

Pittsburgh History from One Shot

Grade

● 9–10

Teacher-In-Residence

● Jane Jeffries

Subjects

● English, History, Art

Carnegie
Museum of Art

Goals

- Engage students in learning about Pittsburgh history.
- Generate student-driven questions.
- Develop basic research skills, including navigation of online databases.
- Practice academic integrity by citing sources appropriately (in this lesson, according to MLA 9th edition guidelines).
- Reflect on the ways multiple sources inform one another.
- Share research with classmates in a presentation.

Objectives

- Students will be able to observe details about the content and composition of photographs.
- Students will generate their own research questions about a person, place, or event in Pittsburgh history.
- Students will conduct basic and advanced searches to learn more about their person, place, or event.
- Students will cite articles and photographs accurately—both parenthetically and in a works cited.
- Students will narrate their research process and present their findings in a 3–5 minute presentation to the class, accompanied by slides as a visual aid.

Standards

Common Core/National Core Arts Standards

Academic Standards for the Arts

- **9.2.12.A** Explain the historical, cultural and social context of an individual work in the arts.
- **9.2.12.H** Identify, describe and analyze the work of Pennsylvania Artists in dance, music, theatre and visual arts.
- **CC.1.4.9–10.V** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **CC.1.4.9–10.W** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **CC.1.5.9–10.C** Integrate multiple

sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

- **CC.1.5.9–10.D** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning; ensure that the presentation is appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
- **CC.1.5.9–10.F** Make strategic use of digital media in presentations to add interest and enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence.

Materials

- Journals
- Computers
- Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh library cards—register online
- Time cards (for student presentations, if desired)
- Print copies of photos ([Resource B](#))
- Print copies of assignment/rubric ([Resource C](#))
- Print copies of Audience Notes Worksheet ([Resource E](#))

Vocabulary

- Charles “Teenie” Harris
- Pittsburgh Courier

Photography vocabulary:

- Background/foreground
- Lighting/contrast
- Focal point
- Framing
- Candid/staged
- Negative
- Photojournalism

Research vocabulary:

- Database
- Basic search
- Advanced search
- Credibility

Citation vocabulary:

- MLA 9th edition
- Works cited
- Author/artist
- Title (article title, database title, etc.)
- Publisher
- Date (date of publication/composition, date of access)
- URL
- Hanging indent

Artwork



Charles "Teenie" Harris, *Reverend Charles Foggie presenting plaque to man with Rosa Parks seated on right, at Wesley Center AME Zion Church, 1958, Heinz Family Fund, 2001.35.12377* © Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh

Lesson

Designed for ten 39-minute daily class periods **Note:** In teacher-in-residence's practice, this mini-unit is designed to precede the study of August Wilson's *Fences*.

Day 1

Introduction: Quick write (or quick draw): If you had to condense your life into just one snapshot, what would you include, and how would it tell a story about you? You might consider who would be in the photo, what the setting might be, whether it would be staged or candid, whether you would be in the frame or taking the picture. Maybe you already have taken a photo that would represent you really well.

Transition: Use a brief student share-out of their quick writes to introduce the concept that photographs can tell a story, revealing historical facts, like time and place, but also emotions, like how the photographer feels about their subject(s). Explain that soon, they will be using photographs to inspire some research about the story of Pittsburgh.

Main Activity #1—Photo Analysis:

Show the photo of Reverend Charles Foggie presenting plaque to man with Rosa Parks seated on right, at Wesley Center AME Zion Church on display as students enter the room. Ask students, directing them first to write in their notebooks and then share with a partner/the class:

- What do you see in the photo? Use single words or short phrases.
- What do you think about what you see? At this point, you may consider the “story” of the photo.
- What do you wonder about the photo?

Teacher may model each step of this process. As appropriate throughout the discussion, provide small details about the context of the photograph—at this point, just location (Wesley Center AME Zion Church), date (April 1958), and occasion (beginning of membership campaign for the Pittsburgh chapter of the NAACP). Introduce some photographic vocabulary, inviting students to use words like background, foreground, framing, focus, and contrast as they describe the photo.

Transition: Point out Rosa Parks in the background of the photo, if students haven't recognized her

Lesson

yet. This picture tells us more of her story, and more of Pittsburgh's story. Ms. Parks continued advocating for civil rights well beyond her famous refusal to give up her seat on the bus (about 2 years before this photo). And the fight for civil rights for African Americans did not just happen in the southern United States—it happened right here in Pittsburgh too. Some of our best-documented evidence of this Pittsburgh history comes from the photographer Charles “Teenie” Harris.

Main activity #2: Provide context about Charles “Teenie” Harris (see [Resource A](#)), then play the “[Around the Clock](#)” video from the Carnegie Museum of Art.

Wrap-up: Explain that students will be working on a project to build their research skills over the next two weeks. In order to gauge their areas of interest, they will need to fill out a short survey, ranking topics from most to least interested: sports, music, neighborhood changes, civil rights. No homework tonight!

Day 2
Introduction—Individual See/

Think/Wonder: Provide each student with a printed copy of a photo from the Charles “Teenie” Harris archive that matches their area(s) of interest. (See [Resource B](#).) Ask them to see/think/wonder about their own piece in their journal—without telling them who's in the photo or what's happening.

Transition: Explain that a portion of students' research work will involve sharing their findings with the class. Students will practice “presenting” by talking about today's photo in a small group.

Main activity—Small Group

Discussion:

- Step 1: Divide students into small groups of 3–4 and ask them to “present” their photograph to the group (talk them through what they saw, thought, and wondered). Invite them to talk more about Harris's style—what similarities do they notice between their photos?
- Step 2: After they have spent 7–10 minutes sharing and noting similarities, provide each student with some context for their photo by providing the title/identifying who or what is in the photo. Teacher may want to have the photos numbered

Lesson

and share Resource B with students to help them find their specific photo.

- **Step 3:** Prompt students to generate/select three primary questions about their research subject—teacher should continue to model with the Rosa Parks photo. Ask students to record their questions in their notebooks.

Homework—initial search:

Ask students to do some initial information-gathering for homework, by means of a quick Google search for some context. They should try to find out five facts about their research subject. They will be doing some more targeted research in class over the next few days.

Day 3

Introduction: Introduce research presentation project. Go over the particulars of the assignment and rubric (see Resource C). Address student questions or concerns. Teacher may want to model the final project for students by delivering a presentation on Rosa Parks (see Resource D).

Transition: Make sure students know they are not responsible for

completing the entire presentation right away! Today students will get an introduction to one database and to MLA citation.

Main activity—Searching and citing photos from the Harris archive:

- **Step 1** Exploring the Archive: Navigate students to the Charles “Teenie” Harris archive on the CMOA website. Demonstrate how to search and navigate using teacher’s Rosa Parks topic. Provide brief time for students to find original and additional photos of their research subject, noting any clues to answering their previous question, or any new questions, in their journals.

- **Step 2** Citation Model: Use the teacher sample for Rosa Parks to show students what an MLA 9th edition Works Cited page looks like (see final slide of Resource D). In pairs, ask students to note what they see, think, and wonder about the Works Cited page. As a class, with teacher guidance, point out specific details, such as entry, hanging indent, author/artist, title (including title formatting), date, institution/publisher, URL.

- **Step 3** Student Citation: Walk students through creating their own Works Cited entry for their Charles

Lesson

“Teenie” Harris photos (at least their teacher-chosen photo; they will need one other photo eventually, but it’s okay if they’re still deciding on that one).

Homework: Complete Works Cited entry for homework.

Day 4

Introduction: Provide students with background and context for the *Pittsburgh Courier* (see [Resource A](#)). Show an introductory section from “[A Beacon for Change: The Pittsburgh Courier Story](#),” a documentary from WQED. (Suggested viewing: 0:00-7:00 for a thorough introduction; 3:28–7:00 for a shorter history.)

Transition: We will be using the *Pittsburgh Courier* to research our subjects because of Charles “Teenie” Harris’s connection to the paper, and because it published articles about these people, places, and events while they were affecting the African American community in Pittsburgh.

Main activity—Searching for Articles in the Pittsburgh Courier Database:

- **Step 1** Accessing the Database: Help students navigate to the Pittsburgh Courier database on the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh website: Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh > Research > Research Resources > Subject > Pittsburgh & Pennsylvania + Find Subject > *Pittsburgh Courier*.

- **Step 2** Teacher Model: Using teacher’s Rosa Parks example, demonstrate a basic search, scrolling through a couple of pages’ worth of results to browse and comment on possible articles. Then take students through an advanced search, demonstrating how to set date ranges, change the focus from “relevance” to “newest first” to “oldest first,” etc. Students may want to try searching for articles from the time of their photograph and from more recent articles, just to get a sense of how the newspaper has covered their topic over time—it may help develop their 5 facts for the presentation.

- **Step 3** Teacher Model: Just before releasing students to search on their own, demonstrate how to download and save an article as a PDF, so they don’t have to search for it on the database again. (Ultimately, my suggested Rosa Parks article

Lesson

is: “Rosa Parks: The Spark that Lit Rights Fire” by Arlethia Perry, published 1979.)

- **Step 4** Provide the rest of class for students to search on their own, asking for teacher help as necessary.

Homework: Finalize article selection before class tomorrow.

Day 5

Introduction: Ask students to spend some time journaling about the following questions:

- How do readers decide that a news source is trustworthy and reliable?
- How can you convince your classmates that the article you found yesterday is trustworthy and reliable?

Transition: Facilitate a brief discussion about evaluating sources and establishing credibility. In their research presentations, students should establish credibility for their articles, since it will highlight their own knowledge and reliability.

Main activity #1—Establishing Credibility and Citing Sources:

- **Step 1** Teacher Model: Remind students of the historical context they learned yesterday regarding the

Pittsburgh Courier, and point out that if their article has a specific author and/or speaker(s), they should learn more about their credentials. Show them the teacher example in the Rosa Parks presentation, pointing out the signal phrases before the quote (see Resource D).

- **Step 2** Independent Work: Provide workshop time for students to learn more about their sources. Each student’s situation will be different. Some may be able to conduct a simple Google search on their author’s name; others may need to search the Pittsburgh Courier database to see what other articles their author has written; others may not have a specific author listed, and so may want to learn a little bit more about the Courier itself. Some students may want to look up interviewees or people mentioned in their articles. Emphasize that this work is exploratory, and it’s okay if their research process looks different from other students’. Teacher should circulate to check in and answer individual questions.

- **Step 3** Works Cited: Pull up the Works Cited slide on teacher sample presentation (Resource D). Point out the article entry, and ask students: What similarities and difference do

Lesson

you notice between photograph entries and article entries? Go over what to do for an article with a specific author, and an article without a specific author. Remind students to alphabetize entries on their Works Cited page.

Homework: Submit completed Works Cited slide for a check.

Day 6

Introduction—Selecting Quotes:

Provide students with 3 possible quotations from the teacher's selected Rosa Parks article. Ask them to discuss with a partner the strengths and weaknesses of each quote. Which do they think is most informative and interesting? Why?

- “Mrs. Parks took time out to discuss the past, the present, and the future of Black Americans” (Perry).
- “Elected National Secretary of the NAACP in 1943, Mrs. Parks also served as the organizer and director of the Youth Council of the Montgomery, Alabama NAACP” (Perry).
- “We have come a long way today... but, we still have a lot to do...[E]ven though there are no signs saying ‘all white’ or ‘all Black’ institutions,

there are still some realms of denial” (Perry).

Transition: Facilitate class discussion about the quotes. Students should realize that the quotes highlight different aspects of Parks's activism. Point out that quote 2 could be summarized pretty effectively, not needing to be a direct quote. Remind students that they must have 1 quote from the Pittsburgh Courier in their presentation. Explain why quote 3 suits the teacher sample presentation best: it emphasizes her ongoing commitment to advocating for civil rights, long past her moment on the bus. Ideally, their selected quote will support an overarching message in their presentation as well.

Main activity—Independent Work:

• **Step 1** Parenthetical Citation
Model: Go over parenthetical citation for direct quotes. Demonstrate how parenthetical citation corresponds to the Works Cited entry: if there is an author, the author's last name is the first item in the Works Cited entry, and the author's last name also goes in the parenthetical citation; if there is no author, the article's title is the first item in the Works Cited entry, and the article's title also goes in the

Lesson

parenthetical citation.

- **Step 2** Independent Work: Provide time for students to build their presentations, prioritizing their *Pittsburgh Courier* quote slides.

Their goal should be for the quote to provide an interesting insight that stands on its own, yet supports the rest of their presentation. Teacher should circulate to address individual student questions.

- **Step 3** Share the presentation schedule with students for planning purposes.

Homework: Submit quote with proper parenthetical citation for a check.

Day 7

Introduction—Presentation

Reflection: Ask students to reflect briefly and write 2–3 sentences in their journals on the following question:

- What do you most hope your classmates will remember from your presentation?

Transition: Remind students that the second Harris photo they select will form their classmates' final, lasting impression of their research subject.

They should plan their image and their remarks in order to leave the most memorable impression on their peers.

Main activity—Independent Work:

- **Step 1** Show teacher sample of final Rosa Parks image. Talk through the teacher's reasoning for selecting this final photo, including how it reinforces the message of Parks leading, yet supporting others and entrusting her cause to future activists.

- **Step 2** Provide workshop time for students to work on their presentations, prioritizing their final image slide. Teacher should circulate to address individual student questions.

- **Step 3** If time allows, save the last 5–10 minutes of class for students to practice their presentation informally with a classmate. Remind them of good presentation habits (appropriate tone, enunciation, volume, and eye contact).

Homework: All presentation slides must be complete and submitted before the next class. Presentations will proceed according to the schedule.

Lesson

Days 8–10

Introduction: Help students break some of the public-speaking tension and get comfortable speaking out loud with a simple acting warm-up. Zip, Zap Zop or Whoosh, Whoa, Zap are great options.

Transition: Pass out copies of the Audience Notes Worksheet (see Resource E) and go over expectations for attentive listening and note-taking during classmates' presentations.

Main activity: Student presentations!

Lesson Extensions and Modifications

Extensions:

- Visit the Charles “Teenie” Harris Archive at Carnegie Museum of Art.
- Inspired by Charles “Teenie” Harris, invite students create photo essays (or single shots) that capture their own families, communities, or spaces.
- Watch the opening few minutes of *Fences* directed by Denzel Washington and note the ways in which Washington drew from Harris’s photography to recreate the Hill District of the 1950s.
- While watching *Fences*, explore August Wilson’s direct references to some of the people, places, and events that Harris also photographed:

Wilson alludes to WWII in his preface to the play: “War had been confronted and won with new energies that used loyalty and patriotism as its fuel. Life was rich, full, and flourishing... [T]he hot winds of change that would make the sixties a turbulent, racing, dangerous, and provocative decade had not yet begun to blow full.” The *Courier’s* “Double V” campaign drew on veterans’ “loyalty and patriotism” to insist on racial equality.

Troy references Josh Gibson when lamenting Black athletes’

disadvantages in professional sports. Rose counters by pointing out the success of Jackie Robinson (though Troy belittles Robinson’s skill).

Cory points out the successes of Black baseball players like Hank Aaron of the Milwaukee Braves; Wilson’s preface mentions that the Braves won the World Series in 1957, the year *Fences* is set.

Lyons, an aspiring musician, asks Troy to come see him play at the Crawford Grill sometime.

Modifications:

- Have students choose photos from Resource B that intrigue them, rather than assigning photos to students.
- Use another database or website if students don’t have access to Carnegie Library cards. *The New York Times* is a paper that would have been published at the time Harris was taking photographs, and there are a certain number of articles per month users can read for free.
- Teachers can provide print copies of relevant articles to students—that way they can focus on learning citation, rather than being overwhelmed by narrowing search

Lesson Extensions and Modifications

results. Students could even still practice some database skills, but not have the pressure of choosing an article themselves. This lesson is designed as an introduction to research—choose whatever might be appropriate for your own classroom.

- Have students research/present in pairs or small groups rather than individually.