
BLACK HISTORY MONTH RESEARCH PROJECT BUNDLE

A Complete Research & Presentation Project
Biography Posters • Oral Presentations • Research Skills

Grades 4 – 8

INCLUDES:

- ◆ Teacher Timeline & Facilitation Guide
 - ◆ Research Graphic Organizer
 - ◆ Biography Poster Template
 - ◆ Oral Presentation Scoring Rubric
- ◆ 30 Change-Maker Starter Info Cards

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A step-by-step weekly plan with tips for scaffolding research, supporting diverse learners, and managing presentations.

2 Research Graphic Organizer

A structured note-taking tool guiding students through key biographical categories and critical thinking prompts.

3 Biography Poster Template

A visual layout guide students use to design an informative and eye-catching poster about their chosen figure.

4 Oral Presentation Scoring Rubric

A clear, standards-aligned rubric for evaluating student presentations across five key criteria.

5 30 Change-Maker Starter Info Cards

Ready-to-use reference cards featuring influential Black Americans — perfect for jumpstarting research and inspiring students.

Standards Alignment: This resource supports **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4-8.7** (Conduct short research projects), **W.4-8.8** (Gather relevant information from multiple sources), **SL.4-8.4** (Present claims and findings), and **NCSS D2.His.4-5** (Explain why individuals and groups during the same era differed in their perspectives).

GUIDE

Welcome to the **Black History Month Research Project Bundle**! This comprehensive resource guides students in Grades 4–8 through a meaningful research journey, culminating in a biography poster and oral presentation about a Black American change-maker. The project develops critical research skills, deepens historical understanding, and builds confident communicators.

Project Overview

- **Duration:** 4 weeks (adaptable to 3–5 weeks)
- **Format:** Individual research project with poster and oral presentation
- **Grade Level:** 4–8 (with differentiation strategies included)
- **Standards:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4-8.7, W.4-8.8, SL.4-8.4; NCSS D2.His.4-5

Weekly Implementation Timeline

WEEK 1: Introduction & Figure Selection

- **Day 1:** Introduce the project using the cover page and rubric. Discuss what makes someone a 'change-maker.'
- **Day 2:** Distribute the 30 Starter Info Cards. Allow students time to browse, read, and rank their top 3 choices.
- **Day 3:** Assign figures (ensuring a diverse range of historical and modern individuals are represented across the class).
- **Day 4:** Model how to use the Research Graphic Organizer. Discuss reliable sources and research expectations.
- **Day 5:** Students begin independent research using provided starter cards and approved digital/print sources.

WEEK 2: Deep Research & Note-Taking

- **Days 6–7:** Dedicated research time. Students complete the Graphic Organizer, citing at least 2 sources (3 for Gr 6–8).
- **Day 8:** Teacher check-in on research progress. Address any challenges with finding information.
- **Day 9:** Mini-lesson on turning research notes into engaging, original writing (avoiding plagiarism).
- **Day 10:** Finalize the Graphic Organizer. Students ensure they have evidence for their figure's contributions and legacy.

WEEK 3: Poster Creation & Presentation Prep

- **Days 11–12:** Introduce the Biography Poster Template. Students draft their poster layouts and write their content sections.
- **Day 13:** Peer review session. Partners give feedback on poster clarity, visual appeal, and completeness of information.
- **Day 14:** Finalize posters. Introduce oral presentation expectations using the Scoring Rubric.
- **Day 15:** Presentation practice. Students rehearse with a partner, focusing on eye contact, volume, and pacing.

WEEK 4: Oral Presentations & Reflection

- **Days 16–19:** Student Presentations (4–5 students per day). Audience members take notes or complete a peer reflection sheet.
- **Day 20:** Whole-class reflection. Discuss overarching themes (resilience, advocacy, equality). Celebrate the learning journey!

Differentiation Strategies

Grades 4–5 (Scaffolded)

- Provide a curated list of 2–3 student-friendly websites per figure.
- Focus on completing the Graphic Organizer with bullet points rather than full paragraphs.
- Allow poster to include more visual elements (drawings, printed photos) with shorter captions.
- Presentation length: 1–2 minutes. Allow note cards during speaking.

Grades 6–8 (Extended)

- Require at least 3 sources (1 primary source if available) and a simple bibliography.
- Require full paragraph responses on the Graphic Organizer.
- Add a requirement to analyze the historical context/era of the figure.
- Presentation length: 3–5 minutes. Emphasize public speaking skills (no note-reading).

Facilitation Tips for Success

- **Emphasize Originality:** Remind students that their posters and presentations must be in their own words. Model how to read a source, close it, and write a summary from memory.
- **Sensitive Topics:** Many change-makers fought against deep injustices. Frame these conversations with care, emphasizing resilience and the ongoing pursuit of equality. Provide content warnings if necessary.
- **Active Listening:** During presentation week, give the audience a specific task (e.g., 'Write down one new fact you learned from each presenter') to ensure respectful, active engagement.
- **Celebrate Growth:** Use the rubric not just for grading, but as a tool for feedback. Highlight areas of strength and one specific area for growth for each student.

Family Engagement Tip: Send home a brief letter explaining the project. Encourage families to discuss the chosen figure at home and help students find reliable online resources or library books. This bridges classroom learning with home conversations.

SECTION 2: RESEARCH GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Student Directions: Use this organizer to collect and organize your research. Answer each section in your own words. You must use at least two reliable sources (three for Grades 6–8) and record them at the end. Use your starter info card to begin, then expand your research!

Student Name:

Research Figure:

Class / Date:

Early Life & Background

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Describe their childhood, family life, and early influences:

What was their education like? Were there any early challenges?:

Major Contributions & Achievements

What is this person most famous for? Describe their most significant actions or creations.:

What specific events or moments defined their career or activism?:

Obstacles Overcome

What significant challenges, injustices, or opposition did they face?:

How did they respond to these obstacles? What does this show about their character?:

Impact & Legacy

How did their work change society, their field, or the world?:

Why should we remember them today? What is their lasting legacy?:

Character Analysis

Identify **three character traits** that describe your figure. For each trait, provide **evidence** from their life to support it.

Character Trait	Evidence from their Life
1.	
2.	
3.	

Sources

List the sources you used for your research. Include the author, title, and publication year or website URL.

#	Source Information
1.	
2.	
3.	

SECTION 3: BIOGRAPHY POSTER TEMPLATE

Student Directions: Use this layout as a guide to create your biography poster on standard poster board or large construction paper. Your poster must be neat, colorful, and include all the sections below. Write in your own words and use visuals to make your poster engaging!

FIGURE'S FULL NAME

Dates of Birth & Death (if applicable)

PHOTOGRAPH OR

ILLUSTRATION

"Insert an inspiring quote by your figure here."

— Figure's Name

EARLY LIFE & BACKGROUND

Summarize their childhood, family, education, and early influences. Include 3-4 key facts.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Detail their most significant actions, creations, or milestones. What are they famous for?

OBSTACLES OVERCOME

Describe the challenges or injustices they faced and how they responded to them.

IMPACT & LEGACY

Explain how their work changed society and why we remember them today. What is their lasting legacy?

TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS / FUN FACTS

List 3-5 key dates/events in chronological order OR share 3-5 interesting fun facts about your figure.

Design Tips for Students:

- **Color Scheme:** Choose 2-3 colors that reflect your figure's life or legacy.
- **Neatness:** Use a ruler for lines. Draft your text on scratch paper first.
- **Visuals:** Draw, print, or collage images. Every image should have a caption!
- **Originality:** All written text MUST be in your own words. Do not copy directly from sources.

SECTION 4: ORAL PRESENTATION SCORING RUBRIC

Teacher Directions: Use this rubric to score student oral presentations. Each category is worth up to 4 points. Provide specific feedback in the comments section. Total score: /20 points.

CRITERIA	4 - EXEMPLARY	3 - PROFICIENT	2 - DEVELOPING	1 - BEGINNING
CONTENT & ACCURACY	All facts are highly accurate. Clearly and thoroughly explains contributions, obstacles, and legacy. Deep understanding is evident.	Most facts are accurate. Explains contributions, obstacles, and legacy, but may lack some depth or detail.	Some facts are inaccurate or missing. Only briefly touches on contributions or obstacles; legacy is unclear.	Many facts are inaccurate or missing. Fails to explain the figure's contributions or legacy.
ORGANIZATION	Presentation has a clear intro, body, and conclusion. Ideas flow logically. Easy for the audience to follow.	Presentation is mostly organized. May lack a clear intro or conclusion, but main points are understandable.	Presentation is somewhat disorganized. Jumps between ideas, making it somewhat difficult to follow.	Presentation lacks clear structure. Ideas are scattered and confusing to the audience.
DELIVERY & SPEAKING	Speaks clearly with excellent volume and pace. Consistent eye contact. Confident and engaging delivery. Does not read from notes.	Speaks clearly with adequate volume and pace. Makes some eye contact. Relies slightly on notes but remains engaging.	Often too quiet, too fast, or too slow. Minimal eye contact. Reads mostly from notes with little engagement.	Inaudible or entirely read from notes. No eye contact. Lack of preparation is evident.
VISUAL AID (POSTER)	Poster is neat, highly visual, and includes all required sections. Greatly enhances the presentation and engages the audience.	Poster is neat and includes most required sections. Supports the presentation adequately.	Poster is somewhat messy or missing several sections. Does not add significant value to the presentation.	Poster is incomplete, messy, or missing entirely. Detracts from the presentation.
KNOWLEDGE & Q&A	Answers questions thoughtfully and accurately, showing deep research beyond the presented material.	Answers questions adequately using information from the presentation. Shows good foundational research.	Struggles to answer basic questions about their figure; shows limited research depth.	Cannot answer questions about their figure. Unfamiliar with the topic beyond the script.

Total Score: _____ / 20

Grade: _____

Teacher Comments:

3. Harriet Tubman (1822–1913)

Known For: Abolitionism & the Underground Railroad

Born into slavery, Harriet Tubman escaped and subsequently made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad. She later served as an armed scout and spy for the Union Army.

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer." — Harriet Tubman

4. Frederick Douglass (1818–1895)

Known For: Abolitionism, Writing, & Oratory

Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery and became a national leader of the abolitionist movement. He was a brilliant writer and speaker, using his autobiography and powerful oratory to expose the horrors of slavery and advocate for equal rights for all Americans.

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress." — Frederick Douglass

29. Carter G. Woodson (1875–1950)

Known For: The 'Father of Black History'

Carter G. Woodson was a historian, author, and journalist who dedicated his life to ensuring Black history was documented and taught. He founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History and originated 'Negro History Week' in 1926, which later evolved into Black History Month.

"Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history." — Carter G. Woodson

30. Amanda Gorman (1998–Present)

Known For: Poetry & Youth Advocacy

Amanda Gorman is an award-winning poet and activist. In 2021, at age 22, she became the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history, reciting 'The Hill We Climb' at President Biden's inauguration. Her work focuses on issues of oppression, feminism, race, and marginalization, inspiring a new generation.

"There is always light. If only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it." — Amanda Gorman

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