

Ida B. Wells | Lesson Plan

How did Ida B. Wells use her skills as an investigative journalist to fight against injustice?

Students will understand how legendary journalist Ida B. Wells fought against injustice with her investigative journalism. Students will understand the importance of honest journalism as well as how she relied on bravery and determination to enact lasting change.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the key achievements of Ida B. Wells and her role as a journalist and a civil rights activist.
- Analyze how Ida B. Wells used her skills as a journalist to fight against injustice and make a difference.
- Identify the qualities that made Ida B. Wells an effective leader and advocate for justice.
- Analyze the impact of Ida B. Wells' bravery, determination, and advocacy on civil rights.
- Evaluate Ida B. Wells' life, contributions, and legacy.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Injustice:** The unfair treatment of or discrimination against individuals or a group.
- **Editorial:** An article that expresses the opinion or viewpoint of the writer on a specific issue or topic.
- **Investigative journalism:** A form of journalism in which a reporter conducts thorough research on a topic and writes about it. It often requires digging deeper than what is readily apparent to uncover hidden truths, corruption, or wrongdoing.
- **Lynching:** The illegal act of putting someone to death without a legal trial or due process.
- **Reconstruction:** The period in American history following the Civil War, from 1865 to 1877. It was a time of rebuilding and restructuring in the United States, particularly in the South, after the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery.

Educational Standards: CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.SL.4

Academic Subject Areas: Biography, America, Free Speech

What You'll Need

- Video: *Ida B. Wells: The Journalist Who Fought For Justice* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Ida B. Wells: The Journalist Who Fought For Justice* (Click [Here](#))



Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Warm-Up: (15 minutes)

1. Initiate a class discussion on injustice, what this word means, and ways to stand up to or fight against it.
2. Encourage students to think of an example of injustice or something they feel is unfair, either from personal experience or history. Invite students to share examples aloud and brainstorm together.
3. Invite students to think of famous examples of people or activists who worked to end an injustice. Allow students to share these examples with a partner or the whole class.
4. Display a copy of the "Ida B. Wells Worksheet" and pass out individual worksheets to students.
5. Instruct students to complete the Warm-Up Activity. Students will write the definition of "injustice" in their own words, an example of injustice, and ways to fight against injustice.
6. Share with students that Ida B. Wells was a journalist who fought against the unjust treatment of black people in the South during the Reconstruction era. Invite students to share what they already know about Ida B. Wells and her story. Invite students also to predict how a journalist might be able to use their skills to fight against injustice.
7. Read over the rest of the worksheet as a class so students know what to listen for during the video.
8. Set the stage for the upcoming video by highlighting the theme of bravery, determination, and honesty. Encourage students to look for ways throughout the video in which Ida B. Wells utilized her writing skills to fight against injustice.

Watch and Complete: (20 minutes)

1. Watch the video.
2. Assist students with completing the worksheet alongside the video, encouraging note-taking and active listening.
3. Pause throughout the video to allow students to answer questions.

Wrap-Up: (10-15 minutes)

1. Allow students 10 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Collect as formative assessment or discuss in class.
3. Ask students to read aloud their responses to the Making Connections section, reflecting on Ida B. Wells' life, character, and legacy.
4. Conclude with an open-ended prompt on the importance of bravery and determination to make a difference, just as Ida B. Wells used her bravery and determination to fight against injustice and change the world. Some guided questions can include:
 - What do you think was the most important achievement of Ida B. Wells, and why?
 - How did Ida B. Wells' work as a journalist help fight against injustice? Can you give an example from the video?
 - What qualities did Ida B. Wells have that made her a strong leader and advocate for justice?
 - Why do you think bravery and determination were important for Ida B. Wells in her fight against injustice?
 - How do you think Ida B. Wells' work has impacted civil rights today?

- What lessons can we learn from Ida B. Wells' life and work about standing up for what is right?
 - If you were a journalist like Ida B. Wells, what issue would you want to investigate and write about? Why?
 - How can we use the qualities of bravery and honesty in our own lives to make a difference in our community?
 - In what ways do you think Ida B. Wells' legacy continues to inspire people today?
 - What other historical figures or modern-day people can you think of who have shown bravery and determination to fight against injustice? How do their stories compare to Ida B. Wells'?
5. Encourage students to be brave and honest in bringing light to dark situations, as Ida B. Wells did.

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.