#### **Assessing with Primary Sources**

Grade Level:Middle School (6-8)Standard(s) orCCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2 - Determine a central idea of a text and how it is<br/>conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from<br/>personal opinions or judgments.

### Library of Congress Resources:



Letter From A. Philip Randolph to NAACP Secretary Walter White, March 18, 1941.

http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/naacp/world-war-ii-and-the-post-war-years.html#obj1

# **Topic Background:**

In the middle of the twentieth century, generations of resistance to segregation culminated in the Civil Rights movement, in which African Americans launched widespread demonstrations and other public protests to demand the rights and protections provided by the Constitution. As a result, a series of landmark court cases and new legislation in the 1950s and 60s, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act

Excerpted From: <u>http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/civil-rights/pdf/teacher\_guide.pdf</u>

## Source Used:

In this letter labor leader A. Philip Randolph suggests to Walter White "a mass March on Washington" by thousands of African Americans to protest discrimination in defense industries and the armed forces. On June 18, A. Philip Randolph and Walter White met at the White House with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of War Robert Paterson, and other officials. On June 25, the threat of the march prompted President Roosevelt to sign Executive Order 8802, which banned discrimination in defense industries receiving government contracts. The Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) was set up to investigate and monitor hiring

Excerpted from: http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html

## **Multiple Choice Answer Key:**

Question 1 – A

SIU Southern Illinois University

# Early Civil Rights Activism (1941) Letter from A. Philip Randolph to NAACP Secretary Walter White, March 18, 1941.

11  $\mathcal{H}$ Mr. Walter White, Secretary National Association for the Advancement of Colored People 10, 20, 3-20-41 69 Fifth Avenue New York, New York Dear Walter: Just a word of remembrance and good hope that you are feeling fine. Now I have been thinking about the Negro and national defense and have come to the conclusion that something drastic has got to be done to shake official Washington and the white industrialists and labor forces of America to the realization of the fact that Negroes mean business about getting their rights as American citizens under national defense. To this end I have decided to undertake the organization of a march of ten thousand Negroes or more upon Washington. When I come back East I want to talk with you about it. I hope it may be convenient for you to join with me and a few other persons in the issuance of a call to the Negro people for such a march. If we are able to mobilize Negroes on such a program it is certain to have a favorable effect upon your splendid plan to get the whole question of national defense and the Negro probed by the Senate. It is my hope that we may be able to plan the march to take place either before or directly after the conference of the NAACP in Houston. Cordially yours. Philip Randolph APR:kw

#### **Question:**

1) Which statement best represents the central idea A. Phillip Randolph is expressing in this letter? (CCSS-RI6.2)

- A. Randolph believes African Americans must stage a large scale march in order to show how serious they are about securing labor rights.
- B. Randolph is concerned about Walter Whites health and wants to make sure he is feeling fine.
- C. Randolph wants information about the NAACP conference in Houston.
- D. Randolph believes improved labor conditions and conditions in the national defense industry will help African Americans become more patriotic.

Created as part of the Assessing with Primary Sources Project Teaching with Primary Sources @ Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL