

## Step Two: Essential Content Coverage

How can I improve coverage of the civil rights movement by addressing these essential content areas in my instruction?

Topic: The legacy of Matthew Shepard		
Essential Question(s): In what ways did the activism in the wake of Matthew Shepard's death lead to advances in LGBTQ rights and acceptance?		
Essential Content	What I do now	What else I could/should I be doing
Leaders	Ellen DeGeneres	Judy Shepard, Dennis Shepard, Jason Marsden, Rep. John Conyers, Sen. Ted Kennedy, Sen. Gordon Smith, Romaine Patterson
Groups		Matthew Shepard Foundation, Angel Action, Tectonic Theatre Project, Anti-Defamation League, Human Rights Campaign, Mountain States Against Hate, GLAAD
Events	Matt's death and resulting news coverage. Matt's funeral.	Celebrity vigil in Washington, D.C. signing of the Shepard-Byrd Act in 2009.
Historical context		The AIDS crisis (and loss of many people's gay loved ones) was still a recent memory as were the stereotypes and dangerous rhetoric used against queer victims at the time. In many states, sodomy laws were still on the books that illegalized same-sex intimacy. As it is now, many states did not have housing or job discrimination protections in place for LGBTQ people.
Opposition	Fred Phelps (and Westboro Baptist Church), James Dobson (and Focus on the Family).	Hate crimes legislation opposed by powerful figures such as Sen. Jeff Sessions, Sen. Trent Lott, Sen. Jim DeMint and President George W. Bush.
Tactics		Speaking engagements. Shepard's personal, emotional appeals to parents, lawmakers and potential allies a "we all know someone affected by this" strategy that would largely inform the marriage equality movement. Training and speaking geared toward law enforcement.
Connections		Compare and contrast to civil rights martyrs of past and present. Emmett Till in 1955: brutal death catalyzes a brewing movement, led by his mother's actions. Trayvon Martin in 2012: galvanizes new generation of young activists and #BlackLivesMatter movement. Differences include: portrayal by media Matt's killers being convicted while Till's and Martin's went free.
Resources or support needed	The Matthew Shepard Foundation guide for commemorating the life of Matthew Shepard: supporting LGBT students.	