



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1985 Volume V: Odysseys: Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century African-American History Through Personal Narrative

Against the Tide: Three Who Made It!

Guide for Curriculum Unit 85.05.04
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This unit will explore the lives of three individuals who were born or raised in New Haven and went on to important public careers: in politics—Adam C. Powell, Jr.; in law—Constance Baker Motley; and in entertainment—Raymond St. Jacques. The purpose is to inform the remedial student about these three figures, about their common roots in New Haven and about the resources each found in the pursuit of their careers.

Sixth- and seventh-grade teachers may use the reading selections included in this unit to reinforce their students' reading skills, plus add a little "hometown" knowledge! These selections of the high points in the lives of these three individuals may also be used during Black History Month (February).

The unit describes New Haven and its Black population during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. It tells of the social life and the economics of the city at that time, comparing the then to the now. The unit also describes the Black migration from one section of the city to another, and the "unwritten" discriminatory codes at that time.

The unit was written for students who have very little knowledge of the achievements of native New Haveners past or present or of their own community history. Many of the students have come here from Puerto Rico and the South and would benefit from the knowledge of the social history of the city at that specific time.

After each selection, the student will do lessons in reading, spelling, and language arts using "Cloze Stories," finding the main idea of a specific selection, sequential order, comprehension and oral discussion of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s in New Haven.

(Recommended for Reading and Social Studies classes, grades 6 and 7)

Key Words

Biography Afro-American History New Haven Connecticut Motley Constance Baker Population Powell Adam C. St. Jacques Raymond

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