.8a (pg. 14)

FA 1, 4, 5

Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

MU: Cn11A.8a (pg. 15)

FA 1, 3, 4, 5

Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

## Missouri Social Studies GLEs

9-12.AH.1.CC.D

Using an inquiry lens, develop compelling questions about United States history post 1870 to determine helpful resources and consider multiple points of view.

9-12.AH.2.Gov.A

Analyze laws, policies and processes to determine how governmental systems affect individuals and groups in society in United States History C. 1870 to 2010.

6-8. AH.5.PGC.1.A

Using an American history lens, describe how people's perspectives shaped the sources/ artifacts they created.

6-8. AH.5.PGC.1.B

Using an American history lens, examine the origins and impact of social structures and stratifications on societies and relationships between peoples.

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