

- One of the work changes Cesar Chavez and the UFW fought for was to stop farm owners from insisting that workers use the short-handled hoe, a tool that contributed to many worker injuries. Share with students a brief history of the short-handled hoe and its use by farm workers to thin lettuce crops and weed the fields. To help your class understand the nature of working with the short-handled hoe, distribute rulers to all students and ask small groups to use the rulers to push pieces of confetti or pennies across sectioned-off areas of your room. Please ask students to use caution to prevent injury. After a few minutes of working with their "hoes" ask students to return to their desks and discuss how they feel. Ask students if they could do this kind of work for an hour? Eight hours? A year? To help students better replicate the farm worker experience, show an image of workers using the short-handled hoe which can be found here: www.lib.berkeley.edu/~ljones/UFW/ho.html.
- Ask students to accompany their parents or guardians when they go to the supermarket or grocery store. Have students ask the store managers where the stores get their grapes, avocados, broccoli and other produce. Students can make lists of locations the store managers mention and report back to class. Using the information they have gathered, ask students to find on a world map the places that grow many of our country's fruits and vegetables.
- To help teach students about the use of nonviolent means to promote change, break students into small groups. Describe and assign to each group an issue related to Cesar Chavez and the UFW, such as health problems related to use of pesticides and the short-handled hoe, or unfair practices such as low pay and lack of clean drinking water. Ask each group to create its own protest poster that reflects their understanding of their assigned issue. Have each group share its poster and explain their issue to the rest of the class.
- Dolores Huerta was a very important person in the creation and organization of the first farm workers union. Ask students to research the life of Huerta and write a short journal entry that demonstrates their knowledge of her contribution to the farm labor movement.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- www.chavezday.ca.gov/servicelearning.html

California's GO SERV, the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, provides teachers with excellent information on the key concepts related to service learning. (Continued)

- www.ufw.org/
This United Farm Workers site provides teachers and students with information on the history of Cesar Chavez, and gives visitors an understanding of what the UFW is doing to try and help farm workers today.
- www.sfsu.edu/~cecipp/cesar_chavez/speeches.htm
The Cesar E. Chavez Institute for Public Policy offers students audio clips of several important Chavez speeches.

Suggested Print Resources

- Altman, Linda Jacobs. *Amelia's Road*. Lee & Low Books, New York, NY; 1993. This portrayal of the difficulties associated with the transient nature of life for the children of migrant farm workers is told through the eyes and dreams of a girl named Amelia.
- Schaefer, Lola M. *Cesar Chavez*. Pebble Books, Mankato, MN; 1999.
- Turner, Ann Warren. *Dust for Dinner*. Harper Collins, New York, NY; 1995. A fictional account of a family that travels to California to find work as a result of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl.

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CESAR CHAVEZ

Grades K-4

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting this program. The guide provides you with a brief historical overview, previewing and follow-up discussion questions, vocabulary, focus questions for assessing comprehension, extension activities and print and Internet resources.

Before Viewing: Give students an introduction to the topic by relaying aspects of the program overview to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up questions and activities to inspire continued discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.



Historical Overview

At a time when many of the people who helped to harvest America's fruits and vegetables had little or no rights, Cesar Chavez and his family were migrant farm workers. They had been forced from their farm during the Great Depression, moving to California along with thousands of others in a desperate search for work.

As migrant farm workers, the Chavez family lived without a roof over their heads or clean water, and often experienced prejudice while earning very little pay for their backbreaking efforts. Chavez knew he had to do something to help his family and other farm workers, so he helped form the National Farm Workers Association in 1962, which later became known as the UFW, the first successful farm workers union in the United States.

As union leader, Chavez worked extremely hard to educate farm workers about the union and advocated peaceful methods such as strikes, marches and boycotts to try and change the unfair practices of farm owners. To show his commitment to the farm worker cause, Chavez fasted on several occasions, demonstrating that he would sacrifice his own life to fight for what he believed in. Under Chavez' leadership, the UFW was able to win numerous battles with farm owners, which helped to improve the lives and working conditions of thousands of people.

Soon after Chavez died in 1993, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest award an American citizen can achieve. Many people continue his work today, by calling attention to social problems that still must be solved.

Vocabulary

migrant farm worker — A person who travels from place to place, doing various jobs on farms, such as picking fruits and vegetables.

Great Depression — The time period from 1929 to around 1939 in which the economy of the United States and much of the world was very bad. Many people lost their jobs, money and homes during this time.

drought — A long period of time in which there is little or no rain.

prejudice — A negative opinion about a certain person, group or race of people.

World War II — A major global conflict fought between 1939 and 1945.

poverty — A situation in which a person or a group of people is extremely poor and lacks the money for the basics of survival — food, clothing and shelter.

Community Service Organization (CSO) — A group that helped to improve the lives of needy people in the United States. Cesar Chavez worked for the CSO from 1952 to 1962. *(Continued)*

braceros — A Spanish word used to describe temporary farm and railroad workers who came to the United States from Mexico.

labor union — A group of people who have the same type of job and who join together to try and obtain better wages, benefits and working conditions from their employer.

strike — A strategy in which workers refuse to work until employers offer or meet demands for better pay, benefits or working conditions.

National Farm Workers Association — A union of farm workers organized by Cesar Chavez in 1962. The group later combined with another union in 1966 to form the United Farm Workers, or UFW.

pesticide — A chemical that is sprayed on a plant to kill harmful bugs or pests.

boycott — A way of protesting in which a person or group stops buying a product or using a service from a company they feel is being unfair.

fast — A situation in which a person does not eat food for a period of time.

nonviolence — A way of protesting in which a person or group tries to make social change peacefully.

Presidential Medal of Freedom — A very important award that is given by the President of the United States to people who have performed great service for others.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Ask students to name some of their favorite fruits and vegetables. Do students know where any of their favorite produce comes from? Do any students live on farms or have gardens where they grow their own fruits and vegetables? Discuss all the work that goes into growing food before it is ready to be eaten.
- Ask students to offer definitions for the words "united" or "union." What does it mean to say a group of people is united? Do students think it is a good thing if people are "united"?
- What do students think they would like to be someday? Ask students to imagine they are working at their first jobs and to discuss what would be the most important part of their new jobs — good pay, a safe place to work or a nice employer? How do students think they would feel about their new jobs if any of these conditions weren't met?

Focus Questions

1. Why did Cesar Chavez' grandfather move to the United States?
2. What is a migrant farm worker?
3. What happened to the Chavez family during the Great Depression?
4. Why did many people move to California during the Great Depression?

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5. Why didn't Cesar Chavez go to school regularly?
6. What kind of prejudice did Cesar Chavez experience as a young person?
7. What did Fred Ross do to try to help farm workers?
8. Why did many people trust and respect Cesar Chavez?
9. Why didn't many farm owners pay their workers a fair wage?
10. What is a labor union? What is a strike?
11. Why were many farm workers afraid to join a labor union?
12. What is a boycott?
13. Why did Cesar Chavez refuse food for weeks at a time?
14. What are pesticides? How are they dangerous to farm workers?

Discussion Questions

- Cesar Chavez made a strong commitment to improving the lives and working conditions of America's farm workers. By fasting, Chavez sent a strong message to UFW members about how important the workers' cause was. Ask students to describe the personal qualities and characteristics of people who dedicate their lives to helping others. Ask students to discuss a social issue or social problem they feel strongly about or would like to try to solve.
- One of Cesar Chavez' first efforts when he worked for the Community Service Organization or CSO was to try to get people to register to vote. Ask students to explain the importance of voting in the United States and to explain why Chavez thought getting people to vote would help improve their lives.
- Cesar Chavez admired Martin Luther King, Jr.'s commitment to using nonviolence to fight for the rights of African-Americans. Do students think Chavez' decision to use nonviolence was a good way to try to change the way farm workers were treated? Do students think it was easy or hard for Chavez and his workers to use nonviolence? Why? Which of the methods used by Chavez and the UFW do students think worked best: strikes, boycotts, marches or fasts? Why?

Follow-up Activities

- Cesar Chavez's cousin Manuel helped design a flag to represent the farm workers union. Based on their understanding of the life of Cesar Chavez and his role in founding the UFW, ask students to draw images of their own flags that represent the life of Chavez or show their understanding of the goals and aspirations of the UFW.
- Ask students to develop a time-line of Chavez' life that chronicles his life and accomplishments, from his days as a migrant farm worker during the Great Depression, through his days as a union leader, to his death in 1993.

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