

## Affrilachia

### Overview

Despite the vastness and diversity of Appalachia, the term is often associated with cultural aspects that are not inclusive of African Americans. In this lesson, students will explore black life in the mountains, first through the lens of “Affrilachia,” a term coined by black Appalachian poet Frank X Walker. Through the exploration of poetry and music, students will gain an understanding of the important role African Americans have played in mountain culture. Students will further explore the various experiences of African Americans living in the North Carolina Mountains by listening to oral history interviews from the Southern Oral History Program, covering topics from daily life to the impact of the Civil Rights Movement. Students will culminate their learnings by creating a performance piece about black life in Appalachia from oral history interview excerpts.

### Essential Questions

- What are the defining aspects of Appalachia?
- In what ways have African Americans been traditionally less recognized as part of the Appalachian culture?
- Why was the term “Affrilachia” created and what is it meant to represent?
- In what ways are African Americans crucial to the history and culture of Appalachia?
- What was daily life like across the decades for African Americans in Appalachia?
- How did African Americans in Appalachia influence the Civil Rights movement and how did the Civil Rights movement influence them?

### NC Essential Standards

#### 8th Grade Social Studies

- 8.H.1.3 Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives.
- 8.H.2.2 Summarize how leadership and citizen actions (e.g. the founding fathers, the Regulators, the Greensboro Four, and participants of the Wilmington Race Riots, 1898) influenced the outcome of key conflicts in North Carolina and the United States.
- 8.H.3.3 Explain how individuals and groups have influenced economic, political and social change in North Carolina and the United States.
- 8.C&G.1.4 Analyze access to democratic rights and freedoms among various groups in North Carolina and the United States.
- 8.C&G.2.3 Explain the impact of human and civil rights issues throughout North Carolina and United States history.

#### Common Core

- RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

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- SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
- L.8.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

### Materials

- Affrilachia accompanying PowerPoint; available (in PDF format) in Carolina K-12's Database of K-12 Resources.
  - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click "View" in the top menu bar of the file, and select "Full Screen Mode"
  - Teachers are encouraged to edit the PPT's information to best meet their particular learning objectives. For an editable version of the PPT, email Carolina K-12 at [CarolinaK12@unc.edu](mailto:CarolinaK12@unc.edu) with the title of the PowerPoint in the subject line.
- Computer with internet access, projector, speakers
- Exploring "Affrilachia" guided notes
- "Affriliachia" by Frank X Walker (poem text attached and available at <http://coalblackvoices.com/poets/frank/index.html>)
- Practicing Oral History Performance - Edited Transcripts, attached
- Transcripts of Oral History Clips, attached
- Performing Oral History, assignment attached
- Individual computers or tablets with headphones – enough for pairs of students to use for independent listening

### Student Preparation

Students should already have an understanding of the Appalachian region and history, and a broad overview of the different people living in the mountains and how they came to make Appalachia home. Students will also have been introduced to oral history, its purpose and what we may learn from it.

### Duration

1 or more class periods (time will vary depending on how in-depth classes go with the research and performance of oral histories)

### Procedure

#### An Introduction to "Affrilachia"

1. As a brief warm-up, project [slide 2](#) of the accompanying Power Point and ask students to call out words, phrases and associations that come to mind when they hear the term Appalachia. The teacher might want to note students thoughts on chart paper up front, categorizing similar answers together. If any responses are stereotypical, discuss this. Project [slide 3](#) and share that by definition, Appalachia is a cultural region in the Eastern United States that stretches from New York to Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia. Teachers can briefly review/discuss some of the defining aspects of [Appalachia](#) then quickly move on to [slide 4](#), which asks students to consider the term "Affriliachia." Have students take a few minutes to think and then summarize their predictions regarding the word's meaning/origin.
2. Provide students with the attached "Exploring Affrilachia" guided notes. Explain to students that Affriliachia is a term created by [Frank X Walker](#), an African American poet from Danville, Kentucky. As of 2013, he is the [Poet Laureate of Kentucky](#). Walker coined the word "Affrilachia", signifying the importance of the African-American presence in [Appalachia](#): the "new word ... spoke to the union of Appalachian identity and the region's African-American culture and history." Tell students you are going to play a brief

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excerpt from an interview with Walker where he discusses aspects of identity and why he coined this new term. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llZ9qXZDi4E> and play 2 brief segments back to back, the first from 11 seconds to 40 seconds and then from 1:01 to 1:50. Students should answer #1 on their Guided Notes while watching. Afterwards, project [slide 5](#) in review and discuss:

- Walker says, “There’s a lot in a name, and there’s a lot in naming yourself. If you don’t tell your own story, someone else will.” What message is he trying to convey? How might this belief have led him to become a poet?
- What does Walker mean when he says there is a misconception that you have to be one thing or one person, when in actuality we are more complicated than that, often liking multiple things? Can you relate to this at all? Why do you think we often want to categorize people into particular boxes in our society?
- Why was poet Frank Walker disappointed in the dictionary’s definition of Appalachian?
- What stereotypes does the term Affrilachian challenge?
- In what ways is the Appalachian region incredibly diverse? Why is it so important to recognize such diversity?
- How does Walker’s creation of the term Affrilachian speak to the power he mentioned of “naming yourself?”

### Exploring Affrilachian Poetry

3. Provide students with a copy of Walker’s poem, Affrilachia (attached and available at <http://coalblackvoices.com/poets/frank/index.html>) and have them discuss the accompanying questions together.
4. Optional: Teachers with time/interest can explore additional poems by Affrilachian writers. Poems as well as videos of writers reading their poems are available at <http://coalblackvoices.com/>. Students (individually or in pairs) can read and/or listen to one or more poems, such as:
  - “Brown Country” by Nikky Finny – Video reading at <https://vimeo.com/119075124> and text at <http://coalblackvoices.com/poets/nikky/index.html>
  - “We Raised You by Ricardo Nazario-Colon – video at <https://vimeo.com/19690073> and text at <http://coalblackvoices.com/poets/ricardo/index.html>
  - “Raised by Women” by Kelly Norman Ellis – video at <https://vimeo.com/62904155> and text at <http://coalblackvoices.com/poets/kelly/index.html>

Discuss questions such as:

- What do the poems have in common? Focus on the deeper *meaning* of the poem, not the structure or style.
- What images in the poems and artwork break down stereotypes? Do any reinforce stereotypes? Explain your answer with evidence.
- One part of the mission of the Affrilachian Artists Project is to “reinforce cultural anchors”. How do these poems and artwork fulfill this mission?
- In what ways do these works illustrate how Affrilachia is about learning and celebrating the untold history of people of color living in the mountains?

### Exploring Affrilachian Music: The Carolina Chocolate Drops

5. Next, tell students you want to explore some music with them and without telling them anything about the musicians or identifying the band, play an excerpt of a song by the Carolina Chocolate Drops at <http://www.carolinachocolatedrops.com/band/about.html>. (See the “Listen Now” box on the right side of

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the page. “Riro’s House,” for instance, is a great option to play a minute or so of.) As students listen for 45-60 seconds, instruct them to fill out #2 on their worksheet, which asks them to reflect on what they hear:

- Listen to the excerpt of the music. In the box below, describe (or illustrate with images and symbols) the style of the music and how it makes you feel. What do you associate with this music? If it were used in a movie, what scene would be taking place while this music played? Who do you think the musicians are playing this music and what might they look like?

6. Allow students to share their reactions with the class and then project [slide 6](#). Tell the students that the music they listened to is by the [Carolina Chocolate Drops](#), pictured on the slide. Further discuss:
  - Is this who you pictured as the musicians when listening? If not, who did you picture and why?
  - Why do you think we often associate blue grass music with people who are Appalachian and white? How do the Carolina Chocolate Drops challenge this thinking?
  - Why do you think they named themselves the Carolina Chocolate Drops?
  - How does this music fit into what you have learned about Affrilachia artists? How does it “reinforce cultural anchors”?
    - Discuss with students that while many people do not associate blue grass and string band music with African Americans, the Carolina Chocolate Drops follow a long and diverse musical history as they merge old time, blue grass, country, classic blues, early jazz and "hot music", African and Caribbean songs, and more. In fact, the [banjo](#) itself derives from instruments that had been used in the Caribbean since the 17th century by enslaved people taken from West Africa.
7. Play the 5:30 min. video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbcqGjeNz7w>, which provides a closer look at the Carolina Chocolate Drops. Discuss:
  - In what ways are the Carolina Chocolate Drops transcending stereotypes and barriers?
  - Did you hear any music that you recognized? (Students may know [“Hit ‘em Up Style \(oops!\)” by Blu Cantrell](#), released in 2001.)
  - At the same time, how are they reenacting a long African American tradition, unknown to many? How are they using this music to open up certain aspects of history?
8. If time permits, teachers may also want to allow students to listen to Rhiannon Giddens’s “At The Purchaser's Option,” which not only exposes them to other aspects of this genre of music, but also shows the powerful way Rhiannon Giddens is addressing the haunting history of slavery through her music. The song is available via video [here](#) and includes the lyrics visually. The full lyrics are available [here](#). After listening, discuss the song and share the quote by Giddens on [slide 7](#). Instruct students to interpret her message on #3 of their accompanying worksheet then share their thoughts with the class.

#### **Using Oral History to learn about the lives of African Americans in Appalachia**

9. Let students know that they are going to continue exploring the lives and experiences of African Americans living in Appalachia by meeting some of them through their oral history interviews. Either introduce or review what oral history is with students by projecting [slide 8](#) and collecting student thoughts. Make sure they understand that:
  - Oral History is a primary source.
  - Oral history is a type of history data collection typically using interview with an emphasis on storytelling or sharing memories of the past.
10. Ask students to share why oral history is important and how it can help us learn about our shared past. (Answers will vary, but ensure students consider how it provides an insight to past from diverse voices, it can help us learn about daily life of everyday people, etc.) Lead into how oral histories are a way to tell the

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untold history sometimes left out of text books or overlooked in the mainstream. Frank X Walker highlighted this when calling to attention the assumptions about Appalachia, assumptions that don't include the diversity of the region. Let students know that they further explore Appalachia by exploring some interviews that focus on the lives and experiences of black NC citizens living in the mountains.

11. Move to [slide 9](#) and explain to students that you will be playing some brief excerpts for them and discuss what to listen for. Instruct students to answer #5-8 on their worksheet as they listen and reflect. Go over the brief biographical information about each person and play the clips for students, discussing afterwards using [slide 13](#).
  - Mrs. Geraldine Ray ([slide 10](#))
  - Dr. Thomas Kilgore ([slide 11](#))
  - Judge Richard Erwin ([slide 12](#))
    - While this is only a 15 second clip, the statement he makes is powerful. Students will be exposed to longer clips in their independent listening.

### **Creating Performances Out of Oral Histories**

12. After discussing these clips, tell students that they will be listening to additional clips by these Appalachian residents, but with the specific purpose of creating a performance out of each person's words. Project [slide 14](#) and discuss with students how theatre (like the art forms of poetry and music that they began this lesson with) can be a powerful way to engage people in the past. Ask two (or more, if you want to split each excerpt in a creative way) volunteers to be readers of excerpts from the first two clips they just heard. (Provide students with the attached edited transcripts to read from. Ideally, teachers may select these students prior to class so that they can briefly practice ) To highlight the creative way the text can be used, teachers might choose to play coordinating music underneath as students read, or highlight certain words or phrases that multiple students read at once, in order to make that particular section "pop." Be sure to address how to avoid stereotyping the narrator in performances.
13. After students have "performed" the excerpts, discuss #9 on their worksheets. Further discuss what creative additions could be added into a reading/performance of excerpts such as these to make the performance even more impactful/engaging (i.e., playing music, wearing costumes or particular colors, projecting primary source images/photos, adding purposeful movement, utilizing props, etc.)
14. Let students know that in partners, they are going to explore additional excerpts from Mrs. Ray, Dr. Kilgore, and Judge Erwin with the dual purpose of learning more about them and life in Appalachia, as well as utilizing their words to create a brief performance. Handout the attached "Performing Oral Histories" assignment instructions and rubric and go over it together. [Slides 15-17](#) contain various interview excerpts that students can use for their performance.
  - Teachers might want to assign pairs of students a particular person/topic, allow all students to browse all links provided and choose, and/or teachers can also expand the assignment to allow students to research additional oral history interviews. Students can also be given the option to create a performance from more than one interviewee's responses.
  - Teachers should edit the attached Performing Oral Histories sheet with additional details based on how complex of a project they choose to make this. The performance can be a quick activity or a detailed project taking several days to weeks to research and perform. (Request an editable Word file by e-mailing [CarolinaK12@unc.edu](mailto:CarolinaK12@unc.edu).)
  - To utilize the clips provided in the PPT, teachers may want to save slides 15-17 on the laptops students will be using for listening so that they can click on each excerpt directly.

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- Demonstrate to students how to access the clips, the links for full transcripts, how to copy and paste excerpts from the transcripts into a document, then cut it down to a performance. Ultimately, students will work in pairs to listen to their assigned interview clips, choose the lines to perform (1-2 minutes), then practice the reading.
  - To search for keywords in a transcript: go to the interview page, on the right side there will be a column titled “Thumbnails.” Select the thumbnail labeled “Transcript.” Click the “Download” button to download or to open the PDF in a new tab. Hit control + F (windows) or command + F (mac). A search bar will appear. Type in a few words from the selection you are looking for and it will highlight the corresponding text. Click and drag to highlight and select the text you would like, then copy and paste into a new document.
- Teachers should also discuss with students how to be respectful of the people’s words they are performing. Let students know they do not need to mimic accents or ways of speaking; rather they should focus on featuring the person’s words, spirit and message in a creative way.
- **OPTIONAL:** Additional SOHP interviews for exploring Appalachian & NC Leaders in Civil Rights Movement
  - Lewis A Brandon III – grew up in segregated Asheville, church life, attended Stephens Lee HS, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sohp/id/25555/rec/45>
  - Roberta Jackson – Boone, NC, discusses her vibrant, segregated community. Lots of details about growing up in segregated Boone and some of desegregation <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sohp/id/25475/rec/57>
  - Floyd McKissick – famous civil rights leader from Asheville, doesn’t discuss Asheville so much as the movement from 70’s perspective <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/sohp/id/21374/rec/1>
  - Howard Kester – white civil rights leader, part of Fellowship of Southern Churchmen <http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/B-0007-1/menu.html>

15. Teachers should provide time for students to explore and work together, rotating around the room and checking in with each group about their performance ideas and oral history excerpts they are choosing to use. Let students know when their final work is due and is to be performed.

16. When it is time for students to perform, project [slide 18](#) and go over respectful expectations for both audience members and performers. As students watch each performance, they should create a chart on notebook paper for taking notes that include the name(s) of the interviewee’s from which the performance was created, what they learned about Appalachian life and experiences, as well as what they liked about the performance overall. (Teachers can also consider hosting an evening of performances for the community.) Questions to pose in a closing discussion include:
- What most struck you about the performance? Where there particular words, phrases, moments, etc. that stood out to you? Why?
  - Why do you think those particular excerpts were chosen?
  - What did we learn of life in Appalachia from these excerpts/performances?
  - Considering the oral histories you’ve been exposed to as well as the Affrilachian artists we started this lesson with, in what ways are African Americans crucial to the history and culture of Appalachia? What was daily life like across the decades for African Americans in Appalachia?
  - How did African Americans in Appalachia influence the Civil Rights movement and how did the Civil Rights movement influence them?
  - What similarities and/or outliers can you identify in the stories and experiences of the Appalachian people you have heard from, both through the oral history interviews and through Affrilachian artists?

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- What images, stories, reflections in the oral histories, poetry, music, etc. break down and/or reinforce stereotypes?
  - What was it like for you learning from listening to oral history clips? Performing and watching the performances?
  - What is your major takeaway from this lesson?
17. As an exit ticket, have students respond to: After this lesson, in what ways will you think of Appalachia differently?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Define *Affrilachia*. Where does the term come from?

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2. Listen to the excerpt of the music. In the box below, describe (or illustrate with images and symbols) the style of the music and how it makes you feel. What do you associate with this music? If it were used in a movie, what scene would be taking place while this music played? Who do you think the musicians are playing this music and what might they look like?

3. What message is Rhiannon Giddens trying to convey when she says: "Know thy history. Let it horrify you; let it inspire you. Let it show you how the future can look, for nothing in this world has not come around before...?"

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4. In what ways do these artists illustrate how Affrilachia is about learning and celebrating the untold history of people of color living in the mountains?

**Using Oral History to learn about the lives of African Americans in Appalachia**

*Mrs. Geraldine Ray ~ Dr. Thomas Kilgore ~ Judge Richard Erwin*

5. What did you find most interesting or surprising regarding what the people shared and why?

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## **Affrilachia**

by Frank X Walker

thoroughbred racing  
and hee haw  
are burdensome images  
for Kentucky sons  
venturing beyond the mason-dixon

anywhere in Appalachia  
is about as far  
as you could get  
from our house  
in the projects  
yet  
a mutual appreciation  
for fresh greens  
and cornbread  
an almost heroic notion  
of family  
and porches  
makes us kinfolk  
somehow  
but having never ridden  
bareback  
or sidesaddle  
and being inexperienced  
at cutting  
hanging  
or chewing tobacco  
yet still feeling  
complete and proud to say  
that some of the bluegrass  
is black  
enough to know  
that being 'colored, and all  
is generally lost  
somewhere between  
the dukes of hazard  
and the beverly hillbillies  
but if you think  
makin,'shine from corn  
is as hard as Kentucky coal  
imagine being  
an Affrilachian  
poet

## **Consider:**

1. What images come to mind or stand out as you read the poem?
2. Although Walker says his home in the Kentucky “projects” is far from Appalachia, what connections exist between the two?
3. How does this poem highlight how people of color are often overlooked (“lost”) in common understandings of Appalachia?
4. Why do you think Walker says that it is hard to be an Affrilachian poet?

## Practicing Oral History Performance - Edited Transcripts

### Dr. Kilgore

"I was born in little town in South Carolina (Woodrop, South Carolina) in Spartanburg County...lived in that little town until was 13. And then moved into North Carolina into Transylvania County in little place called Brevard. That is were the rest of my family is now. That is where first met Charles Jones. had gone away from there when was in high school to Asheville because there was no high school for blacks in Transylvania County at that time. Charles came in to pastor in the Brevard Presbyterian church. Moving from there, finished high school in Asheville, then went to Morehouse College, did my college work, and it was during that time that first became acquainted with the Fellowship... My father was a farmer. He had farm in South Carolina. And then by trade he was also painter, but he really specialized in farming."

### Geraldine Ray

"...I liked going to school. I just enjoyed it, because that was my outing and I guess in a way of speaking that was my freedom more or less, when I was out, cuz when I was home I was always out with the older people and workin'. So, I enjoyed going to school. I hated to miss a day of school. I never failed a class, never failed a class.

I did want to go on. But, you see at the time she was sick and—she had raised me so I had to stay with her...because I guess that was my punishment for her raising me...

The way my aunt done it, it was more or less like a punishment. She told me, 'that's yo job, you have to.'

...it was a lot of things I liked—might a went into cosmetology or I could a went on into art. I don't know, as of now, and I might have ended up bein a nurse, because as I said, I've looked after a lot of people....

I've looked after my grandmother, my uncle, J. T. 's mother, his grandmother, I helped with his grandmother, his aunt, and all of them and then I've looked after two white ladies...

So, I've always ended up helpin people-it just look like that was my....my...My calling, helpin people.

...I sewed, I drewed, I crocheted, that was it.

... I coulda been [an artist], but see after I start havin children, I put that aside. 'Cause, I didn't have time."

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## Transcripts of Oral History Clips

*Below are the entire transcripts from the clips provided by Dr. Kilgore and Mrs. Ray. To assist students in creating their performances, teachers can display these and show how to identify the most important parts or power phrases, as well as cut parts, when working to create a performance piece.*

### Dr. Kilgore – [Biography](#)

I was born in little town in South Carolina (Woodtrop, South Carolina) in Spartanburg County. lived in that little town until was 13. And then moved into North Carolina into Transylvania County in little place called Brevard. That is were the residue of my family is now. That is where first met Charles Jones. had gone away from there when was in high school to Asheville because there was no high school for blacks in Transylvania County at that time. Charles came in to pastor in the Brevard Presbyterian church. Moving from there, finished high school in Asheville, then went to Morehouse College, did my college work, and it was during that time that first became acquainted with the Fellowship. Then came back to North Carolina and taught school in couple of counties, and then began pastoring church in Asheville in 1936. Ffaom there in 193b gave up the school right in the middle of the year was called to church in Winston, Salem. went there and pastored for nine years. Three of those years, was pastor in name only because was taking leave to serve as the executive secretary of the Black Baptist Convention of North Carolina. In 1947 left North Carolina and went to New York City where became pastor of church, Friendship Baptist Church, where pastored for 16 years until 1963. In fall of 1963 came to Los Angeles where have been the pastor of the Second Baptist Church since then. For the last ten years, have been on the staff of the President of the USC as his advisor in community affairs. run an office on this campus, although am only here couple of days, called the Office of Community Affairs.

DB: What kind of work did your father do?

TK: My father was farmer. He had farm in South Carolina. And then by trade he was also painter, but he really specialized in farming.

*Interview number F-0028 in the Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007) at The Southern Historical Collection, The Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.*

*Interview with Thomas Kilgore 11/1/83*

### Geraldine Ray - "School Aspirations and Caring for Others"

K: So, you graduated from Weaverville Colored School in 8th grade?

G: Mmhmm ... and I graduated from Stephen Lee High School in '55.

K: 1955?

G: 1955.

K: What was your favorite subject in high school?

G: I liked Home Economics and I liked Art. I took two years of Art and I took two years of Home Economics. And I also liked library service. I liked library service.

K: So, how was it that you managed to graduate so early?

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G: Good question. As I said, I liked going to school. I just enjoyed it, because that was my outing and I guess in a way of speaking that was my freedom more or less, when I was out, cuz when I was home I was always out with the older people and workin'. So, I enjoyed going to school. I hated to miss a day of school. I never failed a class, never failed a class.

K: And you generally got really good grades?

G: Uhhuh.

K: What was the school year like? Did it start in September and go to June or was it different?

G: Start in September and go to June.

K: And during the summer you would work in the fields?

G: That's right.

K: So, being such a good student, did you ever think that you might want to go to college?

G: I did want to go on. But, you see at the time she was sick and—she had raised me so I had to stay with her. Now, my aunt had five children, but she wouldn't let them stay with her. So, it was me, because I guess that was my punishment for her raising me.

K: Punishment?

G: I would say, the way she did it, it was more or less like a punishment, you know. The way my aunt done it, it was more or less like a punishment. She told me, " that's yo job, you have to. " But, uh ... nevertheless, right after I got out of school, I took a commercial art course, correspondence. And uh, then I married in 1960.

K: In 1960?

G: January 12, 1960.

K: I'm going to get to that next. So, in your mind if you hadn't had to stay with your grandmother, then you would have gone to college?

G: Yes, I would have loved to went on.

K: What do you think you would have gone into?

G: I don't know, it was a lot of things I liked—might a went into cosmetology or I could a went on into art. I don't know, as of now, and I might have ended up bein a nurse, because as I said, I've looked after a lot of people.

K: Sounds like it.

G: Well, see I've looked after my grandmother, my uncle, J. T. 's mother, his grandmother, I helped with his grandmother, his aunt, and all of them and then I've looked after two white ladies.

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(p. 27-29)

**“My Calling”**

G: I had a job helpin a lady who had cancer. I came home like on a weekend and the next weekend she had died. She had terminal cancer when I was there lookin after her. So, I've always ended up helpin people-it just look like that was my....my

K: Your calling.

G: My calling, helpin people.

K: So, when your were living here before you got married, taking care of your grandmother did you have an outside job?

G: No, I couldn't cuz uh I had to look after her. Cuz see every move was mine cuz she couldn't do it, see she had a wheel chair then.

K: Did you have hobbies, things that you did for fun?

G: I sewed, I drewed, I crocheted, that was it.

K: Hmm. do you have any of your drawings from that time period?

G: I think I got one or two somewhere. I don't know exactly where they are, but I do have one or two.

K: So, you 're an artist.

G: I coulda been, but see after I start havin children, I put that aside. 'Cause, I didn't have time-'cause you have to have a place where you can lay stuff down and not be bothered when you doin that. When you drawin everything don't come to you at the same time—, distractions and things and everyday you can't go just pick up something and say I'm gon draw this and this gon be there and this gon be okay. You can't do that.

*Interview number R-0128 in the Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007) at The Southern Historical Collection, The Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.  
Geraldine Ray September 13, 1997*

## Performing Oral History

Student Names \_\_\_\_\_

Person \_\_\_\_\_

Topic and/or Focus of Performance \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment: You will be working with a partner(s) on an assigned person and topic. Use the rubric on the back to help guide your choices.

- Listen to the clips provided.
- Create a 1-2 min excerpt that is most telling of this person and this time in history, and/or that highlights a particular topic you want to focus on. You can choose particular excerpts and phrases and cut others. Copy the exact words that you decide to use to create a script for yourselves.
- Practice your performance, read it with nuance and emotion and clarity.
- Be creative to make your performance as impactful and educational as possible. (For instance, consider thematic music, props, projected images, etc.)
- After creating and practicing your performance, reflect on your decisions by answering the questions below.

Notes:

Why did you choose these particular excerpts for your performance?

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What does this performance teach us about the person and/or your identified topic?

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What does it teach us about daily life in Appalachia?

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How does it break down/reinforce stereotypes of Appalachia?

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*This lesson plan was completed in collaboration with teacher Jesse Wharton as part of the 2017 Carolina Oral History Teaching Fellows Program in Civil Rights, sponsored by UNC-Chapel Hill's [Southern Oral History Program](#) and [Carolina K-12](#).*

### Performing Oral History Rubric

Learning Target	4	3	2	1
<i>I can listen to oral histories and draw conclusions about daily life in Appalachia.</i>	Excerpts and question answers show a clear understanding of the narrator's experience and  Teaches others rich details about Appalachian life.	Excerpts and question answers show an understanding of the narrator's experience  Teaches others details about Appalachian life.	Excerpts and question answers show some understanding of the narrator's experience  Teaches others some details about Appalachian life.	Excerpts and question answers show a lack of understanding of the narrator's experience  Does not teach others about Appalachian life.
<i>I can demonstrate an understanding of how race relations and the Civil Rights movement throughout the decades impacted the lives of African Americans living in Appalachia.</i>	Excerpts and question answers show a deep understanding of how race/class impacted narrator's experience	Excerpts and question answers show an understanding of how race/class impacted narrator's experience	Excerpts and question answers show some understanding of how race/class impacted narrator's experience	Excerpts and question answers do not show an understanding of how race/class impacted narrator's experience
<i>I can create a performance based on an individual's oral history to "fill in the gaps" of Appalachian history for the class.</i>	Tone is accurate and reflective of the narrator  Performance does not stereotype the narrator  Performances is between 1-2 minutes	Tone is mostly accurate to the narrator  Performance mainly avoids stereotypes narrator  Performances is close to between 1-2 minutes	Tone is somewhat accurate to the narrator  Performance somewhat stereotypes narrator  Performances is a less than 1 minute or longer than 2 minutes	Tone is inaccurate to narrator  Performance rudely stereotypes the narrator  Performances is well under/over 1-2 minutes

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**Synthesize what you have learned**

Final reflection for lesson: [Learning from Oral History](#)

What do the stories you have heard from these Appalachians have in common? How do they differ?

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What images, stories, reflections in the oral histories break down stereotypes? Do any reinforce stereotypes?

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How was it learning from listening to these clips? Performing and watching the performances? Do these performances align with the mission of the Appalachian Artists Project?

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What will you take away most from this lesson?

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