

Curriculum

Unit – Challenges Faced by Dominican Veterans in World War II: Stephen Hotesse and José Adrián Trujillo

Objective: Students will be able to investigate and evaluate the challenges faced by Dominican veterans in the United States.

Do Now/Motivation:

Display the image of [this U.S. propaganda poster](#). Ask students to respond to the following questions. You may choose to have students answer these questions in writing, in small groups, and/or in a full class discussion.

1. What details do you notice in this poster?
2. According to this poster, why should the U.S. win World War II? What is the U.S. fighting for?
3. At the same time that this war was being fought, people of color still faced Jim Crow segregation and all forms of discrimination. How do you react to the fact that the United States professed to be fighting for freedom while denying freedom to so many people in the U.S.?
4. If you were a person of color during World War II, how would you respond to the U.S.'s call to war while you also faced discrimination? Would you be willing to join the military? How else might you take action?

Project an [image of the Double-V campaign](#). Explain that people of color acted in a variety of ways during World War II. One way was by embracing both causes at once. They called it the Double-V campaign, because they wanted a double victory: defeating the U.S.'s enemies abroad and the U.S.'s systems of discrimination at home. Many Dominican veterans put themselves at great risk for both causes. This lesson's readings will explore this.

Group Work: Divide the class into small groups. Assign the [Stephen Hotesse](#) reading to half of the groups and the [José Adrián Trujillo](#) reading to the other half. Distribute copies of the reading and the guided questions to each student. Students should read about their assigned veteran and share their findings with the other half of the class at the end of the period. Make clear that students should be prepared to discuss Question #6, in particular.

Share: Ask students to summarize the stories of Stephen Hotesse and José Adrián Trujillo for their classmates. Then discuss the following questions:

- How did Hotesse and Trujillo choose to stand up for freedom?
- Did they do the right thing by (1) joining the military and (2) choosing to resist instead of accepting segregation?
- What do their stories teach you about how to fight for positive change in society today?

Alternatively: You may choose to have the entire class work on the Hotesse reading during the class period. The second reading could then be assigned for homework.

Guided Questions for Stephan Hotesse Reading:

1. How did Stephen Hotesse train for military service during World War II?
2. Why was it an honor to be a Tuskegee Airman?
3. Why were Hotesse and 100 other black officers arrested in April 1945?
4. As an officer, Hotesse had become an expert in air combat and had the authority to command other soldiers. Why would white officers have called him a “trainee” (meaning someone who is still in training)? Why did Hotesse object to being called a “trainee”?
5. Imagine that you were Hotesse in April 1945. That very month, Americans mourned the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. They also celebrated as U.S. soldiers captured Berlin and came very close to forcing the Nazis to surrender. During this key month in history, you would be arrested and held in a military prison. How would you feel? How would you react?
6. Did Hotesse do the right thing by joining the military? Did he do the right thing by choosing to resist instead of accepting segregation? What does his story teach us about how to fight for positive change in society today?

Guided Questions for José Adrián Trujillo Reading:

1. How did Trujillo serve the United States during World War II?
2. Why did Trujillo and his friend argue with a Florida restaurant owner in 1946?
3. What happened when the police arrived at the restaurant?
4. Why do you think Southern newspapers covered the shooting differently from Dominican and U.S. national newspapers?
5. Does this story remind you of any recent news stories? How do you react to the fact that stories like Trujillo’s remain familiar in America today?
6. Did Trujillo do the right thing by joining the military? Did he do the right thing by choosing to resist instead of accepting segregation? What does his story teach us about how to fight for positive change in society today?