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BUNCHE HALL

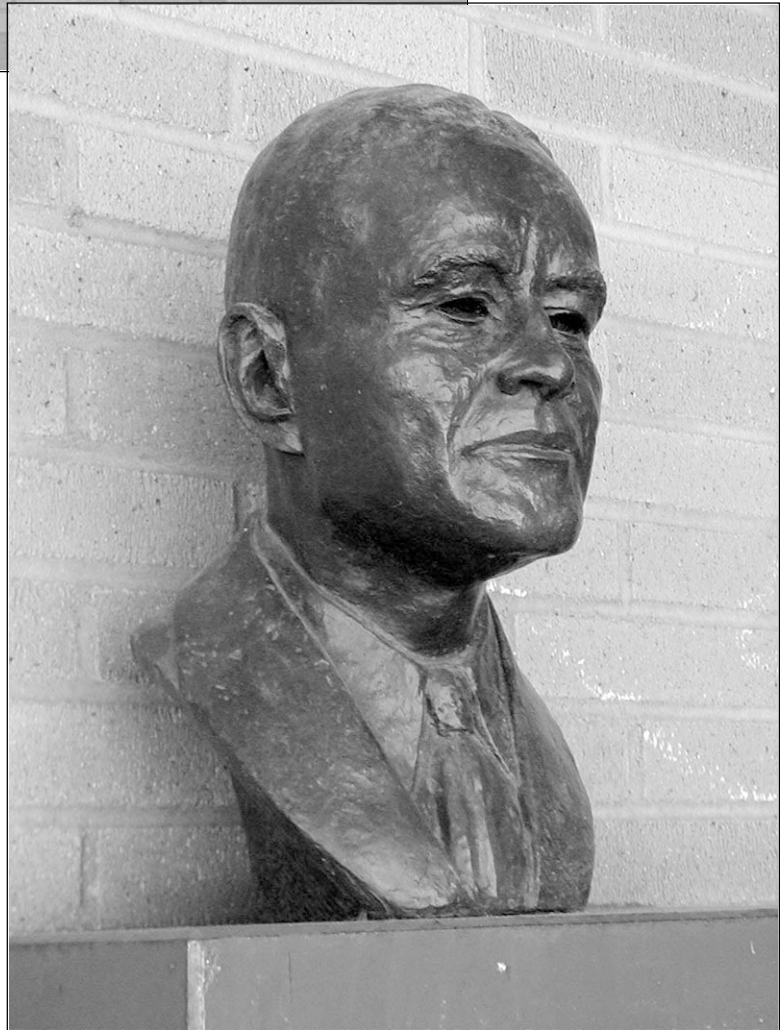
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1904 - 1971

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**Bunche Hall**  
**University of California, Los Angeles**

Photos by Grace Lu

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# INTRODUCTION

## I. APPROACH AND RATIONALE

*Infinite Patience, Indomitable Will: Ralph Bunche—His Struggle for Peace and Justice* is one of over seventy teaching units published by the National Center for History for the Schools that are the fruits of collaborations between history professors and experienced teachers of United States and World History. They represent specific issues and “dramatic episodes” in history from which you and your students can delve into the deeper meanings of these selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative. By studying crucial turning points in history the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected issues and dramatic episodes that bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow’s history.

Our teaching units are based on primary sources, taken from government documents, artifacts, magazines, newspapers, films, private correspondence, literature, contemporary photographs, and paintings from the period under study. What we hope you achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to have your students connect more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to recreate for your students a sense of “being there,” a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian’s craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

## II. CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Within this unit, you will find: Correlation to the National Standards for History, Lesson Plans with reproducible documents, and suggestions for Further Reading. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. Although these lessons are recommended for use by grades 9–12, they can be adapted for other grade levels.

The Historical Background sections in each lesson should provide you with a good overview for the lesson. It is assigned to students as reading; however, if your students are not of sufficient grade level to understand the materials on their own, you may consult it for your own use in class lectures.

The Lesson Plans include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. The resources consist of primary source documents, handouts and student background materials, and a bibliography.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction.

### III. CORRELATION TO NATIONAL HISTORY STANDARDS

*Infinite Patience, Indomitable Will: Ralph Bunche—His Struggle for Peace and Justice* provides teaching materials that address *National Standards for History*, Basic Edition (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996), in both United States and World History. In United States history lessons specifically address **Standard 2C** in **Era 7**, “The Emergence of Modern America (1890–1930)” relating to the Treaty of Versailles and the formation of the League of Nations and **Standard 3A**, race relations in the 1920s. In **Era 8**, “The Great Depression and World War II (1939–1945)” and **Era 9**, “Postwar United States (1945 to Early 1970s)” students examine the purposes and organization of the United Nations and its role in Africa and the Middle East.

World History **Standard 1A** of **Era 9**, “the 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes,” has students explore the major political changes that accompanied post-war recovery including an appraisal of the formation of the United Nations. **Standard 1B**, conflicts in post-colonial Africa (Congo) and **Standard 1C**, the development of the state of Israel, are topics that are included in the teaching unit.

Lessons in the unit also integrate Historical Thinking Standards by having students draw upon skills in five interconnected dimensions of historical thinking: “Chronological Thinking,” “Historical Comprehension,” “Historical Analysis and Interpretation,” “Historical Research,” and “Issues-analysis and Decision-making.”

**LESSON ONE**  
**“The Goal of My Ambition”**  
**BEGINNINGS: 1903–1927**

**A. OBJECTIVES**

- ◆ Discuss Bunche’s youth, identifying the events, character traits, and relationships responsible for his early successes.
- ◆ Understand and evaluate Bunche’s early views on race and international relations and how he reached them.

**B. UNIT INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY**

A week before the lesson begins, distribute **Worksheet 1**, “Survey: Ralph Bunche.” Students should:

- a) Answer these questions themselves, in writing or in class discussion
- b) Ask the same questions of five people outside the classroom. If possible, these interviewees should include adults as well as other students. The surveys can be conducted by groups rather than by individuals.

Once students have conducted the interviews, they should report their findings to the class. The class can then tally the results and post key quotations from the documents on newsprint around the classroom. If possible, keep these in front of the classroom for the duration of the unit.

Tell students that at the end of the unit they will be asked these same questions.

**C. LESSON ACTIVITIES**

**ACTIVITY ONE: Ralph Bunche’s Youth and Early Influences**

1. Distribute **Document I–A** “Central Avenue Neighborhood in the 1920s” and **Document I–B** “1920 Census Returns: Enumeration District 388, Los Angeles, California.” Have students analyze the photographs in **Document I–A** using **Worksheet 2**, “Photograph Analysis Worksheet.” Then have students analyze the census page (**Document I–B**) using **Worksheet 3**, “Document Analysis Worksheet.” After they have completed both worksheets, instruct students to write a paragraph on Bunche’s youth based on the evidence in the photographs and the census.
2. Discuss students’ impressions of Ralph Bunche and his family after analyzing the photographs and the census return page. Then either give students **Historical Background One**, “The Bunche Family,” as a reading assignment or use the introduction to prepare a class presentation on the themes.
3. Assign parts and have students present **Document I–D**, “The Documents Speak: Growing Up.” Several of the documents are lengthy and can be divided up among participating students.
4. After students read or present the “Documents Speak,” distribute **Worksheet 4**, which will have them assess the sources cited. The last question asks students to interview an adult regarding

individuals who have played an important role in that individual's family. The interviews can be conducted by small groups or by individuals. Student responses can be presented to the class or in writing. After the interviews, have each student post the name of the family relative or other adult they learned about from their interview, along with a quote from the interviewee about that relative.

5. **Document I–E** offers a more in-depth view of the influence of Bunche's grandmother on his life. The style of the Cavalcade Theater differs from that of contemporary television and film.
  - a. Use the prompts on **Worksheet 5** to guide discussion of the differences between student work and the professional production.
  - b. Have students write the scene suggested at the end of the **Worksheet 5**.

#### ACTIVITY TWO: Ralph Bunche's Early Views on Race and International Relations

1. Give students **Worksheet 6**, to be used in conjunction with Bunche's 1926–1927 speeches "That Man May Dwell in Peace" and "Across the Generation Gap" (**Document I–F**). The questions can be completed individually, in groups, or as a class discussion.
2. Have the students read **Document I–G**, "Ralph Bunche on Racial Identity"—an historical background on "passing" with four document excerpts. Then have the class complete **Worksheet 7** using one of the following two options:

##### Option One

- a. Divide students into pairs and have them take turns answering questions 1–4 (both should write the answer). Each student should answer question 5 on their own.
- b. Have pairs present their responses to one or two of the questions to the rest of the class.

##### Option Two

- a. Use the questions on the worksheet to conduct a whole-class discussion after students read the materials.

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**SURVEY: RALPH BUNCHE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Answer these questions yourself and then use them to survey five people about what they know about Ralph Bunche and his times.

1. Have you ever heard of Ralph Bunche?
  
2. If the answer to question #1 is “yes,” what do you know about him? (Interviewer: follow up on your interviewee’s response. For instance, if your respondent says that he won the Nobel Peace Prize, ask what work earned the prize).
  
3. Between the Civil War and the era of Martin Luther King, what do you know of African American opinion on civil rights? What were the agreements and disagreements? Can you name three prominent African American political leaders active between 1870 and 1950? What do you know about their beliefs?
  
4. How would you define “race? What is “ethnicity”? What loyalty, if any, do individuals owe to persons of their own racial or ethnic background?
  
5. What is the United Nations? Is it successful or not? Why?
  
6. What circumstances justify war?
  
7. When there is a war, should the United States attempt to stop it? If so, why? If not, why not?