Abstract:
February is designated African American Month, a time when there is a special focus on contributions made by African Americans to American society. This mini-unit is part of such a focus. These lessons are part of another series of lesson taught during the month of February, which focus on contributions and achievements by African Americans.

The story of the Tuskegee Airmen serves as a chronicle to the military contributions made by African Americans during wartime, but it also is intended to provide 3rd graders with a clear example of how established racial prejudice and segregation threaten to interfere with the valuable talents, abilities and potential contributions of a specific group of people.

Essential Questions:
• What does it mean to make a contribution to society?
• What contribution did the Tuskegee Airmen make during WWII?
• What was the policy of segregation towards African Americans during WWII and what is it now?
Goals:
• Students will examine and analyze primary documents [photographs, articles] following guidelines from worksheets adapted from the National Archives and Records Administration.
• Students will read, hear and discuss historical accounts of the Tuskegee Airmen through classroom reading selections and a classroom field trip to an exhibit at Chanute Air Force Museum in Rantoul, IL.
• Students will compare and contrast and draw conclusions about segregation policies during WWII and those in the present.

Objectives:
Students will be able to:
• Define a primary source
• Investigate evidence of past events through analysis of photographs
• Organize the history and facts about the Tuskegee Airmen using graphic organizer [who-what-when-where-how-why]
• Compare/Contrast policies of segregation towards African Americans before and after WWII using a Venn Diagram.

Resources Used in Mini-Unit:
http://www.nps.gov/tuai/historyculture/index.htm
http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/WW2Timeline/Tuskegee.html
http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets
http://www.edhelper.com/teachers/Miscellaneous_graphic_organizers.htm

The Tuskegee Airmen, by Philip Brooks

The Tuskegee Airmen-African American Pilots of World War II
by Sarah E. DeCapua

Lesson One - CONTRIBUTIONS
1. Students [with teacher input as needed] will brainstorm as to what different kinds of contributions people can make in society. Teacher will record student ideas into categories within a graphic organizer [topic/details]; i.e., [contributions/science, medicine, fine and performing arts, sports, literature].
2. Students and teacher will assign specific African Americans to these categories where appropriate.
3. Teacher reads aloud from Philip Brooks’ The Tuskegee Airmen, the story of the Tuskegee airmen, identifying their wartime contribution. Afterwards, students provide facts to teacher who records it on overhead graphic organizer [Who-What-Where-When-Why-How].
4. Teacher prepares students for next-day fieldtrip to Chanute
Lesson Two – FIELDTRIP
Chanute Air Force Museum, Rantoul, IL

Lesson Three – SEGREGATION
1. Teacher asks for any additional information from the field trip to our Who-What-Where-When-Why-How organizer.
2. Teacher provides students with a working definition of primary sources as things that link the event to the past; something used or made. For example, photographs, written documents, and artifacts.
3. Each student table will get copies of 2 photographs, 1 article and analysis worksheets. Teacher models on a transparency how to use modified Photograph Analysis Worksheet to analyze one of the photographs.

http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/
http://www.nps.gov/tuai/

4. Teacher asks students to choose a recorder at the table. Students work in groups and fill out modified photograph analysis worksheet using another photograph. Give students enough time to complete worksheets.

Photograph: 99MessHall.jpg

5. Teacher repeats activity using written document and a modified Written Document Analysis Worksheet.

Written Document: 99ArticleJan41.jpg

6. Teacher writes on chalkboard the definition of segregated from Philip Brooks’ book, The Tuskegee Airmen:

“when people of different races are kept apart”

7. Teacher invites students to look at the photographs and the article again to see if there is evidence of races being kept apart. Teacher records their ideas on chalkboard.

Using their ideas, students construct a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting segregation in the military during WWII and segregation today.