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DATE: 7/21/09

COURSE/ GRADE: US History, Grades 9-12
UNIT: Civil Rights/ Segregation
LESSON TITLE: Esther McCready: Fighting for Civil Rights
TIME NEEDED: One 45-minute class period

LESSON OVERVIEW:
This lesson discusses the struggle of an African American woman named Esther McCready as she attended an all-white nursing school (University of Maryland School of Nursing). The lesson also explores the major role the Civil Rights movement played in achieving desegregation in several predominantly white universities. The students will be able to identify and analyze the struggles of African American nurses during the segregation era.

OUTCOMES: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify and evaluate the struggles of African American nursing students during the Segregation and Civil Rights eras, when they were refused admission to and then equal treatment in white universities.

OBJECTIVES:

Focus Question for the Lesson: What challenges did African American nursing students encounter during the era of desegregation?

Historical Thinking Skill Targeted:
Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation- J) Hypothesize the influence of the past.
Standard 5: Historical Issues- Analysis and Decision Making- A) Identify issues and problems in the past – F) Evaluate the implementation of a decision.

Maryland State Curriculum Content Objectives:
5.4.3.a Students will examine the battle for school desegregation including Brown V. Board of Education on the ideas of the NAACP and Thurgood Marshall.
5.4.3. b Students will describe the efforts to enforce school desegregation and local reactions to these efforts, including crisis at Little Rock and the University of Mississippi.

Maryland State Curriculum Skills and Processes:
6.0.A.4.1 Draw conclusions and make generalizations based on the text, multiple texts and/or prior knowledge.

MATERIALS:
1) Primary source packet, one per student
2) Brainstorming Chart, one per student
3) Document Analysis Chart, one per student
4) BCR instructions and rubric, one per student
5) Exit Slips, one per student
PRIMARY SOURCE:

SELECTED VOCABULARY:
Segregation, desegregation, NAACP, Civil Rights, Brown v. Board of Education, origin, purpose, value and limitations

PROCEDURE:

1) Motivation
a) Have students discuss the following questions in pairs and then discuss as a class:
   • Does it matter which college you attend? Why or why not?
   • Are there places you feel you cannot go? Why?
   • What factors do you think will most determine what college you attend?

b) Ask students whether these have always been the most important factors prospective students considered in selecting a college. Ask them what the most important factor would have been before the Civil Rights Movement. Point out that, prior to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, one’s race was probably the most important factor.

2) Guided Practice
a) Allow students to pull from prior knowledge by asking what they know about the Civil Rights Movement and the process of desegregation in educational institutions. Have students jot down their answers independently using a brainstorming chart. Then have students share their responses as you write them down on the board. With this discussion you want to build the context in which Esther McCready’s story is taking place: pre-Brown V. Board, yet in the midst of many separate state legal actions designed to force integration. Beginning in the early 1930s, the NAACP began trying to dismantle educational segregation through court cases that pointed out that separate schools were, in fact, not equal in terms of facilities, expenditures per student, teacher salaries, transportation, etc. They hoped that the cost of bringing African American schools up to white standards would force the South to integrate. Between the mid-1930s and 1950, the NAACP had won several cases dealing with inequalities at the graduate school, arguing that separate schools harmed African American students intangibly even if resources were equal. It was these victories that paved the way for the Brown case in 1954. Be sure to mention Thurgood Marshall’s role in the NAACP’s fight to integrate the schools.

b) Introduce students to Esther McCready, who was, in 1948, the first African American female to get accepted into the University of Maryland School of Nursing. Through this lesson, students will analyze the origin, purpose, value and limitations of her interview as a source using the Document Analysis Worksheet.

c) Read together the first 2 ½ pages of the interview and model how to complete the Document Analysis Worksheet.
d) Introduce the new vocabulary terms and concepts they will see in the reading about Esther McCready. Explain to the students that they will need to understand these words prior to reading the handout.

3) Independent Practice
a) Divide students into heterogeneous cooperative groups of 3-4 students each. Assign half the groups to read Selection 1 (pages 2-13 from the oral history transcript which detail Esther’s efforts to be admitted to the Nursing School) and half the groups to read Selection 2 (pages 14-26, which detail Esther’s experiences as a nursing student). Each group will analyze the interview using the Document Analysis Worksheet.

b) Suggested time for completing reading and the worksheet is 25-30 minutes.

c) Once all groups have finished analyzing their sections of the interview, reconvene as a class to discuss their findings. Have students fill in any blank rows of their Document Analysis Worksheet with information about the half of the interview that they did not read.

d) Lead a class discussion about how Esther McCready’s experiences as an African American getting into the University of School of Nursing and studying to be a nurse there were the same as and different from white students’ experiences. Ask students whether they think Esther’s struggles impacted the quality of her nursing education positively, negatively, or not all.

4) Assessment
Homework Assignment: Students will answer the following BCR individually.

BCR: Imagine that you are Esther McCready and you are writing a memoir about your experience. Write a paragraph summarizing your experiences and analyzing in what ways it was a positive experience and in what ways it was a negative experience.

5) Closure
If you could ask Ms. McCready one question, what would it be and why?

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS:

1. Extended time
2. Large printed material
3. Peer assistance
4. Rearrange seating
5. Written and oral instructions

LESSON EXTENSIONS:

- Research other individuals who made strides as the “first” African American to break into a certain field – the first to integrate a university or a school, the first to integrate a sport, etc.

- Research the integration of educational institutions in Baltimore and Maryland. Create an annotated timeline sharing essential information about each experience – cover motivation, actions, and outcome in your annotations.
Esther McCready: Struggle for Civil Rights and Desegregation

Brainstorming Chart

Directions: List ten things you know about the Civil Rights Movement and desegregation.

1._________________________________________________ ___________________________

2._________________________________________________ ___________________________

3._________________________________________________ ___________________________

4._________________________________________________ ___________________________

5._________________________________________________ ___________________________

6._________________________________________________ ___________________________

7._________________________________________________ ___________________________

8._________________________________________________ ___________________________

9._________________________________________________ ___________________________

10._________________________________________________ ___________________________
Esther McCready: Struggle for Civil Rights and Desegregation

Name: ____________________________________________ ____________
Class: ____________________________________________ ______________
Date: _______________

Analysis Worksheet

Part I: Read your assigned portion of the interview. Think about this interview as a primary source and answer the following questions to evaluate its reliability and limitations.

1. **Origin:** Who created the document? What is it? When?

2. **Purpose:** Why was the document created? What perspective or bias does the document contain?

3. **Value:** In what ways is this source valuable to historians? In what ways is it a reliable source?

4. **Limitation:** Why would this have limited value to historians? In what ways is it not reliable?
**Part II:** Now, read your assigned section of the interview. As you go through, list various episodes/events that Esther experiences.

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<tr>
<th>What happened to Esther? (list a single event/episode/experience in each box)</th>
<th>Was this a positive or a negative experience? Why?</th>
<th>What questions does this experience raise for you? What information would you like to have to understand her experience more fully?</th>
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<td>What happened to Esther? (list a single event/episode/experience in each box)</td>
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Esther McCready: Struggle for Civil Rights and Desegregation

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

**BCR:** Imagine that you are Esther McCready and you are writing a memoir about your experiences trying to get into the University of Maryland School of Nursing and as a student there. Summarize your efforts to follow your dreams and then discuss whether, given the opportunity to do your life “over,” you would make the same choices? Why or why not?.
<table>
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<th>Content</th>
<th>Excellent 85-100%</th>
<th>Satisfactory 60-85%</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 0-60%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Essay expertly details Ms. McCready’s experiences and contains a reflective, thoughtful, and historically imaginative response to whether or not she would change anything about her life.</td>
<td>• Essay details Ms. McCready’s experiences and contains a thoughtful and imaginative response to whether or not she would change anything about her life.</td>
<td>• Essay lacks details of Ms. McCready’s experiences and does not contain a thoughtful and/or imaginative response to the questions of whether or not she would change anything in her life.</td>
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| Style | | | |
|-------| | | |
| • The essay has a very strong topic sentence, and it relates to the following supportive sentences. | • The essay contains a strong topic sentence, and it relates to the following supportive sentences. | • Essay contains a weak topic sentence, and detail sentences. |
| • Essay is well organized and stays on the topic of the questions asked. | • Essay is well organized and stays on the topic of the question asked. | • Essay is not well organized and does not stay on the topic. |
| • Essay contains few to no spelling or grammatical errors. | • Essay contains some spelling and or grammatical errors. | • Essay contains several spelling and grammatical errors which interfere with the overall comprehension of the essay. |
| • Essay has good usage of descriptive words, and active verbs. | • Essay has good usage of descriptive words which helps keep interest. | • Essay lacks descriptive words. |
Esther McCready: Struggle for Civil Rights and Desegregation

Pre-Test/ Post- Test

1. In what year was Brown v. Board of Education decided?
   a. 1954
   b. 1918
   c. 2009
   d. 1940

2. Who was Thurgood Marshall?
   a. Army general
   b. Educator
   c. Supreme Court Justice
   d. Slave

3. Which of the following statements about Esther McCready is true?
   a. She wanted to be the first black teacher in an all-white school in Baltimore.
   b. She was the first African-American to integrate the horse-racing industry.
   c. She ran for Mayor of Baltimore.
   d. She wanted to attend the nursing school of her choice.

4. Which of the following statements is true about segregation/integration?
   a. No integration of any kind occurred prior to Brown v. Board of Education.
   b. Brown v. Board was the first court case that forced integration in an educational institution at the local or state level.
   c. Integration occurred immediately after Brown v. Board was passed.
   d. Desegregation was a long, slow process that began before Brown and lasted until long after.

5. What was the impact of Esther McCready’s integration efforts?
   a. She was allowed to attend the University of Maryland School of Nursing.
   b. She met with much discrimination and had to attend the all-black school of nursing.
   c. She never was able to become a nurse at all.
   d. Immediately, the University of Maryland hired an African-American Dean of Nursing.
So, that was that meant going to the hospital, seeing nurses, seeing doctors all the time. So, I always thought this was, you know, exciting. And it was something strange about entering John Hopkins, it was such an antiseptic smell that you just -- I don't know why, it would -- just drew me there.

And the nurses were always very pleasant with me. So, I said I think I'd like to do that. So, in high school with career days, you know, I always mentioned that. And one day in I think I was in the 11th grade and we had a career day.

And I said to one of the students in my class, I think we should start writing to various Schools of Nursing. And I said, it's a shame that we only have one hospital here to write to in our hometown and that's Provident Hospital.

I said, because of our race, we can only write to that school or attend that school. But I said, let's start writing some of the white schools and just mention that -- at that time we were negroes -- so, I said, let's mention that we are negroes getting ready to graduate from high school, interested in nursing and would like to attend their
And we looked in the telephone book and got a list of names of hospitals and we started writing. She took half, I took half. And we compared our responses. I'm sorry, we don't accept negroes, but there is -- some just said, I'm sorry, we don't accept negroes.

Some referred you to hospitals outside of the state. I think St. Joseph referred me to a Catholic hospital outside -- I think in Missouri. And, so, we got different responses. But I was shocked to get a -- an application from the University of Maryland.

And I called, I said, listen, I have got this application from the University of Maryland. So, write right away. I said, maybe they're changing their policy. So, she said, well, I'll wait and see what happens to you.

So, then, of course, I had an accident. I always like to tell about this accident where just in filling out the application -- you know, we used to use the ink and pens that we dipped in the inkwell.
And I accidentally spilled the ink all over the application.

So, I said, oh, gosh -- I started crying and my mother and father came downstairs and when they saw this ink spilled all over the application. They knew what was wrong.

So, my mother said, just write back and ask them for another one. So, when I wrote back, I said I better not say I'm a negro this time, because maybe it won't come. So, I just wrote and told them I didn't -- you know, I needed another application.

So, they sent it. I filled it out. And I had already gone to the doctor and dentist. And the dentist was a younger man than the doctor to -- and when he filled out his application -- his part of the application, I said -- no, I think I'd gone to the doctor first.

And when I went to the dentist he said -- I said, you know, the doctor asked me if I'd gone to the NAACP for help. And I said, I asked him why. And he said, you're not going to get into that school without help. And I said, I don't think that.
So, he said, no, I don't think so either. You go on and just do what you're doing. And later I found out we were both very young and -- and silly. Because we did -- I did need help.

So, I contacted the NAACP, but I think the doctor had already given them a warning that I was -- I had already written to the University of Maryland. But I contacted them and they said that they would like for me to meet with their lawyer, who -- the local lawyer was Donald Gaines Murray, who incidentally had -- had graduated from the University of Maryland School of Law.

But on -- African/Americans could only attend in the evening. And he had graduated many years ago. And he helped -- I think I was then asked to see Charlie Houston, who was a great civil rights with the -- then I think chief one for the NAACP.

And it was amazing he, oh, thoroughly interrogated me about who put me up to this, you know. I said, nobody. I, you know, just decided to do this. And, you know, well -- he said, well, you go on with it. You do everything that you have to do, whatever they say, you know.
You write back, you send them -- but do it -- send it with return receipt requested, certified letter, return receipt. He said, because you won't know whether they got it or not. So, [speaking over] and they can say that didn't.

INTERVIEWER
MCCREASY:  [speaking over] I graduated from high school February 1948.

INTERVIEWER
MCCREASY:  At the same -- they wanted to know what I was doing, what I had done. And I told them that I had applied and had not gotten any response back. But they said if you have to send any information to them, send it -- you know, like, if you ask -- say that I have not received anything, you know, any information from you or you know, the school is -- the class that I wanted to get into at the time was the class of August 1949.

I think the university accepted students in August and in -- I don't know they had several admission dates.
So, I didn't hear any more from the university and when it got to be near time for the August class, I wrote to them, certified, return receipt requested and said to them, you know, the class is soon to start and I need to know what I must do before getting into the class, so could you let me know. Could you send me information. So -- and could you let me know whether I've been admitted.

And their response was we're still reviewing your credentials and we will inform you later. And, so, it got to be August, 1949, and the class had started and they were still reviewing my credentials and that's when the NAACP stepped in because, they said, oh, they're going to be reviewing these credentials for a while. So, we will, you know, go on and take this to court.

So, that's how it all started. It was just more than I could understand when everything started falling into place. And there were many meetings with the local attorney, Donald Murray. And the occasional meetings with Charles Hamilton Houston, the top lawyer there.

And this went on for a while and soon we were in
court. I don't even remember when we went to court the first time we went to court. But it -- I do know that when we went to court, to the lower courts in Maryland, we -- I didn't have to take the stand.

But there was a representative from the University of Maryland. I think the chief medical doctor was the representative and the Dean of the School of Nursing, Florence Gipe, at that time.

And they were questioned thoroughly about the university and they wanted me to go -- the doctor said that I could go to Maherry which is in -- a wonderful school in Tennessee.

And when he was questioned -- cross-examined by the lawyer, Charles Houston, he asked him, well, you know, you -- you've given such a flowery report about Maherry, how long have you worked. He said -- he stuttered and said, I haven't.

He said, well, how long were you there? Six hours. And you learned all of this in six hours and you feel that -- that it's -- are you saying that Maherry is a superior school to the University of Maryland. Uh, no, I'm not saying that. So, why do
you want her to go there, you know. She's from Maryland and Maryland is a state school.

Well, anyway we lost in the lower courts. And -- oh, the other thing -- when he cross-examined the dean, he asked, have any other negroes ever written to the School of Nursing, and she said, no. He said, do you have to state that you're a negro when you write? And she said, no. And he said, then you wouldn't know whether any wrote to you before or not.

So, she -- she never forgot that. And when I got into the school -- I'll go a little bit ahead -- she would always say, you know, that lawyer was very brilliant. And, you know, did you see how he cross-examined me. She would always stop me in the hall and say this. And I would wonder, you know, why are you saying this to me all the time.

Did you see how he did me, he cross-examined me and he -- he brought me right down. And I said, oh, gosh, you know, and then she would walk right on off, you know. Not continuing any other conversation, just stopping me and saying that.
Well anyway in the lower court. And it was appealed. Charles Houston became ill with a heart attack or something. And he -- I went to see him and it was the strangest thing. He said to me, well, you're the last of the Mohicans.

And I said, oh, no, you'll be out here arguing other cases. He said, no, you're the last. And I was the last. He died just before I think -- I think we had gotten the court of appeals ruling just before -- he heard that just before he died.

But his student, who was Thurgood Marshall, took over and the court of appeals -- now, this was fascinating to me.

I believe each side got an hour to argue the case. And the University of Maryland got up first and they argued how I should, you know, go to Maherry and they did -- and they [garbled] I could see and I knew nothing about law. I could see that it sounded weak.

Because a state school, my parents paying taxes, and, yet, I couldn't go to this school. So they -- he used up his entire hour. Then -- oh, no, it
Don't done that way.

Donald Murray got up and spoke for about 20 minutes, introducing the case, my case. Then he sat down. And the judges -- I remember saying -- I remember the judges said to him, you do know you have an hour. And they both -- Thurgood Marshall and Donald Murray both said yes.

Then the University of Maryland got up and spoke the entire hour. And as I said, the case just seemed so weak. And then Thurgood Marshall got up. He used the additional time. And I mean, it was so brilliant, so forceful.

And you could see how the judges -- you could almost see how they were feeling. Except all but one -- you -- you felt -- all but one was -- was with -- all but one went along with what he was saying. And, of course, they all have to agree. So the other -- that's what I understand they all have to agree and -- the court of appeals. So, if one is -- is holding out, they have to convince him to come over.

So, anyway, we felt -- you know, you almost had the
feeling that you had won the case when -- when you left. It was just so interesting. So, it was funny too that Thurgood Marshall got a ride -- in the car that we came down in, because they asked if he needed a lift and he said, yes, you know. So, he got a ride back to Baltimore with us. 

But they were talking all about law and stuff that I didn't know what they were saying. So anyway it was -- soon I was told that I had been, you know -- we had won the case. And we went over to tell Charles Houston -- Donald Murray and I went over to tell Charles Houston. And he was very happy about that. But as I said, I think within weeks he -- he died.

INTERVIEWER

MCCREADY: Donald Murray, yes.

INTERVIEWER

MCCREADY: It might have been. It might have been.

INTERVIEWER

MCCREADY: I -- I'm sure I was elated that we won, you know. But then, you know, you sort of started thinking about, oh, you're going to enter the school and how

is it going to be, so -- but I was elated and I got
I think a telegram from Lilly Jackson, who was the
president of the NAACP at the time.

And I -- I didn't -- I don't remember getting
anything from Thurgood Marshall. Of course, being
the stature of Thurgood Marshall, he wouldn't have
sent me, you know, a telegram. But Donald Murray,
the local attorney for the NAACP he would.

And it was the local NAACP that, you know, rejoiced
in this, you know, this -- in winning this case.
And it was a test case, because there were students
who wanted to go into medicine, pharmacy, dentistry.
And then the law students would be able to attend
during the day instead of in the evening.

This particular case would open up the entire
university. And, so, they would -- they -- I'm sure
they knew that they would not have to go in and
argue another case like this. Because it would be
along the same lines.

[CHANGE TAPES]
Esther McCready Interview: Selection 2

MCCREARY:

Okay, so I was elated that I, you know, got the letter that I was admitted to the University of Maryland School of Nursing and the class would start in September, 1950.

But I started thinking, oh, goodness, you know, wonder what it's going to be like. And, of course, my mother was very anxious about all of this.

And I remember the first day of school. I do remember that as if it were yesterday. My -- the lawyer wanted to know -- in fact, he came to my house that morning. And he said, do you want me to go with you. And I said, no. I'll go alone.

And my mother said be careful. I can see her now. Be careful. So, I said, I'll be okay. And I went on -- I caught the bus -- buses, whatever, that -- I don't even remember what buses, you know, brought me here.

But I remember going up to the -- the door and going into the hospital and I think it was the gift shop at the -- at the entrance of the hospital at that time. And I went in and I said, could you tell me where the School of Nursing is.
And, of course, everybody was waiting. Everybody was waiting for this negro girl to be coming in. And, so, they pointed the way, you know, but it was an icy feeling almost, you know, everybody staring.

So, I, you know, went on to the area for the School of Nursing and nobody spoke, you know. Of course, I was greeted, you know, by the administration. But none of the students spoke. I just went in.

And I think there were 55 of us at the time I think or 60 -- somewhere between 55 and 60. And we -- they -- we were given instructions about what would happen that day. And we would go on an orientation, a period of going through the hospital, going through different classes, classrooms and what not to show us where would -- where most of our activities would be during the first six months of school.

And somewhere during the day I would say late in the afternoon somebody came up -- one of the students came up and said, hi, my name is so and so. And I said, hi, and she was the only one who came up and spoke.

And I was standing by an elevator and a nurse came up to me in -- graduate nurse came up to me and said, if you don't pray to god, you will never get out of here, because nobody here is for you.

And remember I was 19 and I looked at her and said, if god intends for me to get out of here, nobody here can stop me. And she turned on her heels and walked away.

And the thing is -- she later told me that -- she said, she's going to be all right, because if she feels that way now, she's going to be all right.

And that day -- by the end of that day, I had the worst headache. When I went home -- when I got home, my mother looked at me and she said, you don't have to go back. And I said, I'll go back if it kills me. And she didn't say any more.

But I -- the headache was just horrible, the stress of the entire day. But anyway I went back. But the thing is they had another gimmick. They didn't want me to stay in the nurse's residence, so they had all of the Baltimore students live at home and gave us a stipend for car fare and what not.
We could have our meals and all of that here, but we couldn't live here. And, so, the Baltimore girls were happy about this. They were saying, oh, we're getting -- and I believe they gave us $25. Oh, boy, we have this extra money.

But when it got to be snowy weather and -- their parents started complaining. And they were brought in, sort of secretly brought in. And I was never brought in until after I was capped.

And I think capping was in February. You had to pass all of your sciences before you were capped. And some of the students were, you know, sent out, you know, eliminated because they didn't pass. But anyhow I managed to get past those sciences and was capped.

INTERVIEWER

MCCREADY: Oh, is that what it said [LAUGHTER]. Is that what it said. And it's amazing how they were -- the other students -- all of them were brought in except me until after capping. They were all in before capping except me.

INTERVIEWER

Esther McCready: Fighting for Civil Rights


wouldn't have complained if I did that for the whole three years.

But when I moved down here, she was very worried and it was, you know, keep your door closed, keep your door locked. That was her -- her advice to me. Keep your door locked, because you don't know what will happen.

And I said, okay, I'll keep it locked, but sometimes I didn't, you know. But anyhow can you imagine one student on the floor with the dean. I don't know of any other students who -- and because of this there were activities and things that were going on that I never knew about.

You know, I looked in the yearbook when we finished and I said -- saw pictures, and, I said, I don't remember any of this, nothing like this going on. But anyhow --

INTERVIEWER

MCCREARY:

And I should say that I got a letter during the -- maybe the first month from a student who said -- an upperclassman who said she would be my big sister.
When you come into the School of Nursing and upper
classman would always be -- would always say, I'm
your big sister or introduce themselves as your big
sister. I don't think -- they chose you, you
didn't choose them.

And I got this letter from a student who said, you
know, I'm -- I live away from the -l I live off
campus because I'm married. She said, but I will be
your big sister. And this was a student whose name
was Virginia Matthews.

And she said, because I'm not there, I've left
somebody else -- she gave me the name of somebody --
to look -- look after you, you know, and if you need
anything go to her.

And, so, I think she came to me and introduced
herself too, that particular student, but I don't
remember her name. I'm sure it's in the letter,
though, you know, but I don't even remember what --
what she looks like now.

But anyhow -- so, when we got to capping -- we'll go
off to that. Virginia was -- Virginia capped me and
that -- I didn't see her that often, because I think
she was sickly and she was out a lot and she had lost a lot of time and she even told me then, I'll probably will end up graduating with you, you know, because I've lost so much time.

But anyway she was very pleasant. Her husband was very pleasant. I think he was a doctor here -- yeah, he was a doctor, but --

INTERVIEWER

MCCREARY:

[speaking over] yeah, because we had finished -- you know, we had finished -- because I was -- because I had done nurse's aid at Sinai hospital after high school -- like you could work four hours -- three or four hours after school and I think I started, maybe in the 10th grade and worked until the end of the 12th grade.

Because I had that experience -- anybody who was a candy striper -- we were put on the floors to, you know, do patient care after three months here. So, I was one of those. So, I, you know, had that experience on the floor before I was capped.

But you loved being capped because then you had something on your head that's said, you know, you're
a nurse. Even though the patients knew, because of the uniform. We had pinstriped uniforms with a white apron and we wore black shoes and stockings, which I always loved.

Because I at one time wanted to go to Philadelphia General and I -- I like Philadelphia because of the cap they wore and the black shoes and stockings. And that they had ambulance duty and I always wanted that, you know. But they didn't have that here.

But anyhow capping was a big thing and we wore a cap without a stripe. When you got to be a senior and you had I think -- I think an 85 average, I believe, you got a black stripe around your cap. And that signified you -- you know, senior, big time senior. And the next step was going to be your graduation.

But anyhow things went along all right, pretty much all right. I -- we had doctors who lectured us in the various sciences before we graduated, before the capping. And then you had -- it was so funny, it was -- at that time there -- in our psychiatry -- in our psychology class, there was this psychologist who was lecturing.

And at that time a black man had escaped from prison using a spoon to dig a tunnel. Well, it was so funny. He was talking about that, you know, in the class. And I, you know, raised my hand and said a few things.

But then oddly enough it's -- the whole thing turned to me, like, because I was the same race I would know why this man did this, you know, and I -- so, when he -- when he started looking to me for all of the answers, I started just staring at him and then he just knew that -- oh, let me look toward the other members of the class. It was so funny.

I said, now, I know why this man came -- dug his way out of prison and who he managed to do it with a spoon. I said, it was ingenious, I know that, to use a spoon and take your time and be that patient and make a tunnel big enough for you to get out of and escape.

But then he was saying that he returned to the scene and why would he have done that, you know. And I -- you know, I said, indeed I don't know any more than anybody else in this class.

But anyhow that was one incident that I, you know, look back to as being very funny. And then another thing which wasn’t funny was this doctor who lectured us in thoracic medicine. Turned to the side of the class that I wasn’t sitting on. He just could not stand and face the class.

He would watch to see where I was coming to sit and when -- if I would sit on his right, he turned his whole body and lectured to this side of the class. And if I sat over here, because I started testing it to see, you know -- and he would turn to that side and never look at this side of the class.

So, one day I said to a student who I felt I could trust -- I did not feel I could trust most of them. So, but this one particular girl -- I told her. Her name was Betty Elwell.

And I said, Betty, when, I said -- this doctor lectures to the side of the class that I’m not sitting on. She said, oh, now, you’re getting paranoid. I said, no, I’ve checked it out, you know.

And I said, now, watch, you sit on one side and I'm
going to sit on the other. And when I did, she looked around in amazement, her mouth opened. She said, I don't believe it, you know, she mouthed. And I said, I'm not paranoid. And he did this the entire time.

And I said, isn't it amazing that he doesn't understand that he doesn't have to look face on, but that I hear what he's saying and I'm taking the same notes and I'm going to pass this exam, you know. Because the nurse instructors gave you the exam. They didn't, they just did the lecturing.

But anyway was another incident. One other thing, you had a big medical nurse -- medical nursing report to do. And I found a wonderful patient to do this on, a young girl who had -- who had had an appendectomy and the wound never healed and it got to be a gaping wound like this all from this appendectomy. It just -- nothing healed.

And she was here and finally it was beginning to -- the wound was beginning to heal from underneath. Her chart was sort of like this. And I said, oh, she'll be a wonderful medical patient to -- you know, to do this report on.

And in writing the report, I just -- it was just so wonderful, you know, and all the questions -- I put the medical information throughout the whole report not in one section.

Mind you, now this was a medical nursing report and I got a B-minus and I said to the nurse instructor, why did I get a B-minus, because I knew it was a fantastic case. She glanced [garbled] she said, oh, you didn't put any medical nursing in here. And I said, wasn't this what the report was about. And she really couldn't answer me.

So, I said thank you and went on. Because I said there was no point in challenging her. She decided I was going to get a B-minus on this. And anybody reading that report -- it was so interesting. It would have been an automatic A on that report.

But I said -- and she couldn't answer. So, I said, it's no point in my challenging her, you know. I could have, but there were times you knew when to challenge and when not to challenge, when to say something, when not to say something. Because there would always be another time.