

Understanding the Life of Migrant Workers

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<http://www.brainpop.com/educators/community/lesson-plan/chavez-day-lesson-plan/?bp-topic=cesar-chavez>

Grade Level: 3

In this lesson plan, which is adaptable for grades 3-8, students use BrainPOP resources to connect the life and achievements of Cesar Chavez to current events. Students will develop an understanding of the effectiveness of non-violent strikes, boycotts, and protest marches in making changes. They will also learn about common working conditions of migrant farm workers and explore how union organizations are effective by creating their own “union.”

Standards:

SS3H2 The student will discuss the lives of Americans who expanded people’s rights and freedoms in a democracy.

- a. Paul Revere (independence), Frederick Douglass (civil rights), Susan B. Anthony (women’s rights), Mary McLeod Bethune (education), Franklin D. Roosevelt (New Deal and World War II), Eleanor Roosevelt (United Nations and human rights), Thurgood Marshall (civil rights), Lyndon B. Johnson (Great Society and voting rights), and **César Chávez (workers’ rights)**.
- b. Explain social barriers, restrictions, and obstacles that these historical figures had to overcome and describe how they overcame them.

Students will:

1. Develop an understanding of the effectiveness of strikes, boycotts, and protest marches (nonviolent reform) in making changes.
2. Connect Cesar Chavez and his experiences to current events.
3. Understand common working conditions of migrant farm workers, and how organizing a union is effective by creating their own "union."

Materials:

- [Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez](#) by Kathleen Krull
- Paper (for planning & posters)
- Pencils & markers
- Highlighters
- BrainPOP and projector or interactive whiteboard
- Cesar Chavez packets of Activity Pages (see 'Preparation' below)

Vocabulary:

- migrant workers
- labor union
- nonviolent reform
- Mahatma Gandhi

- Strike
- protest march
- boycott
- United Farm Workers

Preparation:

Find a current events article related to farming conditions and/or nonviolent reform to share with students. Print and copy a packet for each student on Cesar Chavez including a copy of the current events article, BrainPOP's [POP Quiz](#), the [FYI comic](#), and the [Vocabulary Activity Page](#) to use before, during, and after the lesson. Preview the book and movie and plan where to pause and discuss.

Lesson Procedure:

1. Give students a few minutes to read the current events article in their packets with a partner or individually. Students might use highlighters for key points as they read.
2. Share and discuss current farming conditions or nonviolent reform with students. Facilitate discussion about how adverse conditions affect workers.
3. Have students turn and talk: Restate the problem you just learned about and brainstorm 3 possible solutions.
4. Share and record student responses. As a class, see if there are any categories that the list can be organized into (nonviolent vs. violent/effective vs. ineffective).
5. Introduce Cesar Chavez. Read and discuss the book [Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez](#). Prepare students for the BrainPOP movie by reviewing vocabulary using the [Vocabulary Activity Page](#) from their packets.
6. Watch [Cesar Chavez](#) on BrainPOP. Use closed captioning and pause during key concepts and vocabulary so students can take notes.
7. After the movie, return to the current events article and invite students to make connections. Review the solutions they brainstormed and star the nonviolent methods of reform.
8. Explain to students that they have the opportunity to identify an issue within school or the community that they feel is unfair or involves negative conditions that can be improved (emphasize it should be realistic and reasonable!).
9. In partners or small groups, brainstorm a list of nonviolent solutions for the problem they identified.
10. The class can create their own union to raise people's awareness and organize nonviolent reform techniques to try to improve the condition(s).

11. Students can create posters to advertise their new union and hold an information session to other interested students. They might even create membership cards!
12. In the following days, revisit the movie and quiz with students for review and assessment. By having students teach other students about what they learned, they will develop a better understanding of this topic.
13. For homework, students should read the [FYI comic](#) from their packet, and write a paragraph explaining how this relates to what they learned about Cesar Chavez.