

Reflections on LGBT* History Month

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THEME

LGBTQIA+ Rights

CONTEXT

Recent history has been characterized by a growing awareness that those who identify as LGBTQIA+ have been denied basic human rights throughout history. This denial of rights has been accompanied by exclusion, persecution, and violence against LGBTQIA+ individuals and their communities, but also of growing demands for equal rights.

LGBT History Month, established in 1994 by a teacher in the United States officially is an annual month-long observance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender history, as well as the history of gay rights and related civil movements.

The present activity builds on LGBTQIA+ timeline cards created for the Just Now project.

GOALS

- Raising awareness of LGBTQIA+ histories
- Gaining insight into several individuals who have left their mark – in a positive way – on LGBTQIA+ history
- Gaining insight into local and national organizations that promote the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals and communities

METHODOLOGY

- Brainstorming
- Individual and small group work
- Conducting research
- Developing a poster (online or physical)
- Presenting

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students/participants better understand what 'LGBT History Month' is, what its aims are and why this month is important
- Students/participants are able to process their newly gained insights into several individuals who have left their mark – in a positive way – on LGBTQIA+ history

*Many abbreviations have been used to refer to sexual diversity. Here we have adopted the concept LGBTQIA+, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (one's sexual or gender identity), intersex, and asexual/aromantic/agender. LGBT History month uses a different abbreviation yet refers to the same kind of diversity.

- Students/participants are able to process their newly gained insights into local and/or national organizations that promote LGBTQIA+ rights
- Students/participants improve their research, collaboration, active listening, and discussion skills

MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- Access to the internet
- Flipchart paper and markers if students/participants create physical posters

Overview of activities (process)

Duration: 3 x 45 minutes

Preparation

This activity can be done at any point in the school year but fits best just before or during LGBT History Month.

If teachers/educators are looking for web-based material on LGBT History Month, it is available in multiple languages. See the Resources section at the end of this lesson plan for English language resources.

Ideally, teachers/educators will have already introduced the topics of sexual diversity and/or social movements. Teachers/educators should also have insight into any kind of resistance that might exist among students/participants, parents and or the community to this topic.

PART 1: 45-50 MINUTES

Introduction: 5 minutes (plenary)

The teacher/educator briefly explains what is expected of the learners. He/she/they also goes over what has already been covered with respect to social movements and sexual diversity. Furthermore, the teacher/educator should explain that it is presently (or almost) LGBT History Month.

What is LGBT History Month?: 10 minutes (plenary)

The teacher/educator asks if anybody knows what LGBT History Month is? It is unlikely anybody will, therefore the teacher/educator asks in a brainstorm approach what the students/participants think such a month would entail. The teacher/educator keeps track of the comments and summarizes.

Small group research and presentations: 20 minutes

The larger group is now divided into groups of 5. Group facilitators and presenters are assigned. Each group is given the assignment to research for 15 minutes one the following questions (each group answers one of the following questions):

1. When and why was LGBT History Month created? Who created it?
2. What kinds of activities tend to take place during LGBT History Month?

The groups present briefly what they found (5 minutes).

Debrief, discussion and prep for next lesson: 10 minutes

The teacher/educator debriefs by summarizing/accentuating the major findings from the student/participants research and addresses any incorrect information from the presentations. The teacher/educator can also ask questions such as:

- Do you think such days/months are important in general? For our society and/or school? Why?
- What kinds of issues do members of the LGBTQIA+ community face in our country today?
- Is our school doing enough? Could it do more?

PART 2: TWO PERIODS OF 45-50 MINUTES (CREATING A POSTER)

PERIOD 2

Educator Preparation

The teacher/educator selects approximately 8-10 individuals that have made a positive contribution to LGBTQIA+ history. These can be taken from the internet (see the following links or go to the Just Now timeline cards). The teacher/educator also selects 3-4 organizations (especially local organizations) that have made a positive contribution to LGBTQIA+ history (also to be found on the internet).

Introduction and settling in: 10 minutes

The teacher/educator introduces what was covered in the previous session to refresh the students'/participants' memory. The students/participants are briefed on their task: to jointly (in small groups) create a poster about either a person from history or a past/present organization that works for LGBTQIA+ rights.

Small groups of approximately 5 students/participants are created by the teacher/educator, either through interest or through assignment. Group facilitators and presenters are assigned.

Research and working on posters: 35 minutes

Students/participants go to the internet (in their respective groups) and research the person/organization of their choice (or that they have been assigned to). They also look at both appropriate images and text.

Students/participants start work in their small groups on developing a poster (either online or on a physical surface). The poster should be primarily informational and contain both images and text.

PERIOD 3

Finishing work on posters: 20 minutes

Students/participants finish their work on the posters. The facilitator and the presenter lead the discussion in the subgroups on what and how they will present.

Presentations: 20 minutes

Each subgroup presents its poster for about 3 minutes. The other groups can ask short questions of clarification.

Debrief: 5 – 10 minutes

The teacher/educator gives feedback, debriefs the activity, and wraps up.

HOMEWORK IDEAS

Students/participants can be encouraged to watch one or two videos, if available, about LGBT History Month, or films that have been featured during LGBT History Month.

ADAPTATION ALTERNATIVES

- Students/participants can take the initiative to invite a speaker to class or school (in person or virtual) who can make a presentation about LGBT History Month. In such a case, teacher/educator can ask students/participants to do research on who they would like to invite and why, and then follow-up.

- If there is resistance to the theme of LGBTQIA+ rights, on the part of students/participants, parents and/or the community, educators can opt to discuss LGBTQIA+ rights and/or LGBT History Month as one of several human rights related days/weeks/months and their importance. This can remove the exclusive focus on this issue. In this case it can be useful for various subgroups of students/participants to each select a human rights issue that they wish to research and present. For instance, women's rights, refugee and immigrant rights, children's rights, Roma rights, and also LGBTQIA rights.

RESOURCES

For LGBT History Month

<https://lgbthistorymonth.com/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_History_Month

Videos for the possible homework assignment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTetslDIBkM>

OR for classic films on LGBTQIA+ history:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/campus-life/blogs/staff-qmu-communications-team/five-films-to-check-out-this-lgbt-history-month-and-beyond/>



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