**MDPT Grade 8 Resource 1:**

Excerpt 1 from S.N.C.C. Mississippi Project Handbook, page 2. Wisconsin State Historical Society Archives <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/pdfs/LIB-A-Freedom-Summer-Sourcebook.pdf>

**Section B.** We have learned the following:

1. It is not possible for us to register [voters] in Mississippi. (There is reason to believe that authorities in Mississippi will force a showdown over the right to vote in large numbers similar to the Federal-State showdowns over integration of schools.)
2. All direct action campaigns for integration have had their backs broken by sentencing prisoners to long jail terms and requiring excessive bail. It has not proved possible to get large enough numbers of people committed to staying in jail, or long enough money to overcome these two obstacles.
3. It is expensive to operate in Mississippi.

Excerpt from Voter Registration Summer Prospects document. Wisconsin State Historical Society Archives <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15932coll2/id/2587>

**Voter Registration Summer Prospects**

Voter registration this summer as always, will form the backbone of COFO’s efforts. Mississippi will not change until the distribution of power on the voting rolls is changed, and all the stopgap measures we can plan will not alter this fact. As the situation stands, we will probably not be able to register large numbers of Negroes this summer; what we can do is encourage large numbers of attempts. Every Negro who attempts to register represents a victory; every rejected application means another ounce of pressure on the State, another mandate for action for the Justice Department. The job of the voter registration worker is to get the people to try.

No one can give you specific instructions on what to do in your area this summer: do as much as you can. What is possible depends on the mood of the area, on the level of fear, on the intensity of white resistance. There is no set one way – fake it.

The stock work of ordinary voter registration is the simple day-to-day business of canvassing, informal teaching, and taking groups to the courthouses…Until a local leadership is developed, you, as the “outside agitator” are the leadership. You must…develop a general feeling of trust and confidence in you. This is the first step toward developing the community’s confidence in itself – toward the creation of a self-sustaining local movement. The worker must give the impression of being courageous but not foolhardy, competent but not all-knowing. Be yourself, do your job, preach Freedom, and the community will come. Keep in mind that you have just begun to tear down a set of attitudes that has taken three and a half centuries to build. Talk and keep talking; there are enough people anxious to shut you up without your own timidity interfering. Also keep listening, and remember that fear will often cause words to mask real responses and that you must learn to hear what is beneath the words.