

Le Majordome (The Butler)

Un film réalisé par Lee Daniels
Etats-Unis, 2013

Metropolitan FilmExport

Dossier réalisé par Natalie Grand-Matoré
pour Zérodeconduite.net, Février 2014

Une correction, une suggestion, une question ?

N'hésitez pas à nous contacter : info@zerodeconduite.net / 01 40 34 92 08

INTRODUCTION

Le Majordome (The Butler) soulève la question des droits civiques aux États-Unis à travers sept présidences, entre 1926 et l'élection de Barack Obama en 2008. Ce film-fresque permet de comprendre, dans la durée, les formidables combats qu'ont dû mener les partisans de l'égalité des droits, en butte aux résistances d'une Amérique blanche encore farouchement opposée à l'émancipation des Noirs. En suivant la trajectoire personnelle de Cecil Gaines, fiction inspirée par la vie du véritable majordome de la Maison Blanche Eugene Allen, décédé en 2010, les événements relatés ancrent le film dans quelques uns des épisodes les plus marquants de l'histoire des États-Unis. Les conditions de vie des Noirs américains dans les états du Sud, la ségrégation raciale et ses effets délétères, la longue lutte pour les droits civiques, du meurtre de Emmett Till à l'élection d'Obama, en passant par Little Rock, les Freedom Riders, les Black Panthers, Martin Luther King, Malcom X, tous ces épisodes tumultueux ponctuent la vie de Cecil Gaines et tiennent le film dans leur trame. L'assassinat de John F. Kennedy, la guerre du Vietnam, le Watergate, les luttes raciales en Afrique du Sud et Nelson Mandela tissent également le fond historique de la vie de Cecil et de sa famille, notamment de son fils aîné qui s'engage, contre l'avis de son père, dans tous les mouvements militants pour la cause des Noirs américains. Ainsi, à travers l'opposition entre le père et le fils est évoqué le problème de la différence de points de vue de deux générations par rapport à l'histoire difficile des Noirs américains : d'un côté, Cecil Gaines, qui a connu lynchages et ségrégation dure, et accède par son emploi au plus près des cercles du pouvoir à une notabilité limitée par une ascension sociale mesurée ; de l'autre, la jeune génération beaucoup plus ambitieuse, révoltée, et décidée à réclamer son dû coûte que coûte, dans les soubresauts parfois douloureux de l'histoire.

En étudiant le film, les élèves seront amenés à découvrir un siècle entier de l'histoire des États-Unis de façon chronologique, en reliant les faits à la vie d'un personnage unique qui traverse ces époques, les observe, est affecté par les bouleversements qui secouent la société : ils auront ainsi la possibilité de mieux identifier ces périodes et de comprendre la succession des événements en s'appuyant sur un point de vue personnel, aidés en cela par les très nombreuses archives, photos et vidéos, insérées dans la trame fictionnelle et ancrant celle-ci, parfois violemment, dans la réalité historique. Replacer les étapes de l'histoire des Noirs américains dans leur contexte historique et sociologique permettra aux élèves de surmonter les réactions immédiates d'effroi et de condamnation qui, si elles sont parfaitement légitimes et nécessaires, ne permettraient pas sans cette mise à distance un positionnement plus construit, réfléchi et productif.

Les thèmes présents dans le film, les allusions très précises à l'histoire du pays, l'éclairage sur positions des présidents successifs par rapport aux injustices dont ont été victimes les Noirs américains ainsi que la présence en filigrane des décisions de politique intérieure ou internationale des États-Unis, tout cela contribue à faire de ce film un objet d'étude approprié dans les programmes du cycle terminal des lycées, ainsi qu'en classe de seconde.

L'étude du film peut également être associée à un projet interdisciplinaire, notamment en partenariat avec les enseignants d'Histoire-Géographie.

SOMMAIRE

Introduction	p. 2
Dans les programmes	p. 3
Fiche technique du film	p. 4
Séquenceur	p. 5
■ Activité 1 : History and fiction	p. 8
Éléments de correction	p. 12
■ Activité 2 : From segregated america to the White House	p. 15
Éléments de correction	p. 36
■ Activité 3 : Real life and fiction	p. 41
Éléments de correction	p. 46
■ Activité 4 : James Brown : "Say it loud, I'm black and I'm proud"	p. 47
Éléments de correction	p. 48

DANS LES PROGRAMMES

Enseignement	Niveau	Dans les programmes
■ Anglais	Seconde	Mémoire Sentiment d'appartenance ou d'étrangeté Visions d'avenir
	Cycle terminal	Mythes et héros ; lieux et formes du pouvoir Pouvoirs et conquêtes (luttres pour l'égalité et la liberté, conquêtes et reculs ; la question de la parité ; le droit de vote) Espaces et échanges (conflits entre particulier et universel, que recourent souvent des oppositions entre tradition et modernité)

FICHE TECHNIQUE DU DVD



Le Majordome

Titre original : The Butler

Un film réalisé par Lee Daniels

Avec : Forest Whitaker (Cecil Gaines), Oprah Winfrey (Gloria Gaines), David Oyelowo (Louis Gaines), John Cusack (Richard Nixon) Robin Williams (Dwight Eisenhower) Cuba Gooding Jr. (Carter Wilson) Lenny Kravitz (James Holloway)

Année : 2013

Langue : Anglais

Sous-titres : Anglais ou Français

Pays : États-Unis

Durée : 127 minutes

Editeur du DVD : Metropolitan FilmExport

Bonus : Making-of du film ; mini documentaire sur les Freedom Riders (3 mn 35)

Synopsis : Cecil Gaines fuit une plantation du Sud ségrégationniste en 1926 après le meurtre de son père. Il est bientôt engagé comme majordome à la Maison Blanche et y restera 34 ans, durant sept présidences. Sa position privilégiée fera de lui un témoin de l'intérieur des principaux événements politiques que traversent les États-Unis entre la présidence de Dwight Eisenhower et celle de Barak Obama. Sa femme, Gloria, élève leurs deux fils mais les fonctions de son mari suscitent des tensions dans le couple, surtout lorsque l'aîné, Louis, s'engage aux côtés des Freedom Riders, puis des Black Panthers et du mouvement pour les Droits Civiques. Par les yeux de Cecil Gaines le film retrace l'histoire des États-Unis et les principaux épisodes de la lutte pour l'accès à l'égalité des droits.

CHAPITRAGE DU DVD

Les caractères en rose signalent les points les plus intéressants à exploiter en classe.

Chap. DVD	Minutage	Descriptif
1.	00:38-04:57	Alors qu'il attend d'être reçu par le nouveau Président des Etats-Unis, Cecil Gaines, vieilli, se remémore son enfance dans une plantation de coton à Macon, en Géorgie, dans les années 1920, le viol de sa mère et le meurtre de son père, le début de son apprentissage de serviteur.
2.	05:00-12:04	Cecil apprend à être le domestique parfait aux ordres de la propriétaire du domaine, puis décide de quitter la plantation. Il trouve une place d'employé d'hôtel en Caroline du Nord, puis de majordome à Washington, dans un pays encore sous le régime de la ségrégation raciale.
3.	12:05-15:40	1957. A l'hôtel Excelsior, Cecil est au cœur de la vie politique du pays. Première évocation de la question de la mixité raciale dans les écoles. Première prise de distance de Cecil, qui se focalise sur sa promotion sociale, son épouse Gloria, ancienne femme de chambre, et leurs deux garçons, Louis et Charlie. Evocation de la mort de Emmett Till et de la question d'une justice anti Noirs dans le Sud. (En filigrane, la NAACP, à l'origine de la campagne de Mamie Till)
4.	15:45-21:45	Cecil est engagé comme majordome à la Maison Blanche après avoir convaincu le maître d'hôtel Freddie Fallows que la politique ne l'intéresse pas et qu'il sera un parfait "house nigger", terme méprisant de Blanc du Sud. Cecil ne semble pas en prendre ombrage et célèbre en famille et avec ses amis Howard et Gina sa nouvelle promotion. Louis, son fils aîné, semble au contraire consterné et distant.
5.	21:47-28:00	Débuts à la Maison Blanche, rencontre Carter Wilson, le majordome en chef, et James Holloway. Suite de la question de la mixité raciale dans les écoles : le président Dwight D. Eisenhower hésite à envoyer la force fédérale à Little Rock, Arkansas, pour escorter de jeunes Noirs jusqu'à leur lycée majoritairement blanc. Même au sein du cercle familial, Cecil refuse de s'exprimer à propos des problèmes touchant à la question raciale, ce qui crée des tensions avec Louis, qui commence à s'intéresser aux balbutiements de ce qui va devenir le mouvement pour les droits civiques.
6.	28:02-32:55	Le président Eisenhower décide enfin d'envoyer l'armée à Little Rock. Cecil est optimiste et veut croire que la situation des Noirs va s'améliorer tandis que Louis se radicalise peu à peu. Il décide de quitter la famille pour aller étudier à Fisk University, dans le Tennessee, et non à Howard University, à Washington, comme le voudrait Cecil. La rupture entre le père et le fils se matérialise.
7.	32:58-42:20	Le vice-président Richard Nixon entre en campagne contre John F. Kennedy. En 1960, à Fisk University, Louis rencontre Carol dans le séminaire d'études conduit par le pasteur activiste et non-violent James Lawson. Son engagement politique se précise peu à peu. Il prend part à un sit-in non violent dans la section d'un restaurant réservée aux Blancs à Greensboro, Caroline du Nord. Les étudiants se font frapper, insulter et sont arrêtés par la police.

CHAPITRAGE DU DVD

8.	42:21-50:00	En apprenant la condamnation de son fils à 30 jours de prison, Cecil est furieux. Le père et le fils s'éloignent à nouveau. Gloria souffre de cette rupture et sombre peu à peu dans la dépression. Elle vient d'apprendre que Louis a rejoint les Freedom Riders . En 1967, à la Maison Blanche, John F. Kennedy vient de remporter les élections et s'installe avec Jackie et ses enfants. Gloria devient peu à peu alcoolique, alors que Cecil travaille de plus en plus et néglige son foyer.
9.	50:02-58:52	Dans l'Alabama, l'un des Freedom Buses, avec à son bord Louis, Carol, et des militants de droits civiques se fait attaquer par le Ku Klux Klan . L'affrontement est extrêmement violent, le bus est incendié, les militants frappés et blessés. Cecil, lui, travaille dans un environnement protégé qui contraste avec les violences extérieures. C'est par la petite Caroline Kennedy qu'il apprend l'explosion du bus de Birmingham. Les images télévisées de l'époque font irruption dans la fiction. Cecil ordonne à Louis, emprisonné, de revenir à Washington, ce qu'il refuse. La situation à Birmingham s'aggrave, les manifestations sont brutalement réprimées par la police. En images d'archive, apparition de Martin Luther King , venu soutenir la Marche de Selma, Alabama , pour les droits civiques. Gloria met fin à la liaison qu'elle entretenait avec son voisin Howard.. Les événements récents conduisent le président Kennedy à prendre position sur le problème des Noirs américains.
10.	58:53-1:04:38	Le président Kennedy propose le Civil Rights Act au congrès en 1963 avec, entre autres, le projet de déségrégation raciale. En novembre 1964, il est assassiné à Dallas . Cela fait trois ans que Louis n'a pas revu sa famille. Jackie Kennedy donne à Cecil l'une des cravates du président décédé. Cecil et Gloria se réconcilient.
11.	1:04:40-1:11:40	1964. Gouvernement de Lyndon Johnson . L'ambiance est décontractée au foyer des Gaines, et la discussion de focalise sur la marche qui s'organise sous l'égide de Martin Luther King pour réclamer le droit de vote pour les Noirs (Voting Rights Act signé en 1965). Rappel du meurtre des trois jeunes lors de leur tentative de faire inscrire des citoyens noirs sur les listes électorales à Selma. Depuis ses toilettes, le président exprime son impatience concernant la situation devant un Cecil placide et obéissant. En 1965, Louis, de son côté, commence à être influencé par les idées de Malcolm X , qui est en tournée à travers le pays. Images d'archives montrant des manifestants pourchassés et battus par les forces de l'ordre (« Bloody Sunday »). Lyndon Johnson s'engage à promouvoir le droit de vote pour les citoyens noirs.
12.	1:11:41-1:21:30	1968. Début de la guerre du Vietnam , manifestations pacifistes dans tout le pays. Premières retransmissions télévisées d'un conflit armé et des horreurs perpétrées et subies. Louis milite toujours aux côtés de Martin Luther King. Ce dernier exalte la condition des serviteurs noirs et fait d'eux, à la grande surprise de Louis, un modèle de subversion. Cecil, pendant ce temps, ne réussit pas à obtenir une augmentation salariale qui le mettrait à égalité avec les serviteurs blancs. Assassinat de Martin Luther King . Cecil se trouve pris dans une manifestation violente à la suite de la mort de MLK. Intervention télévisée de Jessie Jackson. Louis vient avec Carol rendre visite à sa famille. Il a rejoint les Black Panthers et se fait chasser de la maison par son père, qui est farouchement opposé à l'engagement de son fils. Evocation des nouvelles figures noires du cinéma Hollywoodien.

CHAPITRAGE DU DVD

13.	1:21:22-1:27:50	Louis se fait à nouveau arrêter. Charlie, le jeune frère, va s'engager dans l'armée et partir au Vietnam. 1969. Gouvernement de Richard Nixon . A Oakland, Californie, siège des Black Panthers, Louis est sur le point de s'engager sur une voix politique plus violente. Nixon envisage de s'attirer le vote des Noirs en promouvant les entreprises dirigées par des Noirs et le mouvement du Black Power tout en évitant de voir son nom et son parti associé aux Black Panthers, qu'il veut réprimer violemment. Louis refuse d'aller jusqu'au meurtre pour défendre la cause et quitte le mouvement. La police réprime les actions engagées, tire sur les activistes et en tue plusieurs dizaines dans les mois qui suivent.
14.	1:27:53-1:32:24	Gloria et Cecil s'apprêtent à célébrer l'anniversaire de Cecil (à la télévision, les premières émissions où apparaissent des Noirs, le disco), lorsqu'ils apprennent la mort de Charlie au Vietnam.
15	1:32:25-1:38:15	1974. Second mandat de Nixon et affaire du Watergate . Louis vient de finir ses études de sciences politiques et rend visite à son père à la Maison Blanche. Cecil le renvoie sans ménagement. Les années passent. Images d'archives de la présidence de Gérald Ford , des manifestations féministes , des marches pour les droits des homosexuels , des ghettos noirs, de la présidence de Jimmy Carter , du choc pétrolier, de la présence de plus en plus visibles des Noirs à la télévision dans des rôles caricaturaux, et enfin de la campagne politique de Louis qui veut se faire élire au Congrès.
16.	1:38:16-1:44:55	1986. Présidence de Ronald Reagan . On apprend avec surprise que le président a beaucoup fait pour garantir l'égalité salariale entre Noirs et Blancs à la Maison Blanche. Nancy Reagan invite Cecil et Gloria à un dîner officiel. Moment de prise de conscience de Cecil à propos des deux visages qu'il a dû montrer toute sa vie. Evocation par Ronald Reagan de la répression des émeutes raciales en Afrique du Sud, de Nelson Mandela et de l'apartheid . Reagan refuse de laisser voter des sanctions contre l'Afrique du Sud.
17.	1:44:56-1:51:32	Après le dîner à la Maison Blanche, Cecil est désorienté et commence à douter de ses convictions. Son optimisme et sa réprobation envers les activistes noirs commencent à vaciller. Il comprend enfin ce qui a motivé les actions de son fils et sa vision des choses en est profondément modifiée, ainsi que son travail. Il démissionne de son poste et se réconcilie avec Louis, qui milite toujours pour les droits civiques mis à mal par Reagan, et dans le mouvement anti-apartheid et pour la libération de Nelson Mandela. Il manifeste à ses côtés et se fait arrêter avec lui.
18.	1:51:35-1:57:00	Cecil découvre la prison avec Louis. 2008. Cecil et sa famille soutiennent la candidature de Barack Obama . Louis a été élu au Congrès. Gloria meurt juste avant la victoire d'Obama.
19.	1:57:01-2:00:00	Le film se termine sur le même plan que celui du début : à la Maison Blanche, Cecil attend de rencontrer le nouveau président.

ACTIVITÉ 1

HISTORY AND FICTION

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



I) CECIL GAINES : HIS PERSONAL LIFE

- As you watch the film, take notes and recreate the chronology of events in Cecil Gaines' personal life. Place them on a timeline.
To do so, first identify these characters :



.....



.....



.....



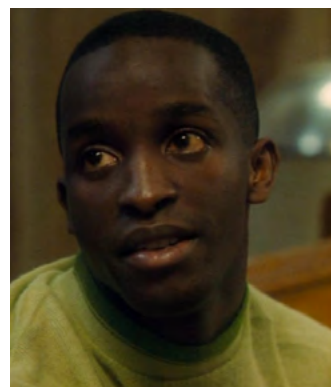
.....



.....



.....



.....



.....



.....



.....

ACTIVITÉ 1

HISTORY AND FICTION

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



- Then, after watching the film, write a short biography of Cecil Gaines. Be sure to include all the following connecting words :

First/ at first/ in the beginning/ at the outset/ to begin with

Next/ then/ following this/ after that/ afterwards/ later/

Consequently/ therefore/ for this reason/ that's why/ hence/ as a result

Before that (+ past perfect)

Finally/ in the end/ eventually/ at last

ACTIVITÉ 1

HISTORY AND FICTION

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels
États-Unis, 2013



2) WHO ARE THEY ?

Consider the portraits of these actors in the film. Can you identify the real-life presidents they embody?

Link the left and right columns, and write the name of each president next to their portraits.



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITÉ 1

HISTORY AND FICTION

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

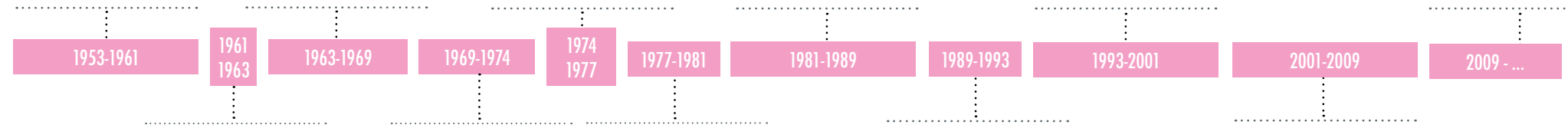
États-Unis, 2013



- Now, place the name of each president on the timeline and add the 5 presidents who do not appear in the film.
(Note that one president appears as himself).



.....



CORRIGÉ

I) CECIL GAINES : HIS PERSONAL LIFE



the plantation owner
who teaches Cecil
how to be a house servant



Cecil as a boy



Cecil's father



Cecil's mother



Cecil's wife Gloria



Cecil's eldest son Louis



Cecil's younger son Charlie



Girlfriend Carol



White House head butler
and Cecil's friend
Carter Wilson



Cecil's co-worker
Jales Holloway

CORRIGÉ

2) WHO ARE THEY ?

Consider the portraits of these actors in the film. Can you identify the real-life presidents they embody? Link the left and right columns, and write the name of each president under their portraits.



Robin Williams plays
Dwight D. Eisenhower
(1953-1961)



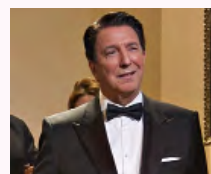
James Marsden plays
John F. Kennedy
(1961-1963)



Liev Schreiber plays
Lyndon Johnson
(1963-1969)



John Cusack plays
Richard Nixon
(1969-1974)



Alan Rickman plays
Ronald Reagan
(1981-1989)



CORRIGÉ

- Now, place the name of each president on the timeline and add the 5 presidents who do not appear in the film.
(Note that one president appears as himself).



Gerald Ford
(1974-1977)



Jimmy Carter
(1977-1981)



George H.W. Bush
(1989-1993)



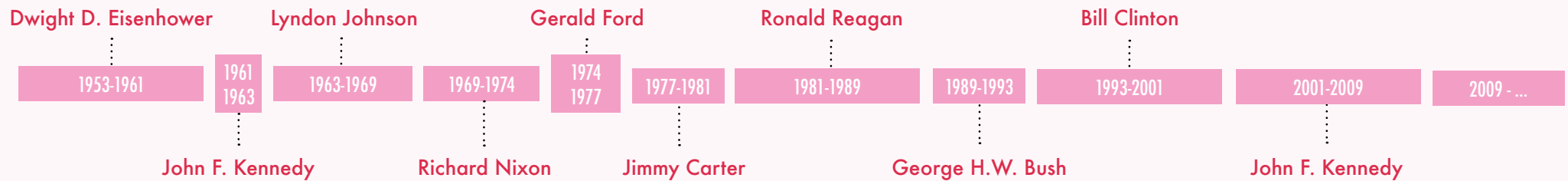
Bill Clinton
(1993-2001)



George W. Bush
(2001-2009)



Barack Obama
(2009-).





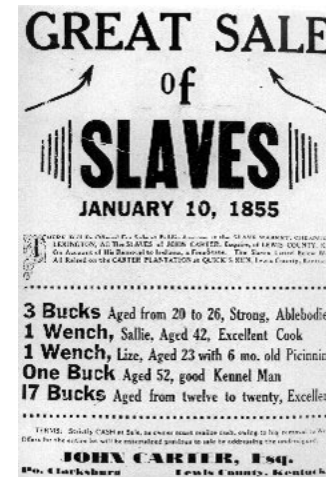
1) THE SOUTHERN STATES IN THE 1920'S (Chapters 1 and 2 on the DVD)

a) Watch the beginning of the movie (Chapters 1 and 2) ; observe people and events, describe them.

What do you see and understand about the way of life in the Southern states at the time ?

SLAVERY

Slavery was abolished at the end of the Civil War (1861-1865) with the XIIIth Amendment to the Constitution. Although black people were officially free from then on, in many southern states laws restricting opportunities for black people were passed. They were called « Jim Crow » laws. Black people were prevented from voting by literacy requirements and a poll tax. They were not allowed to attend the same schools, the same hospitals, the same restaurants, or board the same buses or railroad cars as white citizens. Segregation was rigidly enforced. In the 1920's, most black people worked in house service or as tenant farmers or sharecroppers, many were still employed on plantations. Many black people left the South in the 1920's and migrated in the industrialized North in search of better employment opportunities, higher wages and decent living conditions. This movement has been called the « Great Rural-Urban Migration ».



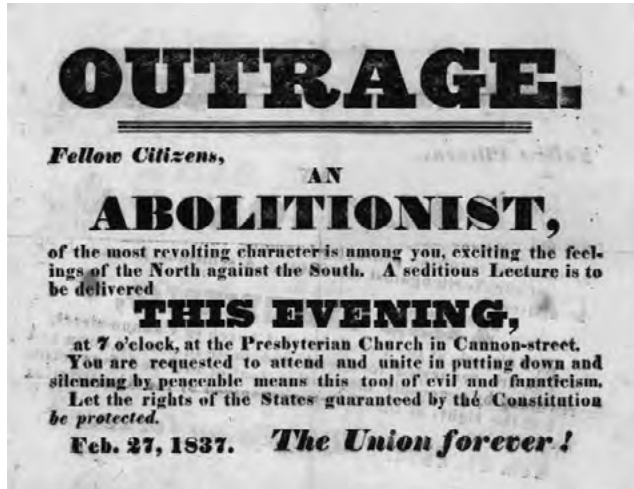
ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



b) Observe the images above, describe them.

What do they reveal about the condition of black people in the United States both before the 1920's in those years ?

Use the passive voice.

TOOLBOX : PASSIVE VOICE

All men are created equal...

We have been cruelly deceived.

The man was struck by the owner.

He got punched in the face during the fight.



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



c) Watch from 02:15 to 00:05. How would you characterize Cecil's father's reaction to the situation? Why ?

TOOLBOX : EXPRESSING FEAR

To be afraid of (+ N) (+ V-ing)

To be scared of (+ N) (+ V-ing)

To fear...To fear for...

To be wild with fear/ To be frozen by terror/ To be stricken into silence

To be frightened by...

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels
États-Unis, 2013

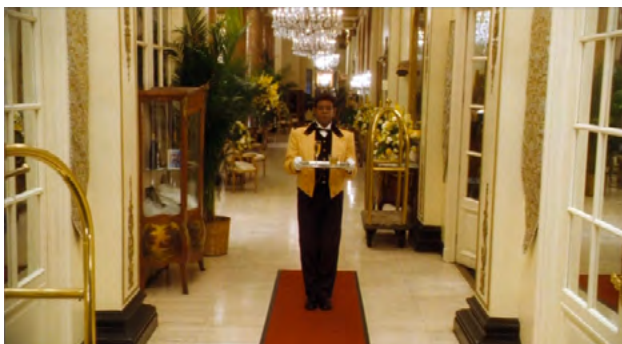


2) IN THE WHITE HOUSE UNDER THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION (chapters 3 to 6 on the DVD)

a) Watch the beginning of chapter 3 (12:51 to 14:05)

Describe what is at stake in this passage and observe Cecil's attitude and reactions. What can you say?

Observe the picture :



Can you comment on the structure of the picture, its colors and how revealing it is of Cecil's position in society at that moment?

.....

.....

.....

.....



Can you compare the picture above to that of Cecil's first day as the White House's butler?

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels
États-Unis, 2013



b) The question of school integration and the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.



Emmett Till

Emmett Till was an African-American teenager who was brutally murdered by two white men in Mississippi in 1955. His assassination was one of the main events which sparked the Civil Rights movement in the United States. After looking up in details what actually happened in the Emmett Till murder, say what your reactions are.

c) Watch from 16:40 to 19:27.

What can you say about the way the job interview was conducted ?

Study the attitudes, positions and language of both men. How different are they ? Describe the hierarchy between them.

What is the decisive argument which gets Cecil hired by Mr. Fallows? What do you think of the term : "house nigger" ?

How do you react to it? How does Cecil react?



d) Segregated schools. Watch [from 25:03 to 25:45](#)

Read the following account of The Brown v. Board of Education Court decision, and some of the reactions that followed.

Brown v. Board of Education was a landmark Supreme Court case in which the Court declared state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students unconstitutional. In 1951, a suit had been filed against the Board of Education of the City of Topeka, Kansas. The plaintiffs were thirteen parents on behalf of their twenty children.

The suit called for the school district to reverse its policy of racial segregation. The Court's unanimous decision stated that *"separate educational facilities are inherently unequal"*. This ruling paved the way for integration and was a major victory of the civil rights movement.



Reactions : Not everyone accepted the Brown v. Board of Education decision. In Virginia, Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr. organized the Massive Resistance movement that included the closing of schools rather than desegregating them.

In 1957, Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus called out his state's National Guard to block black students' entry to Little Rock Central High School. President Dwight Eisenhower responded by deploying elements of the 101st Airborne Division to Arkansas.

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



Students at Barnard Elementary School in Washington, D.C., one of the first schools to desegregate after Brown. (Library of Congress)

Can you comment on the pictures above? What do they reveal about the state of mind at the time? Is it something we can understand nowadays?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



e) Father and son

Watch **from 28:00 to 29:15**. Confront both positions. What is Cecil's perspective ? How does it contradict his son's ? What adjectives do you think Louis associates with Cecil's attitude ? And Cecil, to Louis's ?

TOOLBOX : EXPRESSING CONTRAST AND OPPOSITION

Even though/even if/ although/

In spite of (+N)/ despite the fact that (+S+V)

However/ Yet/ Nevertheless

Contrary to/ On the contrary/ in contrast to

While, whereas (+S+V)

On the one hand... on the other hand

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



3) THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION AND THE END OF SEGREGATION (chapters 7 to 10)

a) The Greensboro, N.C. non-violent sit-ins.

Describe what is at stake in this passage and observe Cecil's attitude and reactions. What can you say?



Four College students sit in seats designated for white people at the racially segregated Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro, NC, in 1960. (Greensboro News & Record photo by Jack Moebe)

Watch from 36:43 to 44:45. Describe what you see and comment on the way the passage is edited. What can you say about the deliberate way of telling the story? What is the intention of the director? Does it work for you? (Use cause and consequence; comparison and contrast structures).

Imagine Cecil's inner thoughts as he silently waits on the dinner guests. Imagine, in parallel, the inner thoughts of one of the sit-in students as they are being insulted and violently molested.

Now imagine the letter Cecil might have written to his son after watching him on TV being arrested by police. What do you think he would try to convince him of? What would Louis answer?

What do you think of non-violence as a strategy to fight racism and segregation?

Comment on the words used in the sequence : "war of love", and the ironical parallel made with the "army" of butlers and servants at the White House.

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



b) Consider both pictures, comment on them and say how you react to them:



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



c) The Freedom Riders. Watch from 51:18 to 54:12

FREEDOM RIDERS

Freedom Riders were civil rights activists who rode interstate buses into the segregated southern United States in 1961 and following years to challenge the non-enforcement of the United States Supreme Court decisions which ruled that segregated public buses were unconstitutional. The Southern states had ignored the rulings and the federal government did nothing to enforce them.

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) sponsored most of the subsequent Freedom Rides. The Freedom Rides followed dramatic sit-ins against segregated lunch counters, conducted by students and youth throughout the South, and boycotts of retail establishments that maintained segregated facilities, beginning in 1960.

The first Freedom Ride began on May 4, 1961. 13 riders (seven black, six white) left Washington, DC, on Greyhound and Trailways buses. Their plan was to ride through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, ending in New Orleans, Louisiana, where a civil rights rally was planned.

The Freedom Riders' tactics for their journey were to have at least one interracial pair sitting in adjoining seats, and at least one black rider sitting up front, where seats under segregation had been reserved for white customers by local custom throughout the South. The rest of the team would sit scattered throughout the rest of the bus. One rider would abide by the South's segregation rules in order to avoid arrest and to contact CORE and arrange bail for those who were arrested.

Source : Wikipedia



Freedom Riders, (left to right):
Stokely Carmichael,
Margaret Leonard,
Kredelle Petway,
Paul Green.

Source : dailykos.com

A Greyhound bus that carried Freedom Riders burns after being set ablaze...

Photo by Joseph Postiglione / Birmingham



THE KU KLUX KLAN

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK), informally known as the Klan or the «Hooded Order», is the name of three distinct past and present far-right organizations in the United States, which have advocated extremist reactionary currents such as white supremacy, white nationalism, and anti-immigration, historically expressed through terrorism. Since the mid-20th century, the KKK has also been anti-communist. The current manifestation is splintered into several chapters with no connection to each other; it is classified as a hate group by the Anti-Defamation League. It is estimated to have between 5,000 and 8,000 members as of 2012.

The first Ku Klux Klan flourished in the Southern United States in the late 1860s. Members adopted white costumes: robes, masks, and conical hats, designed to be outlandish and terrifying, and to hide their identities. The second KKK flourished nationwide in the early and mid-1920s, and introduced cross burnings. The third KKK emerged after World War II and was associated with opposing the Civil Rights Movement and progress among minorities.



Cross burning at nighttime Ku Klux Klan (KKK) rally,
Photo by Hank Walker

Now, imagine you are a reporter covering the story for a local newspaper whose readership is primarily white. What would you write, and what would you emphasize? Do the same thing for a mainly black readership.

Now watch the DVD bonus documentary about the Freedom Riders and characterize the people who took part in the rides. Say what you think of their action.

After watching the end of the extract (54:12 to 56:00), in class, organize a discussion between a mother and a black young woman who wants to sit on the first ride from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 4, 1961. Imagine what might have been said. Then, do the same between a white mother and her child who wants to do the same thing. What arguments are you going to use?

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



d) President Kennedy's speech in June, 1963

Watch from 59:00 to 1:02:50. Then read an excerpt from John F. Kennedy's *Address to the Nation*, in June, 1963

« We face, therefore, a moral crisis as a country and a people. It cannot be met by repressive police action. It cannot be left to increased demonstrations in the streets. It cannot be quieted by token moves or talk. It is a time to act in the Congress, in your State and local legislative body and, above all, in all of our daily lives. It is not enough to pin the blame on others, to say this a problem of one section of the country or another, or deplore the facts that we face. A great change is at hand, and our task, our obligation, is to make that revolution, that change, peaceful and constructive for all. Those who do nothing are inviting shame, as well as violence. Those who act boldly are recognizing right, as well as reality. »

— John F. Kennedy, *Address to the Nation*, June 11, 1963.

How was that speech decisive in the advancement of the civil rights cause? Pick out the words and phrases which demonstrate the President's commitment and make this address a powerful speech.

Then find out online how this commitment was followed by action and translated into actual change.



e) Martin Luther King, Jr.

The March on Washington

In August 1963, more than 200,000 Americans of all races joined a March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Key civil rights figures led the march, including Martin Luther King, Jr., who delivered his *I Have a Dream* speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Watch the subtitled speech here : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ryy7eP0kks>

Read excerpts from the speech :

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. AUGUST 28, 1963 : I HAVE A DREAM

« (...) Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. (...)

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, «When will you be satisfied?» We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the

highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: «For Whites Only.» We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until «justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.» (...)

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: «We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.»

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.





I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of «interposition» and «nullification» – one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.



Washington, D.C.'s, Lincoln Memorial Aug. 28, 1963.

I have a dream today! (...)

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"



Dr. Martin Luther King giving his *I Have a Dream* speech during the March on Washington in Washington, D.C., on 28 August 1963.

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



Now go to : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:I_Have_A_Dream_sample.ogg and listen to 30 seconds of that speech.

How would you characterize the tone of the speech? How does Martin Luther King manage to grab his audience and move them? Find the rhetorical devices that he uses.

What parts of the speech do you find most moving? Why?

Imagine you were in the crowd at the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963. You are writing to a friend about Martin Luther King's speech. What would you say? How would you report his words?



4) FROM THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 TO THE VIETNAM WAR (Chapters 11 and 12)

a) The N-word euphemism

Definition : Nigger (also spelled niggar): a word that is an alteration of the earlier neger, nigger derives from the French negre, from the Spanish and Portuguese negro, from the Latin niger (black). First recorded in 1587 (as negar), the word probably originated with the dialectal pronunciation of negro in northern England and Ireland.

– *Anti-Bias Study Guide*, Anti-Defamation League, 1998

In the United States, «nigger» was first regarded as pejorative in the early nineteenth century. In the era of enslavement, the words «nigger» or «black» were inserted in front of a common American first name (e.g., John), given to a slave to distinguish the slave from any local white person with the same name. While usage of the word in African American culture is complex in that it can be used affectionately, politically, or pejoratively, the epithet is considered an abusive slur when used by white people. The word has gained more acceptance in recent years in youth culture through song lyrics and stand-up comedy. However, most adults continue to view the word as offensive and harmful.

Source : www.pbs.org

DISCUSSION :

- In general, who can or can't say the word? When, if ever, can it be said? How do you feel about the use of the word?
- Is it different to read a text or hear an interview or a song by an African-American who uses it than read or hear it used by a non African-American? Why or why not?
- Does the use of the word in a "classic" literary work such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or a film such as Quentin Tarantino's *Django Unchained* make it more acceptable or valid? If so, why?

Do you agree with the following opinion expressed by a movie critic :

"No word, no matter how hateful, should be off limits in film. That argument, that there are things too terrible to hear or see, runs counter to the spirit of independent film. Disqualifying a word limits the palette of a writer, chains the characters and harnesses the story. How can filmmakers accurately depict the darkness that exists in the world without descending into the ugliness and the muck? It is not pretty to hear Don Zolochi in "The Godfather" utter the n-word, but it holds the mirror up to nature and reveals great insight into his disgustingly flawed character. Independent film exists to expose such flaws, to make explicit such grays that the black and white formula that mainstream Hollywood ignores. A film in the independent spirit should be as ugly and as beautiful and as complicated as life itself".

Source : Ron Mwangaguhunga, ifc.com

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



- Now watch from 1:08:28 to 1:08:55 and then read the following extract :

*“Speaking to reporters at the National Association of Black Journalists convention in Orlando, Florida, Oscar nominated-director Lee Daniels (Precious, The Butler), said that it is possible for White people – particularly in the Deep South – to “really love” Black people and still call them “n*ggas,” reports Politico.com. Delving into the “strategic” use of the n-word in ‘The Butler’ as it was used by former President Lyndon B. Johnson against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement, Daniels opined that obvious displays of racism can be misleading: “For me, it was very strategic,” Daniels told a group of reporters at NABJ. “When we did use it, it was used later on by Cuba [Gooding Jr., as the head butler] making fun of someone that did use it, Lyndon Johnson. It was sort of the joke that this guy uses it. So when he says it and talks about, it opens up the concept of white people loving us and really loving us and feeling that it’s fine to use the word nigga. That’s how Johnson felt. He did something that was incredible for us. That’s trying to be taken away from us right now. And yet, he used that word just like ‘pass the grits.’ Racism is a very hard thing to explain, especially in the South.”*

Source : Kirsten West Savali, newsone.com.

- After watching those passages from the film, what is your opinion? Do you agree with Lee Daniels?

TOOLBOX : EXPRESSING OPINION AND FEELING

I think/ I believe/ I guess

In my opinion/ to my mind/ in my view/ as far as I’m concerned/

I agree/ I disagree with/ I don’t quite agree with/ I couldn’t disagree more/ I object to...

I can’t help thinking that/ I must admit that/ I must confess that/

It cannot be denied that.... however, I must point out that...

This is nonsense/ this is absurd/

My feeling about this is that.../ I have to strongly react to this because.../

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels
États-Unis, 2013



b) The Civil Rights Act, 1964

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act which had been voted by Congress.

It is a landmark piece of legislation that outlawed major forms of discrimination against racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities, and women. It also ended racial segregation in schools, in the workplace and in places like restaurants, trains and buses.

It did not, however, abolish literacy tests required to have the right to vote, which were one of the main methods to exclude black voters.

You can watch the public statement issued by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964 here :

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Rights_Act_of_1964



Signature du Civil Rights Act de 1964 par le président Lyndon B. Johnson

- Watch the film **from 1:10:08 to 1:12:19**. Find which political events the sequence refers to.

In that sequence, what is Cecil's reaction to what is going on around him? How do you explain his feelings? What do you think of his words to President Johnson about his sons : *"I feel like we're living in two different worlds"*?

.....

.....

.....

.....

ACTIVITÉ 2

FROM SEGREGATED AMERICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels

États-Unis, 2013



c) Watch chapter 12, [from 1:12:24 to 1:14:25](#).



Listen to what Martin Luther King says about Cecil's job. What are the adjectives that he uses to refer to people like Louis's father? Why is Louis surprised by Dr. King's point of view? Did he expect to see his father in that light ?

During the rest of the sequence, how are Martin Luther King's words illustrated? How does Cecil's initiative confirm Dr. King's statement? What can we perceive in Cecil's behavior? Describe the scene between Cecil and Mr. Warner. (1:25:25-1:15:50). If you were Cecil, what might you have said to Mr. Warner ? Write a paragraph about it and deliver it out loud in class.

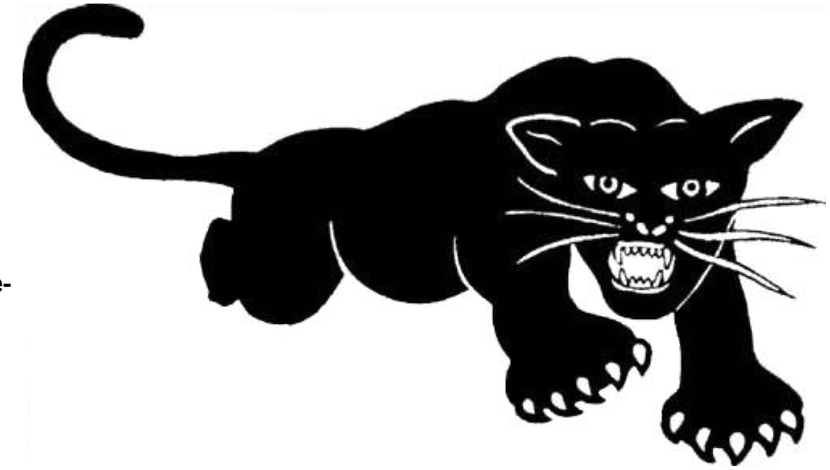
Describe the scene which immediately follows the assassination of Martin Luther King. What do you see? What is happening for Cecil. How is such moment called in a narrative? What can we expect from then on? Use structures of possibility, probability, hypothesis : Perhaps/ Maybe/ Possibly/ He may.../ he might.../ He could.../He's likely to...





5) FROM THE BLACK PANTHERS TO THE WHITE HOUSE (chapters 13 to the end)

- By looking at the Black Panther Party logo, what could you say about the party, its characteristics, who it targets, its program?
(Use structures to express possibility, probability, hypothesis)
- Look up online what the Black Panther party program was, and say how it contains elements that could be found peaceful and reasonable, but also revolutionary and threatening for the institutions.



The Black Panther Party logo

PAIR WORK

- Do you understand why Cecil and Gloria are worried about Louis and his involvement in the Black Panthers? Prepare a dialogue that might have taken place between Cecil and Louis about the pros and cons of joining the Black Panthers. Work in pairs and perform it in front of the class.
- Now watch chapter 16 on the DVD. Focus on the sequence **from 1:38:45 to 1:40:00**. Compare this scene to the first one **from 1:25:25 to 1:15:50**. What has happened? Describe the differences and similarities. How do you account for the change? (Use structures of comparison and contrast).
- Now watch chapter 17 on the DVD (**1:44:56-1:51:32**). Describe what is happening to Cecil and show why.

CORRIGÉ

2) IN THE WHITE HOUSE UNDER THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION (chapters 3 to 6 on the DVD)

a) Cecil is trying to conform to the double injunctions he received from the plantation owner, Mrs. Westfall (*"the room should feel empty when you're there"*) and of his first master in domestic service (*"we shouldn't be threatening to white folks"*). He tries to correspond to what "white folks" are expecting from him, i.e. **they want him** to approve of what they are saying ; **they expect him to** agree with their condemnation of integrated schools; **he is expected to** both be there and not be there; **he is supposed to** deny himself as an individual; **he is asked to** confirm their own racial bias.

Images : Insist on the all-white environment, while his body is *"cut in half"*, black pants and white jacket. Have the students comment on the symbolism of that double nature, which corresponds to the earlier mention of the necessity for black people to show two faces to the whites. Insist on the deeply alienated nature of Cecil at that moment, and of his disturbing acceptance of the situation.

In the second image, comment on the leading lines pointing to the very small door, his being crushed by those white lines, etc.

c) Insist on the blatant superiority of the Maître d', Mr. Fallows, from the handshake to the term *"house nigger"* in the mouth of a black man. Notice the "We" in *"we have no tolerance for politics in the White House"*. Compare and contrast both men's behavior and bring out the implicit.

e) Insist on the shot-reverse-shot way of filming and editing the father-son dialogue. It places both characters on an equal footing (both positions can be seen as valid) while emphasizing their drastically diverging points of views. Show how the Mamie Till rally poster becomes emblematic of the great divide and further radicalization which are going to pull father and son away from each other.

Adjectives : Cecil : subservient, deferential, submissive, resigned, humble, alienated (in the eyes of Louis), but also : proud, content, honored, satisfied, appreciative, respectful. Louis : defiant, pugnacious, rebel, mutinous, dissident, reluctant.

CORRIGÉ

3) THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION AND THE END OF SEGREGATION (chapters 7 to 10)

a) The Greensboro, N.C. non-violent sit-ins. Insist on the use of the parallel/alternate editing of the sequence, which, while it emphasizes the gap between father and son, contributes to juxtaposing two worlds, two realities, two ways for black people to position themselves in a country still largely segregated. On the one hand, the non-violent and/but provocative and subversive student sit-in; on the other, the equally non-violent ceremonial decorum of the White House evening entirely devoted to Whites. Underline the extreme violence of the sit-in sequence as it is pitted against the smooth lushness of the silent official dinner. Comment on the sound (or absence thereof). Observe how in the end of the sequence both storylines meet through the presence of TV set placing Louis and his father face to face and yet absolutely distant, separated, and opposed to each other, in two essentially different worlds (this being intensified by the black and white screen : they are looking in each other's eyes, and yet they are worlds apart.

c) The Freedom Riders. For the press article and the discussion, be sure to make a list of terms before beginning the tasks. List words and notions which are obviously biased for each side, then more neutral. For the discussion, use the structures related to authorizing and forbidding, to fear and danger (such as : to run the risk of +V+ing...)

d) President Kennedy's speech in June, 1963. The terms "moral crisis", the repetition of "it cannot be"; the word "obligation", the notion of "revolution", the adverb "boldly".

President Kennedy appointed unprecedented numbers of African Americans to high-level positions in the administration and strengthened the Civil Rights Commission. He spoke out in favor of school desegregation, praised a number of cities for integrating their schools, and put Vice President Lyndon Johnson in charge of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity. Attorney General Robert Kennedy turned his attention to voting rights, initiating five times the number of suits brought during the previous administration. He announced that major civil rights legislation would be submitted to the Congress to guarantee equal access to public facilities, to end segregation in education, and to provide federal protection of the right to vote. (source : jfklibrary.org). He thus paved the way to the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

e) Martin Luther King, Jr. Find online all the necessary commentaries and analyses of the speech. They are numerous and well-documented. Here is an extract of the "I Have A Dream" article on Wikipedia : "Widely hailed as a masterpiece of rhetoric, King's speech invokes the Declaration of Independence, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the United States Constitution. Early in his speech, King alludes to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address by saying «Five score years ago...» King says in reference to the abolition of slavery articulated in the Emancipation Proclamation, «It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.» Anaphora, the repetition of a phrase at the beginning of sentences, is employed throughout the speech. Early in his speech, King urges his audience to seize the moment: «Now is the time...» is repeated three times in the sixth paragraph. The most widely cited example of anaphora is found in the often quoted phrase «I have a dream...» which is repeated eight times as King paints a picture of an integrated and unified America for his audience. Other occasions include «One hundred years later,» «We can never be satisfied,» «With this faith,» «Let freedom ring,» and «free at last.» King was the sixteenth out of eighteen people to speak that day, according to the official program. Among the most quoted lines of the speech, include «I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. I have a dream today!».

According to U.S. Representative John Lewis, «Dr. King had the power, the ability, and the capacity to transform those steps on the Lincoln Memorial into a monumental area that will forever be recognized. By speaking the way he did, he educated, he inspired, he informed not just the people there, but people throughout America and unborn generations.»

CORRIGÉ

The ideas in the speech reflect King's social experiences of the mistreatment of blacks. The speech draws upon appeals to America's myths as a nation founded to provide freedom and justice to all people, and then reinforces and transcends those secular mythologies by placing them within a spiritual context by arguing that racial justice is also in accord with God's will. Thus, the rhetoric of the speech provides redemption to America for its racial sins. King describes the promises made by America as a «promissory note» on which America has defaulted. He says that «America has given the Negro people a bad check», but that «we've come to cash this check» by marching in Washington, D.C. "

CORRIGÉ

4) FROM THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 TO THE VIETNAM WAR (Chapters 11 and 12)

b) The Civil Rights Act, 1964.

The sequence mentions the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama marches, also known as Bloody Sunday (March 7, 1965) and the two marches that followed. They grew out of the voting rights movement and marked the political and emotional peak of the civil rights movement. During the first march, police attacked the marchers with clubs and tear gas.

It also refers to the passing of the **Voting Rights Act**, enacted one year after the Civil Rights Act, which eliminated most voting qualifications beyond citizenship, thus allowing black citizens to effectively be able to vote. The solemnity of the event is emphasized in the sequence, the emotion is perceived on Gloria's face, on Louis and Carol's, the almost still photographs of different segments of the black population.

Insist on Cecil's refusal to support the Selma to Montgomery marches. Use structures of hypothesis to express his feelings : He must be feeling.../ He certainly feels.../ He's very likely to be worried.../

c) Watch chapter 12. From 1:12:24 to 1:14:25. Martin Luther King says that *"the black domestic defies racial stereotypes by being hardworking and trustworthy"*; he adds that his strong work ethic and dignified character helps slowly tear down racial hatred. The adjectives that he opposes are : subservient and subversive.

We can observe how Louis is gradually influenced into respecting his father more, and, similarly, how Cecil, in his *"other world"*, becomes stronger, braver, and more assertive, as he boldly asks for a raise to an uncooperative and contemptuous employer.

Use **correlative comparative structures** : the more Louis listens, the more respectful he becomes towards his father; the more seemingly subservient Cecil looks, the less submitted he actually is, etc.

After MLK's assassination, Cecil is caught in a violent demonstration. It is dark and therefore difficult to identify who is rioting. People fight, are beaten, cry, glass is flying, shots and explosions are heard. In that turmoil and upheaval, Cecil experiences a radical transformation. He says that for the first time he felt *"a stranger"* in his own neighborhood. *"The whole world was changing and I didn't know where I fit in"*. Insist on the central and paramount importance of the scene in Cecil's character journey. Show that for the first time he questions his own identity and loses his bearings. Show that his life is about to change, and probably so is his relationship with Louis, even if that will take some time.

CORRIGÉ

5) FROM THE BLACK PANTHERS TO THE WHITE HOUSE (chapters 13 to the end)

Black Panthers logo : The Black Panther Party logo may symbolize the strength and dignity of black people. It might also be seen as an ambivalent emblem. Indeed, we could see it as both very elegant, smooth and silent, but also aggressive, dangerous, wild, maybe threatening, as the bare teeth and claws seem to indicate. (Insist on the ambiguity and the almost oxymoronic nature of the logo, a Janus-like sign which reflects the mixed nature of the party and the movement. It comes as no great surprise that the party should have inspired some degree of awe and fear, especially in the white population)

The Black Panthers Party program : (from Wikipedia. Extracts)

The original «*Ten Point Program*» from October, 1966 was as follows:[43][44]

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our black Community.

2. We want full employment for our people.

We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community (...).

3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our black Community.

We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. (That) was promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment as currency which will be distributed to our many communities. (...)

4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.

We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives (...).

5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society. (...)

6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service. (...) We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.

7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people.

We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self defense.

8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails. (...)

9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States. (...)

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny. (...)

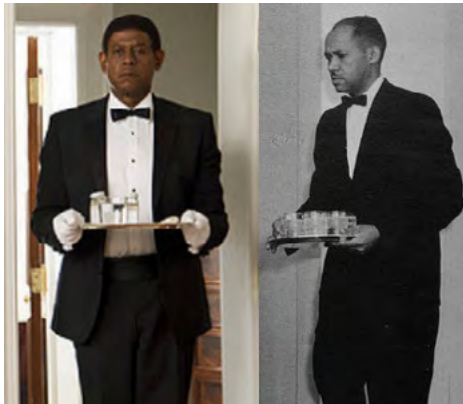
ACTIVITÉ 3

REAL LIFE AND FICTION

Le Majordome

Lee Daniels
États-Unis, 2013

1) Eugene Allen and Cecil Gaines



Left : Forest Whitaker as the butler, in Daniels' film

Right: Eugene Allen, the White House butler, during the Eisenhower years



Allen during a meeting held by Eisenhower.

Compare both pictures, describe the attitudes and postures of both men. Then, say what the second picture adds to your interpretation.

2) Observe, describe, and write a caption for each picture.



.....
.....
.....
.....



.....
.....
.....
.....



.....
.....
.....
.....

3) Interview of Wil Haygood

Go to : <http://www.biography.com/people/eugene-allen-21095473>

Watch the 2-mn video of the contribution by Wil Haygood, the journalist who wrote « *The Butler* ». Now try and summarize what Wil Haygood said. Use the toolbox :

TOOLBOX												
Reported speech and tense agreement												
	Direct speech	Reported speech										
Present Present continuous	I work at the White House We are learning English	She said (that) she worked at the White House They told us they were learning English										
Preterit (past simple) Preterit (past continuous)	He met the president I was walking down the street	He said (that) he had met the President She said (that) she was walking down the street										
Present perfect Past perfect	We haven't seen Joe for ages I had done it before	They said (that) they hadn't seen Joe for ages She said (that) she had done it before										
Future	We'll come and see you next week	They said (that) they would come and see us the following week.										
Verbs that can be used in reporting speech												
add admit agree announce argue claim comment confirm consider deny estimate explain feel insist mention observe remark remember repeat reply report reveal say state suggest suppose tell think												
Time marker changes												
<table border="0"> <tr> <td><i>Today</i> changes to <i>that day/the same day</i></td> <td><i>Last week/month/year</i> changes to <i>the previous week/month/year</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Tomorrow</i> changes to <i>the next day/the following day</i></td> <td><i>Now/just</i> changes to <i>then</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Yesterday</i> changes to <i>the day before/the previous day</i></td> <td><i>Ago</i> changes to <i>before</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Next week/month/year</i> changes to <i>the following week/month/year</i></td> <td><i>Here</i> changes to <i>there</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><i>This</i> changes to <i>that</i></td> </tr> </table>			<i>Today</i> changes to <i>that day/the same day</i>	<i>Last week/month/year</i> changes to <i>the previous week/month/year</i>	<i>Tomorrow</i> changes to <i>the next day/the following day</i>	<i>Now/just</i> changes to <i>then</i>	<i>Yesterday</i> changes to <i>the day before/the previous day</i>	<i>Ago</i> changes to <i>before</i>	<i>Next week/month/year</i> changes to <i>the following week/month/year</i>	<i>Here</i> changes to <i>there</i>		<i>This</i> changes to <i>that</i>
<i>Today</i> changes to <i>that day/the same day</i>	<i>Last week/month/year</i> changes to <i>the previous week/month/year</i>											
<i>Tomorrow</i> changes to <i>the next day/the following day</i>	<i>Now/just</i> changes to <i>then</i>											
<i>Yesterday</i> changes to <i>the day before/the previous day</i>	<i>Ago</i> changes to <i>before</i>											
<i>Next week/month/year</i> changes to <i>the following week/month/year</i>	<i>Here</i> changes to <i>there</i>											
	<i>This</i> changes to <i>that</i>											

4) Eugene Allen's biography

Read the biography of Eugene Allen as reported here : <http://entertainment.time.com/2013/08/16/what-the-butler-really-saw/>

Now compare and contrast reality and fiction, using the toolbox.



Eugene Allen during the Kennedy administration

TOOLBOX
<p>COMPARISON : in the same way as/ in like manner/ by the same token/ likewise/ similarly/ in similar fashion/ like</p>
<p>CONTRAST : yet/ nonetheless/ nevertheless/ however/ on the contrary/ on the other hand/ and yet/ though/ although/ even though/ contrary to/ while/ whereas/ otherwise/ notwithstanding</p>

- Describe the picture. What is the context?

What can you say about Mr. Allen's physical attitude? Does this remind you of a passage in the film?

.....

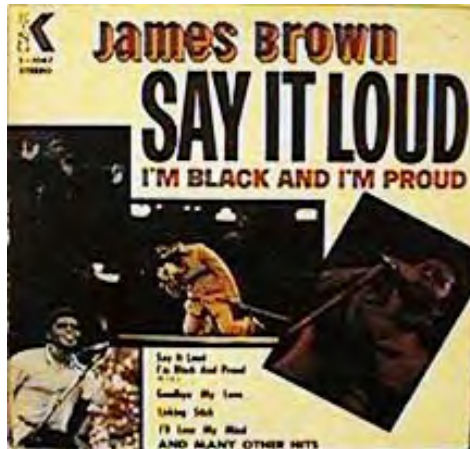
.....

.....

.....

CORRIGÉ

1. Eugene Allen and Cecil Gaines. Look at the listless, lifeless, expression that Whitaker takes on, whereas Allen hasn't lost his character. He has his head lowered, and he looks a little cautious and worried. But surely that can be understood, since the photograph is extracted from that of a meeting where Eisenhower is clearly discussing important national issues, and wouldn't want anyone disturbing it. It looks like delegates from Africa, or Black Americans in a discussion with the President. Three white men and three black men are sitting at the table. One white man and one black man (Allen) are standing, towering above the others. One may wonder about who the photographer was, and what he/she took that picture for.



Say It Loud – I'm Black and I'm Proud is a funk song written and recorded by James Brown in 1968. In the song, Brown addresses the prejudice towards blacks in America, and the need for black empowerment. It was one of the emblematic songs of the Civil Rights movement.

« Uh! With your bad self!
Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud! (x2)
Some people say we've got a lot of malice
Some say it's a lot of nerve
But I say we won't quit moving until we get what we deserve
We've been 'buked and we've been scorned
We've been treated bad, talked about as just bones
But just as it takes two eyes to make a pair, ha
Brother we can't quit until we get our share

Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud!
Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud!
One more time! Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud!

I worked on jobs with my feet and my hand
But all the work I did was for the other man
Now we demand a chance to do things for ourselves
We're tired of beatin' our head against the wall
And workin' for someone else

Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud (x4)

Now we demand a chance to do things for ourselves
We're tired of beatin' our head against the wall
And workin' for someone else

A look a'here,
One thing more I got to say right here
We're people, we're just like the birds and the bees
We'd rather die on our feet
Than be livin' on our knees

Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud

Uh, alright now, good Lord
You know we can do the boog-a-loo
Now we can say we do the Funky Broadway!
Now we can do, hu
Sometimes we dance, we sing and we talk
You know I do like to do the camel walk
Alright now, hu alright,
Alright now, ha

Say it loud: I'm black and I'm proud"

Listen to the song, here : http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=j0A_N-wmiMo#t=11

- Find where the verses «We've been 'buked and we've been scorned/We've been treated bad, talked about as sure as you're born» come from.
- What would you say the song advocates, and what situation does it describe?
- What musical style does it belong to? When was that musical style popular? What did it become emblematic of in the 1960's ?
- What do the words "Funky Broadway", "camel walk", "Boog-a-loo" mean, and what era do they refer to?

CORRIGÉ

“**Say It Loud : I’m Black and I’m Proud**” is a funk song which was number one on the R&B singles chart for six weeks in 1968. In the song, James Brown evokes the prejudice toward blacks in the U.S., and promotes black empowerment. One of the verses in the lyrics, «We’ve been ‘buked and we’ve been scorned/We’ve been treated bad, talked about as sure as you’re born” paraphrase the spiritual : «I’ve Been ‘Buked». **Camel walk** is a ragtime dance that was popular in the 1960s.

James Brown often used this dance in his routine when he performed on stage. **Boog-a-loo** is a genre of *Latin music* and dance that was popular in the *United States* in the 1960s. The style was a fusion of popular African American R&B and Soul. «**Funky Broadway**» is a song written by Arlester «Dyke» Christian. It was originally recorded by his band, Dyke & the Blazers, in 1967, and was made into a hit by Wilson Pickett that same year. **Funk and Soul** helped communicate the ideas of Black Power to people in struggle around the world.