Facing History and Ourselves is an international educational and professional development organization whose mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry. By studying the historical development of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives. For more information about Facing History and Ourselves, please visit our website at www.facinghistory.org.

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ABOUT FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES

Facing History and Ourselves is a nonprofit educational organization whose mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism in order to promote a more humane and informed citizenry. As the name Facing History and Ourselves implies, the organization helps teachers and their students make the essential connections between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives, and offers a framework and a vocabulary for analyzing the meaning and responsibility of citizenship and the tools to recognize bigotry and indifference in their own words. Through a rigorous examination of the failure of democracy in Germany during the 1920s and 30s and the steps leading to the Holocaust, along with other examples of hatred, collective violence, and genocide in the past century, Facing History and Ourselves provides educators with tools for teaching history and ethics, and for helping their students learn to combat prejudice with compassion, indifference with participation, myth and misinformation with knowledge.

Believing that no classroom exists in isolation, Facing History and Ourselves offers programs and materials to a broad audience of students, parents, teachers, civic leaders, and all of those who play a role in the education of young people. Through significant higher education partnerships, Facing History and Ourselves also reaches and impacts teachers before they enter their classrooms.

By studying the choices that led to critical episodes in history, students learn how issues of identity and membership, ethics and judgment have meaning today and in the future. Facing History and Ourselves’ resource books provide a meticulously researched yet flexible structure for examining complex events and ideas. Educators can select appropriate readings and draw on additional resources available online or from our comprehensive lending library.

Our foundational resource book, Facing History and Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior, embodies a sequence of study that begins with identity—first individual identity and then group and national identities, with their definitions of membership. From there the program examines the failure of democracy in Germany and the steps leading to the Holocaust—the most documented case of twentieth century indifference, de-humanization, hatred, racism, antisemitism, and mass murder. It goes on to explore difficult questions of judgment, memory, and legacy, and the necessity for responsible participation to prevent injustice. Facing History and Ourselves then returns to the theme of civic participation to examine stories of individuals, groups, and nations who have worked to build just and inclusive communities and whose stories illuminate the courage, compassion, and political will that are needed to protect democracy today and in generations to come. Other examples in which civic dilemmas test democracy, such as the Armenian Genocide and the U.S. civil rights movement, expand and deepen the connection between history and the choices we face today and in the future.

Facing History and Ourselves has offices or resource centers in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States as well as in-depth partnerships in Rwanda, South Africa, and Northern Ireland. Facing History and Ourselves’ outreach is global, with educators
trained in more than 80 countries and delivery of our resources through a website accessed worldwide, online content delivery, a program for international fellows, and a set of NGO partnerships. By convening conferences of scholars, theologians, educators, and journalists, Facing History and Ourselves’ materials are kept timely, relevant, and responsive to salient issues of global citizenship in the twenty-first century.

For more than thirty years, Facing History and Ourselves has challenged students and educators to connect the complexities of the past to the moral and ethical issues of today. They explore democratic values and consider what it means to exercise one’s rights and responsibilities in the service of a more humane and compassionate world. They become aware that “little things are big”—seemingly minor decisions can have major impact and change the course of history.

For more about Facing History and Ourselves, visit our website at www.facinghistory.org.
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I. Welcome to Facing History and Ourselves

Through professional development seminars, resource books, study guides, conferences, and Web activities, Facing History and Ourselves provides educators with models for creating a unit or a course that integrates significant historical content with a tested methodology to engage students in thinking about the lessons of the past for the present and future. Facing History and Ourselves is distinguished from other organizations through its focus on pedagogy, its strong connection to scholarship, and its long-term relationships with its teachers. This comprehensive approach results in engaging, high-quality materials and strategies for the classroom and support for teachers, including the ongoing follow-up they need. The approach engages young people in studying their history and heritage in a way that makes the lessons relevant to the choices they face in their everyday lives. Young people are growing up in a world tested by conflict and rife with extremism. As shepherds of the next generation, it is our responsibility to give them the tools to think critically, understand the connection between history and ethics, and to understand how the lessons of history can help guide moral choices they face in the present and future. Facing History and Ourselves is well positioned to reach junior and senior high school students with these essential lessons, and to support their teachers in making it a high-quality learning experience.

The language and vocabulary emphasized in Facing History and Ourselves’ materials are tools for entry into the study of history—words like perpetrator, victim, defender, bystander, opportunist, rescuer, and upstander. Students learn that terms like identity, membership, legacy, denial, responsibility, and judgment can help them understand complicated history, but that an authentic use of that language needs to be rooted in the constellation of individual and group choices, decisions, and behaviors that engage both head and heart and constitute ways of connecting past to present. By focusing on participation, Facing History and Ourselves helps teachers and students explore those moments in history and in our own lives with the hope of finding ways to strengthen our communities in order to prevent violence and injustice from reaching a level at which the risks of intervention become overwhelming. Facing History and Ourselves classrooms learn that the events of history were not inevitable, but were determined by the conscious choices of individuals and groups, and that the brave and moral acts of small numbers of people can grow and reverberate into powerful forces that influence history’s course. Democracies are fragile enterprises and can only remain vital through the active, thoughtful, and responsible participation of its inhabitants. Education for global citizenship means encouraging students
to recognize that their participation matters.

Education of high quality for all children balances cognitive understanding and acquisition of the skills to learn the lessons of the past with the capacity for empathy, courage, and compassion that marks the determination to stand up for human rights in the present and future. Our students are at heart moral philosophers, seeking to express themselves in productive ways, so that they can both engage with and shape the worlds they inhabit. In order to be participants in society, students need the habits, skills, and knowledge that will allow them to discover who they are, what they believe, and how to make an impact. For our democracy to thrive and for it to be truly compassionate, equitable, and just, young people need help developing their burgeoning moral philosophy—their unique voices—in complex, academically rigorous, and personal ways.

Students come to us with already formed notions of prejudice and tolerance. As they move through childhood and adolescence, their issues take deep hold: overarching interest in individual and group identity, and concern with acceptance or rejection, conformity or nonconformity, labeling, ostracism, loyalty, fairness, and peer group pressure. So our pedagogy must speak to newly discovered ideas of subjectivity, competing truths, and differing perspectives, along with a growing capacity to think hypothetically and an inclination to find personal meaning in newly introduced phenomena. We must teach students to make distinctions among events and to grasp similar issues without making facile comparisons and imperfect parallels. In order to make sense of the present and future, students need an opportunity to find meaning in the past. They can be trusted to examine history in all of its complexities, including its legacies of prejudice and discrimination, resilience, and courage. This trust encourages young people, and their teachers, to develop a voice in the conversations of their peers, as well as in the critical discussions and debates of their community, nation, and the world.
II. About This Curriculum

In addition to providing seminars, workshops, and personalized follow-up, Facing History and Ourselves offers these units as another facet of our professional development model. These materials come out of the best practices we have culled from decades of work in classrooms and we offer them to teachers as a vehicle for their own learning.

This curriculum was developed as a partnership between Facing History and Ourselves and Boston Public Schools. Together, we decided that an appropriate way to align Facing History and Ourselves’ resources and expertise with the structure and needs of Boston Public Schools was to create a curriculum focused on the civil rights movement. Knowing that BPS teachers have other resources and expertise related to the study of the civil rights movement, the intent was not to produce a civil rights unit for Boston Public Schools, but to produce materials that would complement the work that teachers are already doing. These units were also designed to encourage technology use in the classroom. We have developed a companion website, www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights, that hosts materials for students and teachers, including links to historical documents and a comment board. Students can use this site as an entry point for their own research about major events and themes in the civil rights movement, teachers can use this site in order to review online documents with the class, show students excerpts from the film Eyes on the Prize, or present student-produced videos hosted on Facing History and Ourselves’ website. This curriculum also encourages teachers’ use of projection screens and laptop computers.

The three units we have developed require students to “do” history—to gather evidence from primary documents, use that evidence to make claims about the past, and then apply what they learn to their own lives today. In the first unit, students learn about the murder and trial of Emmett Till. This material asks students to consider the historical context that contributed to the growth of the civil rights movement in the 1950s. In the second unit, students explore voter discrimination in the South and the philosophy of nonviolence that guided civil rights activists’ responses to this injustice, culminating in the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. The third unit exposes students to the civil rights movement in the North by focusing on the struggle over school desegregation in Boston in the 1960s and early 1970s. Thus, a journey through all
units allows students to trace the development of the civil rights movement from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Each unit includes four lessons. The duration of the lesson will depend upon your unique context, such as the length of your class periods, the number of students in your class, the reading level of your students, and the depth of their prior knowledge about the civil rights movement. We trust teachers as creative intellectuals and believe these lessons will be used to stimulate their own curriculum development. The joy and brilliance of teaching often comes from following up on students’ unanticipated reactions and questions, so we do not expect teachers to follow our lessons as a prescriptive set of instructions. We describe our rationale for each lesson and provide historical background in order to frame how teachers might guide students through a journey where they learn about history and themselves. We know that this journey will vary by schools and by classrooms, depending on students’ interests, prior knowledge, skill level, and misconceptions. Therefore, we expect teachers to diverge from our lesson plans as needed, creating their own pedagogical rationale in dialogue with the needs of their students. Because of our deep respect for each classroom’s uniqueness, our lesson plans always provide several options, including suggestions for ways to “extend” students’ thinking through incorporating additional resources, discussion questions, or activities.

In some cases, to fit the lesson into a one-hour class period, you might decide to shorten or eliminate the “warm-up” or “follow-through” activity. Many of these lessons could extend into several class periods, especially if you provide students with class time to respond to what they are learning through writing or discussion. Although these units were written to be part of a civil rights unit, you might consider incorporating the units into other units of study. For example, Unit #1 could supplement a unit on Jim Crow. Because each of these units touches on core ideas about the structure and ethos of the United States government (e.g., federalism, the Bill of Rights, the three branches of government, the importance of civic participation, etc.), these units could also support a civics or government unit.

STRUCTURE OF THE LESSONS
The units begin with a general introduction, including a rationale, unit outline, historical background, unit learning goals, and suggestions for final assessments. The four lessons within each unit are structured as follows:

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE
1. **RATIONALE:** This section provides a brief overview of the ideas addressed in the lesson as well as the larger purpose for helping
students understand this material.

2. **OBJECTIVES, including guiding questions, key terms, and skills:** We frame the learning objectives for each lesson in terms of what students should understand (guiding questions), know (key terms), and be able to do (skills). You can draw from the key terms and guiding questions when creating quizzes and tests to evaluate student learning.

3. **DURATION**: Each lesson gives a suggested duration time, which can be adjusted based on your time constraints.

4. **MATERIALS**: These units incorporate Facing History and Ourselves’ resources on the civil rights movement, including the study guide that accompanies the television series *Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Movement 1954-1985*. A website has been designed for BPS teachers to house Internet links to primary and secondary sources you may want to use in your classroom—www.facinghistory.org/bps/civil-rights. If you choose to print these materials, please be considerate of copyright laws governing fair use of these materials as posted on their websites. Facing History and Ourselves—produced texts, such as sample graphic organizers and handouts, are included in the Appendix following most lessons and may be copied as is or modified to fit the needs of your students.

Another important companion to this curriculum guide is the Facing History and Ourselves website (www.facinghistory.org). Many of the teaching strategies referred to in these lessons, as well as additional teaching strategies, are described in more detail in the “Teaching Strategies” section of the website, found in the “Classroom Strategies” section of Educator Resources.

**BACKGROUND**
This section establishes the historical context for the lesson and highlights important facts and ideas that students will be encountering in the lesson. It has been written for the teacher, but could be distributed to students. Keep in mind that since the overviews have been written for adults, the language may not be readily accessible to all students.

**LESSON PLAN**
1. **WARM-UP**: The purpose of the warm-up section is to activate stu-
students’ prior knowledge or experience, with the material they will be studying.

2. **MAIN ACTIVITY:** In this section, students are introduced to new material. We design our lessons so that students have support in comprehending and making meaning of new content. Authentic understanding happens when students are able to take an idea and make it their own.

3. **FOLLOW-THROUGH:** The purpose of the follow-through section is to provide students with the opportunity to deepen their grasp of material explored in the lesson by reflecting on how these ideas resonate with their own lives and issues they see in their world today.

4. **HOMEWORK:** Homework suggestions follow each lesson plan. Some homework suggestions provide students with the opportunity to reflect on material studied during that lesson. Other assignments might ask students to preview material they will study in the next lesson. Often, the activity suggested in the follow-through section could be adapted as a homework assignment.

5. **ASSESSMENT IDEAS:** Each unit is developed around one final assignment. Each lesson includes an assignment that contributes to this final product. This assignment is often completed during class time but also could be assigned for homework. By the end of the four lessons, students should have the material they need to complete the final assignment. In addition to this final assignment, lessons include other ideas about how you might gauge students’ learning. For example, listening to students’ responses during class discussions and reviewing their work during small group activities can help teachers gauge understanding and identify misconceptions.

6. **EXTENSIONS:** This section includes resources and activities that could be used in addition to, or in place of, the main lesson.

7. **APPENDIX:** Graphic organizers, handouts, and other teaching resources are included in the appendix located at the end of each lesson. You can adapt any of these to fit the needs of your classroom context.
CIVIL RIGHTS UNIT ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

In addition to the final assessment suggested within the introduction to each unit, you might also consider one of these ideas as a culminating final assessment for an entire civil rights unit.

Possible essay questions:

- Drawing on evidence from your study of the civil rights movement, answer the following question: What strategies can be used to oppose discrimination and strengthen civil rights?

- Civil rights are not strengthened through the three branches of government alone; the democratic participation of individuals and groups is also required to achieve greater equality and justice. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Use evidence from the civil rights movement in your response.

- Use examples from the history of the civil rights movement to answer these questions:
  - What is a civil right?
  - How do you know when civil rights have been violated?
  - When civil rights have been violated, what tools can be used to respond to discrimination?

Project ideas:

- Students can create dioramas, incorporating images, quotations, and objects, to express their ideas about the civil rights movement. Dioramas can be accompanied by a reflective paper and/or presentation in which students explain how their knowledge of history has informed their artistic decisions. This project could be worked on in stages, with students collecting material (images, text, objects) throughout each unit.

- A unit on the civil rights movement provides an excellent opportunity to work on students’ research skills because this is such a well-documented history. One way to structure a research project is to have pairs of students work in teams that will present a dramatic monologue describing the experiences of a participant in the civil rights movement. One student serves as the actor and the other as the director. Both students must have sufficient knowledge of the character to write, direct, and/or perform the monologue. You could assign students a particular person or group to study, or you could allow students to select someone from a list you provide. Interesting figures for whom there is ample research material include Diane Nash, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, John Lewis, Robert Moses, and Lillian Smith.
III. Core Learning Principles

The development of this curriculum has been guided by four core learning principles fundamental to the mission of Facing History and Ourselves:

- **Intellectual Rigor.** All students are challenged to develop a deep understanding of history and its relation to their lives through an exposure to rich content, stimulating discussions, and thought-provoking assignments that enhance historical thinking skills.

- **Ethical Reflection.** The Facing History and Ourselves curriculum requires students to consider the moral implications of decision making and human behavior embedded in the study of history.

- **Emotional Engagement.** When students care about what they are learning and when educators honor students’ emotional responses to content, students are able to develop a deeper understanding of history and human behavior.

- **Civic Agency.** Students develop a heightened sense of civic responsibility as they appreciate how their own efforts can contribute to building stronger communities—local, national, and global.

These principles interact and play off each other. Sometimes one might be more prominent than others in a particular lesson, but all of them need to be practiced and integrated if students are to gain the full benefit of a Facing History and Ourselves classroom experience. These core learning principles are visually represented here.
IV. Teaching for Historical Understanding in a Facing History and Ourselves Context

This curriculum draws from important research on how students learn history. Taken together, several qualitative and quantitative studies delineate both goals for teaching for historical understanding and the developmental stages that mark different degrees of proficiency in learning history. They include:

- The ability of students to provide a plausible and credible explanation to a question (or questions) that asks why and how events and choices occurred in the past.
- The ability of students to understand how core concepts in historical understanding are the building blocks for the creation of plausible explanations to inquiry-based questions. These core concepts are evidence, agency, significance, causality, and continuity and change.
- Students are able to demonstrate a more sophisticated ability to think and write about history when they have had the opportunity to practice these concepts over time and at different grade levels.
- Teaching for historical understanding provides students with the skills to better reason in history and equips teachers with the pedagogical tools to adapt curricula and instructional strategies that enhance students’ motivation, comprehension, and engagement with the study of the past.

To develop and deepen historical understanding, students use the following core concepts to build a logical and plausible explanation for why and how choices or events occurred in the past:

**SIGNIFICANCE**
- Establishing why a past event is significant for our historical understanding of a particular time period
- Determining historical significance depends on questions asked and sources used.
- Guiding questions include: Why does this matter? To whom is this important?

**CAUSATION**
- Trying to avoid monocausal explanations for understanding choices and events in history
- Understanding that different causal factors vary in importance in how they influence historical outcomes
- Guiding questions include: How did this happen? What were the causes?
• How do we differentiate the importance of multiple causal factors in understanding why and how situations occurred in the past?

AGENCY
• Taking into account the historical context that influences why and how people acted the way they did in the past
• Weighing the relative significance of contextual factors for why and how individuals and groups acted in the past
• Recognizing the differences and similarities between choices in the past and today
• Guiding questions include: What were the factors that motivated people in the past to think and act the way they did? How do we prioritize which factors in the past were the most important in understanding why people did what they did?

EVIDENCE
• Understanding that sources become evidence when they are employed to build an explanation about the past
• Needing to use multiple sources to corroborate an historical interpretation
• Understanding that different types of sources have different strengths or limitations depending on the questions asked
• Guiding questions include: How do we know? What types of sources are we using? How are they appropriate for the questions we are trying to answer about the past? Who was the author or creator of this evidence? What was the historical context in which it was produced? Who was the audience? What other sources do we need to examine in order to construct a better explanation for the questions we are asking about the past? Where might you find this information?

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE
• Understanding that historical patterns persist over time but never in the same way
• Realizing that the past influences our thoughts and actions today in complex ways
• Guiding questions include: How was this past situation similar to present-day situations? What was distinctive or unique about this situation in the past? What legacies were created from past events that shape our world today?
ENDNOTES


A Pivotal Moment in the Civil Rights Movement: The Murder of Emmett Till

RATIONALE
In 1955, a 14-year-old African American teenager was brutally murdered by white men while visiting relatives in Mississippi. His name was Emmett Till. His murder and the subsequent trial of his accused killers became a lightning rod for moral outrage, both at the time and to this day. The case was not just about the murder of a teenage boy. It was also about a new generation of young people committing their lives to social change. As historian Robin Kelley states,

The Emmett Till case was a spark for a new generation to commit their lives to social change. They said, “We’re not gonna die like this. Instead, we’re gonna live and transform the South so people won’t have to die like this.” And if anything, if any event of the 1950s inspired young people to be committed to that kind of change, it was the lynching of Emmett Till.1

Civil rights activists used the murder of Emmett Till as a rallying cry for civil rights protest, transforming a heinous crime into a springboard for justice. The Montgomery Bus Boycott followed closely on the heels of the case. Indeed, Rosa Parks is quoted as saying, “I thought about Emmett Till, and I could not go back. My legs and feet were not hurting, that is a stereotype. I paid the same fare as others, and I felt violated.”2

Black men, including black teenage boys, had been brutally lynched by white men before the murder of Emmett Till. Likewise, before Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam were acquitted for this crime, other white men had also gone unpunished for the murders they committed (and even confessed to committing outside of the courtroom). So why, then, did the lynching of Emmett Till and the subsequent trial “set in concrete the determination of people to move forward,” according to Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, in a way that previous events of a similar nature did not?3 What factors contributed to making this event a pivotal moment in the history of the civil rights movement? The answer to this question reveals the dynamic relationship between individual actions and historical context and highlights the power of courageous acts to transform society. Ultimately, we hope students come away from this unit not only with an understanding of the events surrounding the murder of Emmett Till, but also with an awareness of how their historical context shapes their actions, just as their actions have the potential to shape history.
UNIT OUTLINE: This unit is divided into the following four lessons:

**LESSON ONE: The Story of Emmett Till**—Students are introduced to the murder of Emmett Till through watching an excerpt from the “Awakenings” segment of the *Eyes on the Prize* video series. Then they begin to explore how Emmett Till’s murder became a pivotal moment in civil rights history through identifying the important decisions made by individuals and groups involved in this event.

**LESSON TWO: The Legacy of Lynching**—Students begin to understand the historical context of this moment in history, first by studying documents depicting the history of lynching in American history.

**LESSON THREE: Investigating Emmett Till’s Historical Context**—Students explore historical documents to deepen their understanding of the context surrounding the murder of Emmett Till. The documents focus on four key themes: Jim Crow racial segregation, the rise of the media, the impact of World War II, and the precedent of civil rights activism.

**LESSON FOUR: Why Was the Murder of Emmett Till a Pivotal Moment in Civil Rights History?**—Synthesizing material they have learned in the first three lessons, students develop a thesis and supporting arguments to explain which factors they believe were most significant in causing the murder of Emmett Till to become a turning point for the civil rights movement.

**MATERIALS:** In addition to optional resources suggested with each lesson, the unit mainly draws from the following materials:

- *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 1, Episode 1, “Awakenings”* (11:00–25:00)
- Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet, including five steps of worksheets. You could use each step as a standalone worksheet; the packet does not need to be used in its entirety.
- Historical documents that are linked to from the website: www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights

**UNIT LEARNING GOALS:** The purpose of these lessons is to help students . . .

- Understand how individuals’ actions are influenced by their historical context and vice versa.
- Identify the choices made by people involved in this moment of history and the consequences of those choices. Individuals and groups students might focus on include Mamie Till-Mobley, Mose Wright, black journalists (e.g., *Jet Magazine*, James Hicks), the all-white jury, Roy Bryant, and J. W. Milam.
- Explore the American postwar historical context, with special focus on the following: segregation and Jim Crow, the legacy and practice of lynching, the role of media, the experiences of black soldiers returning from World War II, and civil rights actions prior to 1955. (Note: Teachers might also include other historical context students have studied, such as the Great Migration, Reconstruction, etc.)
- Gather relevant information from primary documents.

*For a transcript of this episode, follow this link: www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesonthelprize/about/pt_101.html.*
Use historical evidence to defend an argument.
Understand that multiple factors (causes) influence events (effects).
Recognize the connections between the past and the present; apply history to deepen understanding of their own lives and use their own experience to deepen their understanding of history.

SUGGESTED FINAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Essay questions: You could select one of these or allow students to choose. For the second question, the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet included in the appendix of the introduction prepares students to answer this essay question. It could be adapted to fit the other essay questions.

• Before Emmett Till was murdered, thousands of African Americans had been lynched without causing a national outcry and providing a spark for a movement. Many events and decisions interacted to make this event a pivotal moment in American history. Which three factors do you think made the most significant contribution to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till? In an essay, you will identify these significant factors and explain how they influenced the outcome of this event. In your conclusion, address what this event teaches us about the relationship between individual actions and historical context.

• Documentary filmmaker Keith A. Beauchamp argues, “Unless you know the story of Emmett Louis Till, you do not know the racial dynamics that led to the civil rights movement.” In an essay, interpret Beauchamp’s statement. What does this case reveal about racial dynamics? What other factors does it reveal that contributed to the rise of the civil rights movement? In your conclusion, create an argument for why, or why not, the story of Emmett Till should be part of an American History course for high school students.

Project:
• Students can tell the story of Emmett Till in other formats such as a newspaper article or a textbook entry. Along with their narrative, they can write a statement explaining their decisions about what to include and what not to include. Students could also write a letter to the editors of their textbook and/or their state’s Department of Education explaining why the story of Emmett Till should be included in their textbook/curriculum frameworks.
In August 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till traveled from his home in Chicago to the home of his great-uncle, Mose Wright, in Money, Mississippi. Soon after his arrival, Emmett joined a group of teenagers, seven boys and one girl, and went to Bryant’s Grocery and Meat Market for refreshments to cool off after a long day of picking cotton in the hot sun. Bryant’s Grocery, owned by a white couple, Roy and Carolyn Bryant, sold supplies and candy to a primarily black clientele of sharecroppers and their children. Emmett went into the store to buy bubble gum. Some of the kids outside the store said they heard Emmett brag about having a white girlfriend back in Chicago, and also that he said “Bye, baby” to Carolyn Bryant.

A few days later, Roy Bryant, Carolyn’s husband, and his half-brother J. W. Milam kidnapped Emmett Till from Mose Wright’s home. They brutally beat him, took him to the edge of the Tallahatchie River, shot him in the head, fastened a large metal fan used for ginning cotton to his neck with barbed wire, and pushed his body into the river. Once Emmett was reported missing by Mose Wright, J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant were arrested on kidnapping charges in LeFlore County. Three days later, Emmett Till’s decomposed corpse was pulled from the Tallahatchie River. Mose Wright identified the body from a ring with the initials L. T. (Till’s father’s initials). The murder of Emmett Till left an indelible mark on the African American community, especially for those boys who were around the same age as Emmett Till. Reginald Lindsay, today a judge, remembers what it meant to him as a young boy growing up in Birmingham, Alabama:

The mantra that was repeated to me (and I dare say to other boys my age) nearly every time I left my neighborhood, after August 1955, to go to a place where it was likely that I would encounter white people was: “Be careful how you talk to white women. You don’t want to end up like Emmett Till.”

Mississippi Governor Hugh White ordered local officials to “fully prosecute” Milam and Bryant in the Till case. The kidnapping and murder trial of J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant opened in Sumner, Mississippi, the county seat of Tallahatchie County, in September 1955. Jury selection resulted in an all-white, twelve-man jury made up of nine farmers, two carpenters, and one insurance agent. During the trial, Mose Wright, Emmett Till’s great-uncle, did the unthinkable—he testified against two white men in open court. While on the witness stand, he stood up and pointed his finger at Milam and Bryant, accusing them of coming to his house and kidnapping Emmett. Despite this testimony and other evidence presented at the trial, Milam and Bryant were acquitted of murdering Emmett Till, after the jury deliberated for 67 min-
utes. One juror told a reporter that they wouldn’t have taken so long if they hadn’t stopped to drink soda pop. Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam stood before photographers, lighting up cigars and kissing their wives in celebration of their acquittal.

After the trial, Mose Wright and another poor black Mississippian who had testified, Willie Reed, were smuggled to Chicago. Once there, Reed collapsed and suffered a nervous breakdown. Just a few months later, Look magazine published an article written by Alabama journalist William Bradford Huie, titled “The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi.” Huie had offered Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam $4,000 to tell how they killed Emmett Till. Milam agreed and told their story for the record. In January 1957, Huie published another article called, “What’s Happened to Emmett Till’s Killers?” Huie reported that the shops owned by the Bryant and Milam families were now out of business, largely due to the fact that blacks boycotted their stores. He also suggested that both men had been ostracized by the white community. J. W. Milam died of cancer in 1980; Bryant followed him 14 years later.

After her son’s death, Mamie Till-Mobley became a powerful civil rights activist. She founded the Emmett Till Foundation in 1973, an organization “committed to teaching boys and girls to become responsible American citizens and serious scholars.” From the time of Emmett’s death in 1955 until her own death in 2003, Till-Mobley lobbied the FBI to seek justice for her son’s murder. In 2004, the FBI reopened Emmett Till’s murder case with the intent of finding out if there were other people involved in Emmett’s murder who were alive and could be prosecuted, such as Roy Bryant’s ex-wife, Carolyn Bryant Donham. It was said that she had traveled with Bryant and Milam to Mose Wright’s home in order to point out the boy to her husband. In 2007, a grand jury in Mississippi found that there was insufficient evidence to bring charges against her or anyone else associated with this crime.

For additional historical background on the history of Emmett Till:

The Murder of Emmett Till (PBS/American Experience)
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/index.html
(Note: This film can be borrowed from Facing History and Ourselves’ library. Facing History and Ourselves also wrote a series of four lessons to accompany this film. These lessons can be downloaded from our website.)

Eyes on the Prize (PBS/American Experience)
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesonthelive/story/01_till.html#video

The Untold Story of Emmett Louis Till
www.emmetttillstory.com
All About Mississippi Madness: The Story of Emmett Till (Court TV)
www.crimelibrary.com/notorious_murders/famous/emmett_till
Justice, Delayed But Not Denied (CBS News)
www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/10/21/60minutes/main650652.shtml

Additionally, the New York Times updates a collection of articles about Emmett Till, covering news about this story from 2002 to today.
Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet*

Have you ever wondered why some events have a huge impact while other events are barely noticed? How come some events change our thoughts and behavior while other moments are quickly forgotten? Through learning about a significant moment in civil rights history—the murder of Emmett Till—you will also learn about the factors that contribute to making other events “pivotal.”

**Essay assignment:**
Many people believe that the murder of Emmett Till was a pivotal moment in civil rights history. African Americans had been lynched before without causing a national outcry; why did the murder of Emmett Till have such a significant impact on many Americans?

To answer this question, you will think about these subquestions:
What decisions made by particular individuals helped make this a pivotal historical moment? Which decisions most contributed to the lasting impact of this event?

How did the historical context—the United States in the 1950s—contribute to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till? What aspects of the historical context most contributed to the lasting impact of this event?

**Essay due date:**

**STEP ONE (to be completed during or after Lesson One): Writing an Introduction**
What does it mean for an event to be pivotal? (This answer might include a definition of the word pivotal and an example of a pivotal event.)

---

*This packet is intended for all lessons within this unit.*
STEP ONE (to be completed during or after Lesson One): Writing an Introduction

What does it mean for an event to be pivotal? (This answer might include a definition of the word pivotal and an example of a pivotal event.)
**STEP TWO (to be completed during or after Lesson One): “Awakenings” Film Notes**

**Quick facts:**

When was Emmett Till murdered?

Where did it happen?

When did the trial of Milam and Bryant take place?

Where was the trial?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Describe the individual or group.</th>
<th>2. What choices did they make? (Identify two per person or group.)</th>
<th>3. What were the consequences of these decisions?</th>
<th>Respond: What do you think of their behavior? Do you think the individuals were aware of these consequences before they acted? Do you think the consequences were fair or just?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emmett Till:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mose Wright:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Describe the individual or group.

2. What choices did they make? (Identify two per person or group.)

3. What were the consequences of these decisions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mamie Till-Mobley:</th>
<th>Respond: What do you think of their behavior? Do you think the individuals were aware of these consequences before they acted? Do you think the consequences were fair or just?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journalists:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jury:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP THREE (to be completed during Lesson Two and Lesson Three): How Can Historical Context Deepen Our Understanding of Emmett Till’s Story?

**Directions:** Use information from documents and the film to complete this chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context: Historical factor influencing Emmett Till’s story</th>
<th>Evidence: What do you know about this factor of Emmett Till’s historical context? (Cite your sources.)</th>
<th>How might this factor of the historical context have influenced people’s actions and attitudes during this time? How might this factor have influenced the choices made by people involved in this event? (Refer to your Step Two chart when answering this question.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History of lynching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Crow laws and segregation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Context:
**Historical factor influencing Emmett Till’s story**

| Evidence: What do you know about this factor of Emmett Till’s historical context? (Cite your sources.) |
| How might this factor of the historical context have influenced people’s actions and attitudes during this time? How might this factor have influenced the choices made by people involved in this event? (Refer to your Step Two chart when answering this question.) |

| Rise of the media |
| WORLD WAR II AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE MILITARY |

Rise of the media

Precedent of civil rights actions

World War II and the integration of the military
STEP FOUR (to be completed during Lesson Four): Developing a Thesis and Supporting Arguments

In Steps Two and Three, you answered these subquestions:
- What decisions made by particular individuals helped make this a pivotal historical moment?
- How did the historical context—the United States in the 1950s—contribute to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till?

Now it is time to synthesize—to pull together—the information you have learned about the people who shaped this event and the historical context that influenced this event in order to answer the following question: Many people believe that the murder of Emmett Till was a pivotal moment in civil rights history. African Americans had been lynched before without causing a national outcry; why did the murder of Emmett Till have such a significant impact on many Americans?

1. Writing a thesis

You have already discovered many historical factors that contributed to the impact of this event. Which of these factors do you think was most important? Remember, your job is not to argue that the murder of Emmett Till was a pivotal moment for the civil rights movement. Historians and civil rights activists agree on this point. Your job is to identify and explain three factors that helped this event become a spark for the civil rights movement. What aspects of the historical context most contributed to the lasting impact of this event? Which decisions most contributed to the lasting impact of this event? Use the information in the charts you completed (Steps Two and Three) to help you with this task.

Complete this sentence: There are many factors that contributed to making the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in civil rights history, but the most significant factors that contributed to the impact of this event were . . .

a.

b.

c.
2. Defend your thesis: I believe this because . . .

Body Paragraph 1: Reason A

________________________________________ was a significant factor that contributed to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till because . . .

Which document[s] and other evidence support your argument?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/evidence</th>
<th>This supports my argument because it shows . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Body Paragraph 2: Reason B

________________________________________ was a significant factor that contributed to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till because . . .

Which document[s] and other evidence support your argument?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/evidence</th>
<th>This supports my argument because it shows . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Body Paragraph 3: Reason C

_______________________________ was a significant factor that contributed to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till because . . .

Which document[s] and other evidence support your argument?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/evidence</th>
<th>This supports my argument because it shows . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP FIVE (to be completed during or after Lesson Four): Write a Conclusion

What is the most important idea you have learned from studying about the murder of Emmett Till? What have you learned about what makes an event significant? What have you learned about individual choices or historical context? How can you connect what you wrote in this essay to something from your life, community, or world today?
SAMPLE RUBRIC FOR EMMETT TILL UNIT ESSAY
[Note: We suggest that you adapt the format and content of this rubric for your own classroom use. We also recommend sharing an assessment rubric with students before they begin writing so that they understand what is being expected of their work.]

## HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>The word <em>pivotal</em> is not clearly defined and/or sufficient background information about the murder of Emmett Till is not provided.</td>
<td>The word <em>pivotal</em> is clearly defined and sufficient background information about the murder of Emmett Till is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis (Significance)</strong></td>
<td>The thesis statement is unclear or incomplete.</td>
<td>The thesis statement clearly identifies three significant factors that contributed to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arguments (Evidence and agency)</strong></td>
<td>Arguments are supported by at least one piece of evidence. Some of this evidence may not be accurate, however.</td>
<td>Arguments are supported by at least two pieces of evidence. All of this evidence reflects an accurate understanding of the history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion (Connections, continuity, and change)</strong></td>
<td>The conclusion does not explain why learning about the murder of Emmett Till is (or is not) relevant to life today.</td>
<td>The conclusion explains the degree to which the study of Emmett Till is relevant to life today by noting similarities or differences between the past and the present.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## WRITING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Some paragraphs may contain more than one main idea. Supporting evidence does not always support the main idea of the paragraph.</td>
<td>Paragraphs contain one clear, main idea and all of the information in that paragraph supports that idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language (Vocabulary and sentence structure)</strong></td>
<td>Some of the language is not appropriate for an academic essay.</td>
<td>All of the language is appropriate for an academic essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>The essay contains many grammatical errors, making your ideas difficult to read.</td>
<td>The essay may contain a few grammatical errors, but these do not interfere with understanding your ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Essay and/or preparation packet is incomplete.</td>
<td>Essay and preparation packet are complete and turned in on time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Story of Emmett Till

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
A rich understanding of ourselves and history includes understanding why certain events carry special significance as “pivotal” moments—moments that change the direction of attitudes, customs, and actions. In this lesson, students begin to explore how Emmett Till’s murder became a pivotal moment in civil rights history through understanding the choices made by individuals and groups and the consequences of those choices. This lesson also helps students think about the pivotal moments in their own lives and to consider the different ways people respond to violence and injustice today.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• When did the civil rights movement begin?
• What does it mean for an event to be pivotal in history? In your own life?
• What happened to Emmett Till? How did people respond? How do people respond to violence and injustice today?

Define These Key Terms:
• Pivotal
• Upstander
• Bystander
• Perpetrator
• Victim
• Emmett Till
• Mamie Till-Mobley (also referred to as Mamie Till-Bradley)
• Mose Wright
• J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant

Practice These Skills:
• Identifying main ideas and supporting details from watching a documentary
• Analyzing the relative significance of individual actions on historical events

DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes
MATERIALS

Texts (print, video, audio):
- *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 1, Episode 1, “Awakenings”* (11:00–25:00)
- Civil rights images (See “Links to Images of the Civil Rights Movement” in the Appendix for websites that publish civil rights images.)
- WGBH Teachers’ Domain Civil Rights Movement, Interactive Timeline
- From the *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide, Episode 1, “Awakenings”
  - Document 1: Black Boys from Chicago (pp. 15–17)
  - Document 2: Mamie Till-Mobley Goes Public (pp. 17–18)
  - Document 3: Mose Wright Stands Up (pp. 18–19)

HANDOUTS
- From the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet:
  - Step One: Writing an Introduction
  - Step Two: “Awakenings” Film Notes (graphic organizer)
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Selected Quotations: The Impact of the Lynching of Emmett Till

BACKGROUND**

It would be too much to say that this case was the most important catalyst for the civil rights movement. That would not do justice to all of the efforts of organizations like the NAACP and individuals such as W.E.B. DuBois and Ida B. Wells, who for decades had been planting the seeds for change by challenging Jim Crow laws in courts and through the press. Yet the brutality of Emmett Till’s lynching, the acquittal of his murderers, and the courageous acts of individuals such as Mamie Till-Mobley and Mose Wright did capture the imagination of a new generation of young people who believed in the hope and promise of democracy. According to civil rights activist Reverend Jesse Jackson, “The movement to end Jim Crow didn’t start in Montgomery. The 1954 Supreme Court decision made Jim Crow illegal. It meant a lot, but it did not translate into mass action. But when Emmett Till was lynched, there was no struggle for definition. His lynching touched our bone marrow.”

*For a transcript of this episode, follow this link: www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/about/pt_101.html

**The historical background section of the unit introduction provides more details about this event and its impact on the civil rights movement.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
Activating prior knowledge: Here are several ways you can tap into students’ prior knowledge about civil rights and pique their curiosity about when the movement started:

- Have students look at iconic images from the civil rights movement to stimulate their thinking. You could project images on an LCD screen from a classroom computer. See “Links to Images of the Civil Rights Movement” in the Appendix for a list of links to help you create a PowerPoint presentation of civil rights images for this purpose. You could also print out different images and ask students to place them in chronological order. You might ask students to share what these images tell them about the civil rights movement. Students can also spend a few minutes responding to the question, “When did the civil rights movement begin? How do I know?”
- The Civil Rights Movement Interactive Timeline on the WGBH Teacher Domain website provides a visual representation of key moments in the civil rights movement. When looking at this timeline, you could raise the question, “Does one moment start a movement?” Most historians do not pinpoint the beginning of any movement, including the civil rights movement, to one particular day in history. But, historians do claim that movements, including the civil rights movement, are sparked by specific pivotal events.

Defining the word pivotal: This unit focuses on helping students understand that many factors—from the choices individuals made to the larger historical context—contributed to making the lynching of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in civil rights history. Before exploring the details of the event, make sure students understand what it means for an event to be pivotal. Here are some ways to help students understand this term:

- Students can write the word pivotal in their notebooks, and you can write it on the board as well. Next, come up with a class definition of this word by asking students for synonyms or by asking a student to read the dictionary definition. You might even have a student get up to demonstrate what it means to pivot.
- Once the class has recorded a definition of pivotal in their notebooks, you can ask them to write about an event that has been pivotal in their own lives or in history and why they think it was pivotal. You might frame this question as, “What recent events might be viewed as pivotal by future generations?” Then students can share their responses, noting themes on the board about these events. Perhaps they were important on a national scale or perhaps they were personal, or both.
- Students can brainstorm a list of current events or news stories. Or, you could come to class with a list already prepared. The lists can include items from popular culture as well as local, national, and international news. Then ask students to identify the items on this list that they think might be viewed as pivotal by future generations.
• In class or for homework, students can complete “Step One: Writing an Introduction” found in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.

MAIN ACTIVITY

**Introducing the case study of Emmett Till:** Before students view the *Eyes on the Prize* episode about the murder of Emmett Till, it is important that they have some context so that they understand why they are being asked to learn about this moment in history. Here are some ways you might achieve this goal:

Note: The murder of Emmett Till is often called a lynching. This can be confusing to students who think that lynching means a death by hanging. It is true that many lynchings did use hanging as one method of brutalizing and killing victims. Yet, the definition of lynching does not refer to a particular method of violence. Rather, lynching is a violent, usually lethal, form of social intimidation that goes outside of the legal system to punish someone for an alleged “crime” or breach of social mores. If you think your students already understand what lynching means, you might use the word lynching instead of murder to describe what happened to Emmett Till. The history of lynching will be discussed in the next lesson, so if you are uncertain about students’ understanding of this term, you might want to use more familiar language, such as murder, in this lesson.

• Referring to the Civil Rights Movement Interactive Timeline on the WGBH Teacher Domain website, you can highlight the spot for the murder of Emmett Till in 1955 and explain that this is the moment the class will focus on for the next few days because it is known as a pivotal moment in civil rights history. Students might already know something about Emmett Till. Before viewing the *Eyes on the Prize* clip, as a class you could complete a K-W-L chart about this event. (A K-W-L chart helps students organize information about a topic by using the questions: What do I **K**now? What do I **W**ant to know? What have I **L**earned? It is used before and after an activity or unit.)

• See “Selected Quotations: The Impact of the Lynching of Emmett Till” in the Appendix. It is a list of short statements from various people testifying to the impact of this event. Hand out quotations to various students in the room and ask them to read them aloud. When students are done, you can ask the “audience” of students to report on what they heard.

• At this point, you might introduce the essential questions of this unit: Why was the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in the civil rights movement? What factors contributed to making this a turning point in civil rights history? You might even want to keep these questions posted in the room. To build in accountability, you can tell students that in a few days they will be turning in an essay or completing a project that addresses these questions and that each activity they are doing is designed to help them on this assignment.

Students will learn the story of Emmett Till by watching the “Awakenings” segment from the *Eyes on the Prize* television series (11:00–25:00). Here are some suggestions for how to structure the viewing of this clip:
• This segment from *Eyes on the Prize* contains graphic images of the mutilated body of Emmett Till as well as other images of earlier lynchings. Prepare students for the images of graphic violence they are about to see. Please be sensitive to the fact that some students, for example, those whose lives have been recently touched by violence or death, may be especially moved by the material in this film. Allowing students a few minutes of silent writing after viewing particularly violent moments in the film is one way to help them process the injustice and brutality of this event. No specific prompts are often necessary, as the power of the images is enough to provoke a response. You can also ask students to respond to what they just viewed by recording a list of words and phrases the scenes called to mind. Or you might ask them to record what they are feeling or thinking about after watching a particular scene.

• As students watch the film, they will record important information in the graphic organizer found in Step Two: “Awakenings” Film Notes of the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.

• To provide students with ample opportunity to record detailed information, stop the film at key moments. During these pauses, students can add more details to their notes as well as respond more generally to what they are viewing. When pausing the film, you could also give students an opportunity to Think-Write-Pair-Share about questions such as:
  - Why do you think Emmett Till’s actions sparked such a strong reaction from Milam and Bryant?
  - Why do you think Mamie Till-Mobley decided to show her son’s mutilated body?
  - What do you think of Mamie Till-Mobley’s decision to have an open casket and to allow *Jet* magazine to publish the photos?
  - Respond to Mose Wright’s decision to testify. Why might blacks have been afraid to testify at that time? Why do you think Mr. Wright decided to testify?
  - Respond to the jury’s decision. Why might the jury have made this decision? What does it mean to be tried by a “jury of one’s peers”? After watching this clip, what do you think about using juries to make decisions on murder trials?
  - Why do you think Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam decided to “confess” to the reporter from *Look* magazine?

(Note: These questions could also be used in a comprehension quiz after viewing the film or they could be used to structure a note-taking guide.)

Facing History and Ourselves uses particular language to help students understand the different ways that people experience and respond to injustice. (Note: The definitions provided here are working definitions. You or your students might find other language to define these terms.)

- **Perpetrator:** an individual or group who chooses to act in ways that are unjust
- **Victim:** an individual or group who is wronged. An individual or group who receives unjust treatment
- **Bystander:** an individual or group who is aware that injustice is occurring but chooses not to intervene; someone who “stands by” while injustice happens
- **Upstander:** an individual or group who chooses to act in ways to prevent or stop unjust or violent acts
You can go over these terms with students after they view the film. Then you might ask small groups of students to decide which individuals and groups they would put under each category. Encourage students to think creatively as they go about this task. A victim might also be a bystander. Someone might begin as a perpetrator and evolve into an upstander.

One way to illustrate the fluidity of these roles is by having students create a Venn diagram. Prompts you might use to guide this activity include:

- What person was most challenging to categorize? Why?
- Who are the perpetrators? What makes them perpetrators?
- Who are the victims? What makes them victims?
- Who are the bystanders? What makes them bystanders?
- Who are the upstanders? What makes them upstanders?

To encourage students to consider the significance of these individual and group choices, you might end this lesson by asking students to identify the one decision or individual they think was most important in terms of its larger importance to the civil rights movement. Another way to frame this question is to ask students to imagine themselves as a director of a new movie about the story of Emmett Till. Who would they position as the main character? Why?

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

You could also end this lesson by having the students connect the murder of Emmett Till to violent acts in society today. Often, violent acts, like the murder of Emmett Till, serve as turning points (pivotal moments) in history. But, violent acts also happen without impacting the larger society (although they still might have a significant impact on family members and the local community). As a final activity, or as a homework assignment, you might give students the opportunity to connect the violence of the murder of Emmett Till to the way our society experiences violence today. Students can discuss questions such as: When violent acts occur in society today, how do people respond? Why do violent acts sometimes have the power to bring people to action while other times they do not?

**HOMEWORK**

- Students can complete Steps One and Two in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.
- Students can complete the following film comprehension questions:
  - When did this event take place?
  - Who was Emmett Till? Where was he from? Why was he in Mississippi? What did he do in the general store? What were the consequences of his actions?
  - Who was Mose Wright? What did he do during the trial? Why did he make this choice? What were the consequences of his actions?
  - Who was Mamie Till-Mobley? What did she do after Emmett’s mutilated body was found? What were the consequences of her actions?
  - Who were J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant? What did they do to Emmett Till? What did they do after their trial? What were the consequences of their actions?
  - What was the role of the media? What choices did journalists, particularly black journalists, make? What were the consequences of their actions?
• Who was on the jury? What choice did they make? What were the consequences of their actions?
• You can reinforce student understanding of this event by having them read excerpts from the *Eyes on the Prize* study guide. Students could be assigned one of the three sections to read with the responsibility of taking notes on their reading and reporting back to students in the class who have not read that section. Each reading is approximately one page. This assignment can be given after Lessons Two and Three as well.
  • Document 1: Black Boys from Chicago (pp. 15–17)
  • Document 2: Mamie Till-Mobley Goes Public (pp. 17–18)
  • Document 3: Mose Wright Stands Up (pp. 18–19)

You might give students the option of selecting one of the three readings and then writing a response to it that might be useful for their essays. Sample prompt: What are three interesting facts or ideas you learned from this reading? What do these facts/ideas tell you about the United States in 1955?

**ASSESSMENT IDEAS**
• Review students’ work on Steps One and Two of the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.
• Give students a take-home quiz about the story of Emmett Till. You can draw from questions in the lesson and in the homework section to write your quiz.
• How students label individuals and groups during the follow-through activity will provide you with information on their understanding of the story of Emmett Till.

**EXTENSIONS**
• Completing a “sensory figure” for key characters in the film, such as Mamie Till-Mobley, Mose Wright, or a member of the jury, might help students more deeply understand personal factors that might have motivated these individuals to make important decisions. A sensory figure is a simple drawing of an individual with descriptions of what they might be seeing, thinking, hearing, saying, feeling, or doing at a particular moment in history.
• The story of Emmett Till continues to this day. In February 2007, a grand jury in Mississippi decided not to pursue a case against Carolyn Bryant. The *New York Times* article “After Inquiry, Grand Jury Refuses to Issue New Indictments in Till Case” describes this decision as well as the ongoing legacy of the murder of Emmett Till. You might have students read this article for homework. Or, if you have access to a computer lab, students might do additional research about other examples of unresolved civil rights murder cases.
• Students can interview family members or community members to learn about what they know about the murder of Emmett Till. Then they can report on what they found. A class discussion might begin by having students answer the questions, “How many people knew the story of Emmett Till? What did they remember about it?”
Links to Images of the Civil Rights Movement
(For use with Lesson One Warm-Up Activity)

www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/084_civil.html

Civil Rights Movement Veterans, “Photo Album”
www.crmvet.org/images/imghome.htm

PBS, American Experience, “Eyes on the Prize: Image Galleries”
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/resources/res_img.html

About.com, “African American History: Civil Rights Movement Photos”
www.afroamhistory.about.com/od/civilrightsmovement/ig/Civil-Rights-Movement-Photos/

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/05/americas_us_civil_rights_movement/html/1.stm
Selected Quotations: The Impact of the Lynching of Emmett Till

When people saw what had happened to my son, men stood up who had never stood up before.
—Mamie Till-Mobley

I remember not being able to sleep when I saw [the photos]. Can you imagine being 11 years old and seeing something like that for the first time in your life and it being close to home? The death of Emmett Till touched us, it touched everybody. And we always said if we ever got a chance to do something, we were going to change things around here.
—Margaret Block, a long-time activist in Cleveland, Mississippi

The Emmett Till case was a spark for a new generation to commit their lives to social change, you know. They said, We’re not gonna die like this. Instead, we’re gonna live and transform the South so people won’t have to die like this. And if anything, if any event of the 1950s inspired young people to be committed to that kind of change, it was the lynching of Emmett Till. . . . I think there are at least two distinct legacies of Emmett Till. One, that the level of violence that was commonplace in a place like Mississippi became known to the world, and that violence generated anger and outrage—and in some ways courage—for those fighting in Mississippi and those willing to come South to fight that fight. . . . I think the second legacy of Emmett Till is that Jim Crow racism, as it used to exist from the age of slavery, could no longer exist. Now something has to change. And black people in Mississippi itself were the ones who were going to make that change. And the great thing is that the change that they made, the extension of citizenship to all people, is a change that affected all of America, not just black people, but whites, Latinos, Asian Americans. It extended democracy to the country when democracy had never been extended to everyone before.
—Robin Kelley, professor of history, University of Southern California

And the fact that Emmett Till, a young black man, could be found floating down the river in Mississippi, as, indeed, many had been done over the years, this set in concrete the determination of people to move forward.
—Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, civil rights leader

I thought about Emmett Till, and I could not go back. My legs and feet were not hurting, that is a stereotype. I paid the same fare as others, and I felt violated. I was not going back.
—Rosa Parks, civil rights activist
I was not even born when Emmett Till was brutally murdered in Money, Miss., but growing up in Detroit in the early 1960s, I knew his name well. When I took the long train ride to my mother's hometown of Greenwood, Miss., in 1967, I learned even more about him. I learned that he had violated the rigid rules of racial deference and hierarchy that governed the South, and had paid for it with his life. He had allegedly whistled at a white woman in a store. As a result—and as a reminder to others—he was kidnapped from his uncle's home and was mercilessly beaten and tortured to death. His lifeless body was then thrown in the Tallahatchie River. His killers (who confessed later to Look magazine to kidnapping and beating Till) were tried and set free by an all-white jury. This story was told to me as an orientation for a northern black child traveling south in the era of Jim Crow segregation. The Emmett Till case instilled fear in me, of course, but it did something else. It steeled my determination to resist and defeat the kind of racial hatred and institutional inequality that had caused Till's death and given immunity to his murders. Even though I did not understand all the implications of the case at age 10, it left me angry and unsettled. This was the effect that the Emmett Till murder had on an entire generation of African Americans and anti-racist whites. But we would not have even known of Emmett Till if not for the courage and commitment of his mother.

—Barbara Ransby, professor of African-American studies and history, University of Illinois at Chicago

Emmett Till and I were about the same age. A week after he was murdered . . . I stood on the corner with a gang of boys, looking at pictures of him in the black newspapers and magazines. In one, he was laughing and happy. In the other, his head was swollen and bashed in, his eyes bulging out of their sockets and his mouth twisted and broken. His mother had done a bold thing. She refused to let him be buried until hundreds of thousands marched past his open casket in Chicago and looked down at his mutilated body. [I] felt a deep kinship to him when I learned he was born the same year and day I was. My father talked about it at night and dramatized the crime. I couldn’t get Emmett out of my mind.

—Muhammed Ali, boxer

I think the picture in Jet magazine showing Emmett Till’s mutilation was probably the greatest media product in the last forty or fifty years because that picture stimulated a lot of interest and anger on the part of blacks all over the country.

—Congressman Charles Diggs
The Legacy of Lynching

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE

Lessons Two and Three deepen students understanding of the murder of Emmett Till by introducing aspects of the historical context that influenced the decisions made by individuals involved in this event. Why did Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam murder Emmett Till for whistling at a white woman in a store? Why was Mamie Till-Mobley’s decision to have an open casket able to have a national and international impact? There are many ways to answer these questions, but all of these answers involve an awareness of the history that preceded the murder of Emmett Till and shaped the customs and attitudes that prevailed in Money, Mississippi, and across the country in 1955. Students’ investigation of historical context begins with the history of lynching. In this lesson, students will explore various primary documents in order to answer the question: How did the legacy of lynching influence the choices made by individuals involved in the story of Emmett Till? To help understand the relationship between historical context and individual choices, students will begin to think about how their own historical context has shaped their beliefs and actions.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• What is historical context? What is your historical context? How does your historical context shape your beliefs and actions?
• What is lynching? What was the purpose of lynching?
• How did the legacy of lynching influence how people thought and acted in 1955 at the time of Emmett Till’s murder?

Define These Key Terms:
• Historical context
• Lynching
• Ida B. Wells

Practice These Skills:
• Applying the concept of historical context to their lives
• Interpreting primary source documents
• Explaining the relationship between historical context and individual or group behavior
DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes

MATERIALS
Texts (print, video, audio):
- “Lynch Law in Georgia” (suggested excerpt is provided in the Appendix at the end of this lesson) http://afroamhistory.about.com/library/blidabwells_lynchlawingorgia1.htm
- “Number of White and Colored Persons Lynched in United States, 1889–1918” www.jimcrowhistory.org/geography/lynching-list_1889-1918.htm
- “Lynch Law in Georgia” image and photo of Ida B. Wells www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_people_wells.html

HANDOUTS
- From the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet:
  - Step Three: How Can Historical Context Deepen Our Understanding of Emmett Till’s Story?
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Document Analysis Form

OTHER

BACKGROUND
Even as the number of lynchings decreased dramatically at the turn of the century, the fear and humiliation associated with this horrific practice still permeated Southern towns. For example, the tradition of lynching might help explain why Milam and Bryant believed murdering Emmett Till was an appropriate response to his whistling at a white woman. It might also explain why they decided to kill him in such a gruesome manner. The legacy of lynching might also explain Mamie Till-Mobley’s decision to have an open casket and to allow the photographs of her son’s mutilated body to be published in Jet magazine. She knew that she was not only acting to express her personal grief, but also to draw attention to an immoral practice that had plagued blacks in the South for decades. Civil rights activist Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth suggests that the impact of Emmett Till’s murder is intertwined with the history of lynching. He explained, “And the fact that Emmett Till, a young black man, could be found floating down the river in Mississippi, as, indeed, many had been done over the years, this set in concrete the determination of people to move forward.”15
Like Reverend Shuttlesworth, in this lesson students will also consider how the
history of lynching may have influenced the murder of Emmett Till, as well as reactions to his murder.

**For additional historical background on lynching:**
Lynchings in America: Statistics, Information, Images
www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchstats.html

The History of Jim Crow
www.jimcrowhistory.org

Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America
www.withoutsanctuary.org/main.html

http://afroamhistory.about.com/library/blidabwells_lynchlawingorgia1.htm
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
This unit asks students to use primary documents in order to answer an essential research question: Why was the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment for the civil rights movement? In order to understand that, in addition to individual and group actions, the historical context of the 1950s also contributed to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till, therefore, students need to have a grasp of the term *historical context*. If they have not already been introduced to the term *historical context*, you can take a few minutes to do this now.

You might begin by asking students to respond to the following questions in a journal or notebook: “Ten years from now, what do you think people will remember about the beginning of the twenty-first century? What might they say was happening between the years 2000 and 2007?” Your list should include at least seven items. Then have students share items from their lists. Explain that they are now describing their historical context. Write the term historical context on the board. As a class, define this term and have students record the definition in their journals or notebooks. Some definitions you might use include “the conditions and circumstances in history in which an event occurs” or “what is happening at the same time as an event is its historical context.”

Remind students of the essay question: What factors contributed to making the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in civil rights history? If you did not read the statements of people testifying to the impact of this event during the previous class, you might want to read a few now. (See “Selected Quotations: The Impact of the Lynching of Emmett Till” located in the Appendix of Lesson One of this unit.) Review that the previous lesson focused mostly on what individuals and groups did that contributed to the impact of this event. Explain that in this lesson and the next lesson, they will be looking at different documents about the time period in order to understand how the historical context shaped this event.

MAIN ACTIVITY
To prepare students to analyze historical documents, first model this process with them. Modeling primary source analysis using lynching documents is especially appropriate because this topic is particularly disturbing and, thus, requires special attention.

- Pass out the document from the Appendix at the end of this lesson entitled “Excerpt from ‘Lynch Law in Georgia’ by Ida B. Wells.” The PBS *Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* website has a picture of Ida B. Wells and an image of the pamphlet.
- Research shows that the more familiar students are with a document before they read it, the better they are able to access information within that document. So, before even beginning to read the text, ask students to tell you some important information about the document. For example, you could ask them to identify the kind of document this is. Is this a diary, a newspaper article, or a pamphlet? Then, students can consider the purpose of writing a pamphlet as opposed to a diary entry or even a newspaper article. Who can write a pamphlet? Who reads them? How are they distributed? What might have been Ms. Wells’ purpose in writing a piece
called “Lynch Law in Georgia”? What information might it contain? Students can answer these questions on the Document Analysis Form found in the Appendix.

The National Archives also has a good template for primary document analysis. Or, you might want to use a SOAPS chart or the APPARTS strategy. All of these formats require students to record information about the messenger, the message, and the audience by answering questions such as:

- What is the name of the document?
- What kind of document is it?
- Who created it? What do you know about the author?
- When was it created?
- Who might be its intended audience? What might be the intended purpose of this document?

Another appropriate prereading activity is to ask students if they have heard of Ida B. Wells and what they know about her. You can add some additional biographical information. At the very least, students should know that she was a black journalist. See the PBS Rise and Fall of Jim Crow website for more background on Ida B. Wells.

Next, give students an opportunity to read the document. You might want to have a few students take turns reading this aloud while students read it to themselves. As students read, ask them to circle words that represent main ideas and underline words or phrases that are confusing.

Ask students to write down at least five things this document tells them about lynching. They can record this information under question two on the Document Analysis Form in the appendix at the end of this lesson. Small groups of students can share their lists. Or you can do this as a Think-Pair-Share. Some important ideas that they might find include:

- Lynchings were usually public and often involved especially brutal tactics.
- The purpose of lynching was not only to punish someone (often for a crime that they did not commit), but also to scare blacks into submission. That is one of the reasons lynchings were public as well as brutal.
- Lynch mobs often used “protecting women” as an excuse to justify their actions; a fear of black men as sexual predators existed at that time, but even more there was a fear of miscegenation (race-mixing).
- Lynching sidestepped the justice system. Many blacks accused of crimes never made it to trial because they were killed first.
- Even though lynching activities were documented and law officials knew about them, the practice still continued for decades.

At this point in the lesson, you might decide to process students’ responses to this material and help them connect what they have learned to their understanding of violence and justice today. The next activity offers several suggestions for how to do this. Or, you might decide that your students would be best served by analyzing another historical document now and then proceeding to a debrief discussion. If this is the case, you could have pairs or small groups of students repeat the historical document analysis process for the graph titled “Number of White and Colored Persons Lynched in United States, 1889-1918.” They can record information about the document and what the document reveals about lynching on their
Document Analysis Form. Or, you might want to guide students’ investigation with more specific questions, such as (1) What do you notice about the geographic distribution of lynchings? What does this tell you about life in the United States at the time? (2) What do you notice about who was being lynched? What does this tell you about life in the United States at the time? (3) How does the information on the chart reinforce Ida B. Wells’ statements about lynching? This last question raises the larger issue of how historians do their work—that they do not look at only one piece of evidence and make a claim, but at a large body of evidence.

The subject of lynching speaks to a violent attack on human dignity. Although reviewing the words and meaning of the text is important, it is just as important that students grasp the moral implications of these acts. A few minutes of silent reflection can give students the space to process this information on an emotional and ethical level. You might have them write a journal response in their interactive notebooks. This could be a free-writing exercise, or you might provide students with the option of responding to one of the following prompts:

- What beliefs motivate individuals and groups to inflict harm and shame on other individuals and groups? How do you think the lynch mobs justified their actions?
- What does knowledge of lynching make you think about?
- What do you think community members, both white and black, might have thought about after a lynching occurred in their communities?
- What happens to a community when crimes of hate go unpunished?
- Lynchings were well documented. People knew that this violence and injustice was taking place. Why was it allowed to continue? What might have stopped the lynchings from happening?
- What thoughts do these documents bring up for you? How do you make sense of the history of lynching that they describe? How is it possible to make sense of such unjust acts?

After students finish writing, they can identify a word or phrase that these documents bring to mind. Then each student can share these words. Hearing powerful language strung together can have a dramatic and even poetic effect.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

The last activity in this lesson asks students to connect what they learned about the historical context to the event at hand—the murder of Emmett Till. For many students, making connections between historical context and individual decisions may be unfamiliar and challenging, even though this is something students do naturally in their everyday lives. Before modeling how to do this step with these documents, you can begin by providing an example from your own life. Then help students identify an example of how their own actions or ideas have been influenced by their historical context. For example, students might reflect on how their lives have been shaped by computers, technology, or the Internet. Once students have practiced connecting historical context to their own ideas and actions, they can apply this skill to the individuals in the case study of Emmett Till.
• First, refer students to Step Three in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet found in this unit’s Introduction. (After they fill out the evidence box, ask them to think about how they would answer the “significance” question. If you are not using this worksheet, you can refer students to the following questions: How might the legacy and practice of lynching have influenced people’s actions and attitudes during this time? How might this factor have influenced the choices made by people involved in this event? Students might be better able to answer these questions if they are looking at the “Awakenings” Film Notes chart, where they listed particular actions made by individuals at the center of this event.
• You can start to address this question for them by providing one example: Milam and Bryant surely knew about the practice of lynching. Living in this context probably informed their decision to lynch Emmett Till as a symbol to the community that black men should stay away from white women. They knew other white men had gotten away with this crime in the past, so they assumed that they would not be punished for brutally killing Emmett Till, either.
• Then you might ask students to think of other people or groups who might have been influenced by this history of lynching. Some ideas you might use to spark students’ thinking include the following: Emmett’s mother grew up in the South, but Emmett grew up in the North. Because the lynching of blacks was mostly a Southern phenomenon, do students think Emmett knew about the history of lynching? If he had known, do you think he still would have whistled at the white woman in the store? Note that his Southern cousins did not whistle. Also, Mamie Till-Mobley grew up in Mississippi. She knew about the history of lynching. How might this have shaped her reaction to her son’s death?

**HOMEWORK**

• Students can complete the row for “History of lynching” on their chart for Step Three in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet. If students did not have time to review the second lynching source during class, they could also complete this for homework.
• Students can respond to the following question in their journal or notebook: What are three ways that the legacy of lynching might have contributed to the impact of Emmett Till’s murder? As an extension of this assignment, you might also ask students to apply this question to themselves: How have your thoughts or actions been shaped by your historical context?

**ASSESSMENT IDEAS**

• Collect students’ notes on the primary documents used in this lesson (i.e. the Document Analysis Template or SOAPS chart, for example).
• Review students’ responses next to “History of lynching” on their chart for Step Three in their Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.
• Ask students to answer this question: What are three ways that the legacy of lynching might have contributed to the impact of Emmett Till’s murder?

**EXTENSIONS**

• If you have more time, you could include additional documents about lynching.
For example, the song, Strange Fruit, by Billie Holiday (lyrics and audio at www.strangefruit.org) provides a way for students to learn about the history of lynching through imagery and metaphor. You can print out the lyrics of the song and have students interpret its meaning.

- The websites listed in the Background section at the beginning of this lesson contain graphic photographs of lynchings. These usually provoke a strong emotional response in students. If you decide to use them as a document, we suggest giving students ample time to process these explicitly violent images. You might build in extra time for reflective writing and/or discussion.
Excerpt from “Lynch Law in Georgia” 
by Ida B. Wells, 1899

**CONSIDER THE FACTS.**
During six weeks of the months of March and April just past, twelve colored men were lynched in Georgia, the reign of outlawry culminating in the torture and hanging of the colored preacher, Elijah Strickland, and the burning alive of Samuel Wilkes, alias Hose, Sunday, April 23, 1899. . . . The real purpose of these savage demonstrations is to teach the Negro that in the South he has no rights that the law will enforce. . . . Samuel Hose was burned to teach the Negroes that no matter what a white man does to them, they must not resist . . .

**ELIJAH STRICKLAND, A COLORED PREACHER, LYNCHED.**
Sunday night, April 23d, a mob seized a well-known colored preacher, Elijah Strickland, and, after savage torture, slowly strangled him to death. The following account of the lynching is taken from the Atlanta Constitution:

Palmetto, Ga., April 24.—(Special.)—The body of Lige Strickland, the negro who was implicated in the Cranford murder by Sam Hose, was found this morning swinging to the limb of a persimmon tree within a mile and a quarter of this place, as told in the Constitution extra yesterday. Before death was allowed to end the sufferings of the Negro, his ears were cut off and the small finger of his left hand was severed at the second joint. One of these trophies was in Palmetto to-day.

On the chest of the Negro was a scrap of blood-stained paper, attached with an ordinary pin. On one side this paper contained the following: “. . . [W]e must protect our Ladies. 23–99.” The other side of the paper contained a warning to the Negroes of the neighborhood. It read as follows:

“Beware all darkies. You will be treated the same way.”

Before being finally lynched, Lige Strickland was given a chance to confess to the misdeeds of which the mob supposed him to be guilty, but he protested his innocence until the end.

**GLOSSARY**
- **Outlawry**: breaking the law, criminal behavior
- **Culminating**: ending
- **Savage**: brutal, uncivilized
- **Atlanta Constitution**: the name of a popular newspaper in Georgia
- **Implicated**: was said to be involved
Document Analysis Form

1. Describe the document.

Title:__________________________________________

Author:________________________________________

Date written or produced:________________________

Type of document:________________________________

Who was the audience for this document?

Other distinguishing features:

2. List at least eight ideas expressed by this document. What does it say or show?

3. What did you learn about life in the United States during the 1950s from looking at this source?
Investigating Emmett Till’s Historical Context

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
In this lesson, students will explore primary documents in order to learn more about the historical context of Emmett Till’s murder. Studying about segregation, the rise of the media, the impact of World War II, and earlier civil rights activism will help students develop an awareness of how multiple factors combine to influence events. Many students have practiced drawing simple cause–effect relationships, and the activity in this lesson pushes them toward deeper historical analysis.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• What was happening at the time of Emmett Till’s murder? What was Emmett Till’s historical context?
• How did this historical context influence how people thought and acted in 1955 at the time of Emmett Till’s murder?

Define These Key Terms:
• Media (such as Jet and Look magazines)
• Jim Crow
• Segregation
• Integration
• Brown v. Board of Education
• World War II
• Historical context

Practice These Skills:
• Interpreting primary source documents
• Explaining the relationship between individual actions and historical context

DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes
MATERIALS

Texts (print, video, audio):
• Historical documents posted on www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights (suggested documents are provided in the Appendix at the end of this lesson.)

HANDOUTS
• From the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet:
  • Step Three: How Can Historical Context Deepen Our Understanding of Emmett Till’s Story?
  • From the Appendix of Lesson Two:
    • Document Analysis Form

OTHER
• SOAPS chart
• The National Archives template for document analysis found at www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/document.html
• The APPARTS strategy for document analysis

BACKGROUND
The documents in this lesson emphasize four trends related to Emmett Till’s historical context. One is the growing power of the media, including the existence of media networks run by and for black Americans. Newspapers, magazines, and television spread the story of Emmett Till to a national and international audience. While the United States government was trying to fight communism abroad on the grounds that this form of government oppressed people, the story of Emmett Till in national and international headlines highlighted the limits of the government’s ability to protect the civil rights of its own citizens. The documents included in this lesson reveal how people’s ideas and behaviors were shaped by what they saw and read in magazines and newspapers.

Another aspect of the historical context students will investigate is the tradition of segregation and Jim Crow, a tradition that was being challenged by court decisions such as Brown v. Board of Education and Executive Order 9981. Studying examples of Jim Crow laws might prompt students to ask, “Would the murder of a young black boy and the acquittal of his murderers have been possible within an integrated context—a context where blacks and whites interacted as equals?” Likewise, after students read President Truman’s Executive Order integrating the military and a newspaper headline announcing the Supreme Court’s decision banning segregation in schools, students might won-
der whether some white Southerners would have felt as protective about their way of life if they did not see challenges to this system coming from multiple branches of government.

The third historic trend emphasized in this lesson is a legacy of civil rights action exemplified by Ida B. Wells, A. Philip Randolph, and the NAACP. Would this event have served as a spark for a civil rights movement if the foundation for a movement—exemplified by a poster advertising A. Philip Randolph’s March on Washington—did not already exist? The existence of organizations such as the NAACP facilitated the mobilization of Americans who were inspired by the injustice of the murder of Emmett Till to take action.

Finally, the memory of World War II and the Korean War were still fresh in the minds of many Americans in the summer of 1955 when Emmett Till was killed. In both of these wars, Americans believed that they were fighting for a particular vision of democracy that embraced justice and equality. The acquittal of Emmett Till’s murderers revealed the work that needed to be done on the home front to secure the same rights for African Americans that we had fought for abroad. African American soldiers were especially outraged by the fact that they had risked their lives protecting a country that did not protect the lives of its own African American citizens. Additionally, with the integration of the Armed Services in 1948, whites and blacks, in addition to other minorities, interacted in ways that diminished racial stereotypes and often gave way to feelings of camaraderie. This experience of integration in the military helped produce allies in the white community.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
To prepare students to learn more about the historical context of the 1950s, you might ask students to predict why the murder of Emmett Till gained national attention. Indeed, in many cities, news of Emmett Till’s murder was front-page news. For example, the headline from the Chicago Defender newspaper on September 10, 1955, read, “Nation Shocked, Vow Action for Lynching of Chicago Youth.” You can show students an image of this headline and then ask them to respond to the following prompt: What makes a story front-page news? Why was the murder of Emmett Till front-page news? What factors made this story newsworthy?

Students can write these predictions on the board and in their notebooks, and can return to them at the beginning of the next lesson.

MAIN ACTIVITY
Students will spend most of this class period in small groups investigating a collection of historical documents. (See The Murder of Emmett Till: Historical Context, Documents Organized by Theme in the Appendix at the end of this lesson.) To prepare them for this task, students need clear directions as well as an idea about the ultimate purpose of their research. Here are some ideas you might share with students before they begin working in groups.

- Explain that they will use what they learn in this activity to write their final essay on the factors that contributed to making this a pivotal moment in civil rights history.
- Students will be working in groups of four or five students. Each group will receive a collection of historical documents, referenced above and found in the Appendix at the end of this lesson. They were selected to include a wide range of media and convey information about different aspects of the historical context. (Depending on the reading level of your students, you might add some documents from the optional list or create excerpts of longer documents.)
- Students will analyze these documents in the same way that was modeled for them in the previous lesson. They can complete the same Document Analysis Form (or other graphic organizer) for their assigned source that they completed during Lesson Two.
- Remind students that by the end of the lesson they should have completed at least one Document Analysis Form (or similar note-taking template) and, with their group, they should have filled out the chart in Step Three in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.
- Give students a rough estimate about how far along they should be at particular moments in class in order to finish their work on time. The estimates will be different depending on the structure you employ, but here is one example: 20 minutes for document analysis and 30 minutes for sharing information and completing Step Three in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.
What follows are some ideas about how to further structure this activity for students:

- The documents represent four major themes about the time period: (1) the impact of the media, (2) integration/segregation, (3) previous civil rights actions, and (4) aftermath of World War II and the integration of the military. There are several suggested documents per theme, and some documents reveal information about more than one theme. You can divide these documents into themes for students and ask each student to be responsible for one theme. Then they could present their documents to their group and, together, the group can answer the question in the right column of the chart: How might this factor of the historical context have influenced people’s actions and attitudes during this time? How might this factor have influenced the choices made by people involved in this event?
- This activity could be organized as a jigsaw, with a group of students studying documents related to one theme. Then a representative or “expert” from each of these groups forms a new group. Experts share the information from their document with their new group members, so that by the end of the sharing, the group members have completed the Step Three chart.
- You could space out the documents around the room in stations, grouping documents with similar themes together. Students could go from station to station recording information about the texts on document analysis forms.
- So that students work with documents that will provide an appropriate challenge for them, you might assign documents to particular group members based on their reading level. Each student would be responsible for interpreting one or two documents on their own and then, as a group, they can use that knowledge to complete their research charts.
- You could give students the pile of documents and the task and have them figure out how to organize them by theme. This mirrors more authentically the work of historians, but would also take more time.
- If you have access to a computer lab, students can work alone or in groups gathering information based on the links provided on the website “The Murder of Emmett Till: Historical Context.”

FOLLOW-THROUGH

Take a moment to help students reflect on their work as historians. Students often wonder how information ends up in a history textbook or even a documentary. They might be interested to know that historians do the same work they just did, but that they look at hundreds or even thousands of documents, instead of nine or ten. Students might reflect on how their understanding of the murder of Emmett Till and its impact on Americans has changed since Lesson One, when all of their information came from the Eyes on the Prize documentary.

HOMEWORK

- Students can finish the chart in Step Three of their Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet for homework. Or, students can begin Step Four: Developing a Thesis and Supporting Arguments.
- Students can respond to the following questions in their notebook or journal:
How does someone gain an understanding of an event that happened in the past? What steps are necessary? What might happen if someone forms ideas about the past without taking all of these steps?

**ASSESSMENT IDEAS**
- Step Three of the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet can be assessed for thoroughness and historical accuracy.
- Students’ notes on historical documents can also be evaluated for thoroughness and historical accuracy.

**EXTENSIONS**
- Students can do their own research to learn more about the context surrounding Emmett Till’s murder. They could follow up on any of the themes included in this lesson, or use Web and text resources to learn about other events that shaped the United States in the 1950s.
“The Murder of Emmett Till: Historical Context,”
Documents Organized by Theme
www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights
(Note: Some of these documents can fall into more than one category.)

Legacy of Lynching
Document 1A: Ida B. Wells—“Lynch Law in Georgia” (1899)
www.afroamhistory.about.com/library/blidabwells_lynchlawingeorgia1.htm
This site contains the text of “Lynch Law in Georgia” and background information
about Ida B. Wells and lynching.

PBS, The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_people_wells.html
This site contains an image of the cover of “Lynch Law in Georgia” and the first page.
The site also contains an image of Ida B. Wells and biographical information about this
early civil rights activist.

Alternate—Document 1B: Ida B. Wells—“Lynch Law in America”
http://afroamhistory.about.com/library/blidabwells_lynchlawinamerica.htm

Document 2A: “Number of White and Colored Persons Lynched in United States, 1889–
1918” www.jimcrowhistory.org/geography/lynchinglist_1889-1918.htm

Alternate- Document 2B: “Lynchings: By Year and Race”
www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingyear.html

History of Jim Crow
Document 3: “Signs of Segregation” collection
www.jimcrowhistory.org/scripts/jimcrow/gallery.cgi?collection=segregation

More photographs documenting segregation
www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/085_disc.html

Document 4: Voices of Jim Crow (selection), “We Just Don’t Do That,” Mr. Donald Harris
www.voicesofcivilrights.org/Approved_Letters/0168-HARRIS-CT.html

Spurgeon Roberts
www.voicesofcivilrights.org/Approved_Letters/1236-ROBERTS-CO.html

1923
http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/976.htm
Document 7: Executive Order 9981 (excerpt), Establishing the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces

www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/images/br0084s.jpg

Document 9: Excerpt from Brown v. Board decision
www.nationalcenter.org/brown.html

Document 10: Chicago Defender article, “African Americans Must Keep to One Side of the Sidewalk”
www.yale.edu/glc/archive/981.htm

Precedent of Civil Rights Actions

www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/images/br0084s.jpg

Document 9: Excerpt from Brown v. Board decision
www.nationalcenter.org/brown.html

Document 11: “Rally for the Proposed March on Washington, 1941”
Flyer promoting the proposed March on Washington spearheaded by A. Philip Randolph.
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_march.html

www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1153.htm

Document 13: Front page of The Crisis newspaper
www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1146.htm
Impact of the Media

Testimonials of seeing photographs of Emmett Till’s mutilated corpse in Jet magazine.
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_remember.html

Document 15: Excerpts from newspapers covering Emmett Till’s murder and the trial of Milam and Bryant (click on “press”)
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/story/01_till.html#video

Document 16: Reactions to the Look magazine article detailing the confessions of Milam and Bryant.
www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/till/sfeature/sf_look_letters.html

Document 17: “Emmett Till and the Impact of Images” (brief newsstory)

Aftermath of WWII and Integration of the Armed Services

Document 5: “It Would Only Be a Matter of Time,” Mr. Spurgeon Roberts
www.voicesofcivilrights.org/Approved_Letters/1236-ROBERTS-CO.html

Document 7: Executive Order 9981 (excerpt) Establishing the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces

Document 18: “Above and Beyond the Call of Duty,” U.S. Government recruitment poster for the Navy

www.loc.gov/exhibits/goldstein/57.jpg

Document 20: “United We Win,” a poster published by the U.S. Office of War Information (1943)
www.nasm.si.edu/interact/blackwings/hdetail/detailbw.cfm?bwID=BW0056
Why Was the Murder of Emmett Till a Pivotal Moment in Civil Rights History?

**LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE**

**RATIONALE**

In this lesson, students synthesize material from the first three lessons in order to develop a thesis that answers the question: Why was the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in civil rights history?

At this point in the unit, students have learned about many factors that combined to create a pivotal moment in American history. Lesson Four asks students to evaluate the relative significance of these factors and to make some claims about how they interacted. Ultimately, students’ answers to this question will vary, but hopefully all students will come away from this unit with a deeper understanding of how pivotal moments in history are the products of both individual actions and historical context.

**OBJECTIVES:** This lesson will help students . . .

**Answer These Guiding Questions:**
- What factors contributed to the impact of the murder and trial of Emmett Till? Which ones were the most significant?
- What makes some events gain more attention than others? What contributes to making an event pivotal?
- Would the murder of Emmett Till be a pivotal moment if it happened today? Why or why not?

**Define This Key Term:**
- Thesis

**Practice These Skills:**
- Writing a thesis statement
- Developing arguments and supportive evidence to support a thesis
- Using history to help understand your own life and world

**DURATION:** Approximately 60–90 minutes

**MATERIALS**
HANDOUTS

- From the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet:
  - Step Four: Developing a Thesis and Supporting Arguments
  - Step Five: Writing a Conclusion

BACKGROUND

In her book *Killers of a Dream*, Lillian Smith describes a conversation with a white, Southern girl that took place just a few years before Emmett Till’s death. This young girl sees the immorality of segregation—the signs over doors and not being allowed to “invite a colored girl to Sunday school.” Yet, because of the context in which she lives, she feels unable to act on what she knows in her heart is right. The young girl laments, “To change things you have to get mad when you see folks do what you think is wrong.” Yet, at the same time, she confesses, “I just can’t fight people I love. . . . I don’t want anybody calling me a crackpot.” Smith characterizes this tension as a conflict between conscience and customs.

Pivotal moments in history are often those that expose the contradictions between customs and conscience. In the case of Emmett Till, the customs associated with Jim Crow—segregation and lynching—clashed with a growing American respect for racial justice. Decisions made by Emmett Till, his mother, his uncle, his murderers, the jury, and others helped reveal the customs of the segregated South. Yet, it took the existence of a national media system to get this information before the eyes of the American public (and international public, as well). Would the media have published this story on the front page if it had happened 10 years earlier? Twenty years earlier? We know that thousands of other lynchings had happened and did not receive this kind of attention. What was different in this case? The attention received by the story of Emmett Till reveals a change in American culture. Perhaps prior civil rights efforts, World War II, integration of the military, and other factors had moved Americans’ conscience just enough so that they began to question traditions of injustice.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
Now that students have learned more about the historical context in which Emmett Till’s murder was situated, have students revise their response to the warm-up prompt for Lesson Three: A headline from the Chicago Defender newspaper on September 10, 1955, read, “Nation Shocked, Vow Action for Lynching of Chicago Youth.” What makes a story front-page news? Why was the murder of Emmett Till front-page news? What factors made this story newsworthy?

As students share their responses, record ideas on the board. Students will likely mention that the tragedy of a boy, rather than a man, being killed might have gotten this story special attention. They may refer to the violent nature of his death. Students may also recognize that the death of Emmett Till garnered so much attention because it was a story about injustice; the story provoked outrage on the part of many Americans. The fact that the story was front-page news in 1955, but might not have made the news at all in 1920, begs the question: What had happened in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s that made some people question Jim Crow customs?

If you have time, you might want to share the story from Lillian Smith’s book found in the background of this lesson. This quotation reveals the tension between custom and conscience—a tension that the murder of Emmett Till brought to light.

MAIN ACTIVITY
Explain to students that the purpose of this lesson is to help them develop a thesis for their essay on the three most significant factors that contributed to making the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in civil rights history. The activities described here are intended to help students process their thoughts before they begin writing. You might decide to do all of these activities or none of them, depending on your students’ prior experiences with essay writing.

Defining thesis:
First, if you are not sure whether your students are familiar with the term thesis, you might want to take a few moments to review this term with them. A thesis is the main argument of a paper, report, or speech. A thesis is a statement that must be supported with evidence; it can be proved or disproved. It is not a declaration of a fact. To check students’ comprehension of the term thesis, you can read the following sentences, asking students to raise their hands when they hear a thesis statement. (Note: This activity is more engaging when you use statements that reflect the lives and interests of your particular students. The statements do not need to be historical in nature.)

- There are 50 states in the United States of America.
- The civil rights movement changed life for all Americans, not just for black Americans.
- Mamie Till-Mobley was angry about the unjust death of her son, Emmett.
- The 2008 New England Patriots are the best football team that has ever played in the NFL.
Once you are comfortable with students' understanding of the term *thesis*, ask them to read the introduction and first section of Step Four of the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet. Or, you can read this text aloud as a class. This language clarifies the purpose of the essay.

**Brainstorming:**
To help students brainstorm possible ideas they might consider for their “three most significant factors” that contributed to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till, you can ask them to respond to the following question in their notebooks or journals: Drawing from the information on the charts you have completed about the people and historical context related to the murder of Emmett Till (Steps Two and Three in your Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet), what do you think contributed to making the murder of Emmett Till a pivotal moment in the civil rights movement? List as many factors as you can.

Challenge small groups of students to list at least ten responses on a large sheet of paper. These lists can be posted on the wall for reference as they write their essays.

**Circle discussion:**
The purpose of the next exercise is to help students flesh out their ideas by having a conversation with their peers. Students will stand in either an inner circle or an outer circle. Students in the inner circle should be facing students in the outer circle so that they can talk about one of the factors they think was most significant in contributing to the impact of the murder of Emmett Till. Emphasize that students should try to help their partners develop their idea. In other words, the point is not to debate but to help each other identify evidence that can be used for support. After about five minutes, announce that students in the inner circle should move to the left. Now, students begin a conversation with a new partner. You can repeat this process as many times as you like. Usually students have received enough practice explaining their ideas and have heard enough other ideas after three or four rounds.

Before beginning this exercise, students need 5 to 10 minutes to identify their “three most significant factors” and record some thoughts about why they believe these factors were so important. The lists on the wall from the previous exercise should help with this step. The idea here is not that students need to have fully developed answers, but that they begin to generate ideas that will help them write their individual essays. During the circle activity, you might suggest that students only share one of their selections in each conversation. After three rounds, students would have had the opportunity to discuss all three of their selected factors.

**Independent work time:**
Now students can be given some class time to complete Step Four in the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet. Make sure students know that they do not have to stick to the three factors they originally identified. Conversations with other students might have helped them realize the significance of other factors. Remind students to refer to the evidence in their charts from Steps Two and Three as they write. This is a good time to go around and help students who are struggling while other students begin writing.
FOLLOW-THROUGH

Studying the story of Emmett Till helps students understand a particular moment in history, but it also can help students think about their own lives and context. How might this event have played out differently if it happened today? Could it have had the same impact? Why or why not? What has changed since 1955? What has not changed? What would it take today to rally your community toward speaking out against injustice, violence, or hate? Students’ answers to these questions contribute to material they can include in the conclusion of their essays. A fishbowl discussion, described next, is one way to structure a conversation about the relevance of the story of Emmett Till to students’ lives and the world today. Give students time to record their reactions to the fishbowl in Step Five of the Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet.

Fishbowl discussion directions:

- First, give students a few minutes to write about the prompts. As students write, you can move chairs around so that there is a circle of chairs in the center of the room—enough chairs for half of the students.
- Divide the class into two groups. Ask half of the class to participate in the discussion while the other half of the class participates as active listeners. Each listener should record at least one question or comment that they would like to make when they go to the center of the fishbowl. For example, a student may record an idea that they agree with or an idea that they disagree with.
- After about 10 minutes, have students switch roles.

Note: This would be an appropriate opportunity to review the norms for a respectful discussion. For example, students might be reminded that in a respectful conversation you comment on ideas—not on people. Before beginning the conversation, you could even ask students to give you an example of an appropriate comment (e.g., “I disagree with the idea that . . . ”) and an inappropriate comment (e.g., “That is the stupidest idea I have ever heard”).

HOMEWORK

- Students can complete their essays for homework.
- See the extension section for more homework ideas.

ASSESSMENT IDEA

- Emmett Till Essay Preparation Packet Steps Four and Five can be reviewed before students begin formally writing their essays.

EXTENSIONS

- Students can write poems about this event. They could either write poems individually or as a class. To write a class poem, each student contributes a word, phrase, or an image—something that stands out to them about this moment in history. Groups of students arrange those words into a poem and share it with the class. Marilyn Nelson, Connecticut’s poet laureate, published a collection of poetry titled A Wreath for Emmett Till (Houghton Mifflin, 2005). These poems, and accompanying illustrations, provide another way for students to access this history.
and exemplify how history can be presented in an artistic medium. The Houghton Mifflin website has a teacher’s guide for this text.

- Bob Dylan wrote a song called “The Ballad of Emmett Till.” Students can read the lyrics and write their own song or poem about the murder of Emmett Till. The website Democracy Now allows you to download a recording of Bob Dylan singing this song in 1962 (it was never released on an album). You need to download the show that aired on August 26, 2005, on the fiftieth anniversary of the murder of Emmett Till. At 34:00, a segment on Emmett Till begins, including a recording of Mamie Till-Mobley. Bob Dylan’s song is at the end of the program (54:40) (www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=05/08/26/1350225)

- Many U.S. history textbooks write very little, if anything, about the murder of Emmett Till. You might have students look at various history textbooks to see how they treat this historical event. This might lead to a discussion about how textbook publishers make decisions about what to include and what to leave out. Also, Massachusetts and many other states do not include the murder of Emmett Till on their state history frameworks. Students could write a letter to the editors of their textbook and/or their Department of Education explaining why (or why not) the story of Emmett Till should be included in their textbook or curriculum frameworks. Students might also write their own textbook entry for this event and send this to the textbook publisher along with their letter. Students could even send copies of their textbook entries to other high school history teachers, encouraging them to include this material in their study of the civil rights movement.

- Students might interview members of their community, asking them what they know about Emmett Till. They should come to these interviews having already thought about what they think is important for others to know about this moment in history. The interview can then become an opportunity for students to learn more about the event (assuming the interviewee is familiar with it) as well as an opportunity to share their own knowledge. After the interviews are completed, students can write a reflective essay describing their experience, guided by prompts such as:
  - What did people already know about Emmett Till?
  - How did they react to learning more about this moment in history?
  - What were the most interesting moments of the interview for you?
ENDNOTES


11. “Rosa Parks Quotes.”


Nonviolence as a Tool for Change: 
The March for Voting Rights

RATIONALE
Recent studies report that the demographic group in the United States with the lowest voter turnout is young adults. Why is this? Scholars point to inadequate civic education, a distrust of government institutions, and an overall attitude that voting just does not make a difference as a few of the reasons. The purpose of this unit is to help students develop an understanding of the power and importance of voting as a form of nonviolent political participation. By exploring the choices made by individuals and groups in Selma, Alabama, in 1965, students will learn why many Americans, both black and white, risked their lives to protest voter discrimination in the South. As students explore this important moment of the civil rights movement, they are confronted with questions such as: Why would black citizens risk their lives in order to vote? Why would whites risk their lives to protest discriminatory voting practices against blacks? What does it mean to protest nonviolently? Throughout this unit, we suggest activities and writing prompts that ask students to apply what they are learning about voting in the South in the 1960s to their own thoughts about what voting might mean to them and their communities today.

Not only does this unit help students learn about voting rights and nonviolent protest, but it also provides an ideal opportunity to review concepts related to the structure of the United States government. A deep understanding of voter discrimination requires an awareness of federalism. For example, to understand why many Southern whites were frustrated when federal officials intervened to protect the rights of black voters, students would need to know that many Americans thought that election policy should be left for state governments to decide. Likewise, for students to understand why protesters appealed to the federal government and why the Justice Department sent lawyers to the South, they would need to understand that, in accordance with the Fourteenth Amendment, the federal government is responsible for ensuring that states are not infringing on citizens’ constitutional rights. Furthermore, this unit demonstrates the relationship among the three branches of government: the executive branch authorized civil rights lawyers to investigate voting conditions in the South; the judicial branch ruled on the legality of the ordinance banning the march from Selma to Montgomery; and the legislative branch eventually voted to pass the Voting Rights Act. Accordingly, as students are engaged in this unit, you may want to review the basic structure of the United States government and ask students to apply these ideas to the material they are studying.
UNIT OUTLINE: This unit is divided into the following four lessons:

- **LESSON ONE: In 1965, Why Were Less Than 7 Percent of Blacks in Mississippi Registered to Vote?**—Students explore historical documents describing voter discrimination in the South in the 1950s and 1960s in order to answer questions about the difference between voting as a right and as an opportunity.

- **LESSON TWO: Voting and Nonviolent Protest**—Using excerpts from an essay written by Martin Luther King, Jr., students learn about the philosophy of nonviolence. This exercise prepares students to understand the response of civil rights activists to voter discrimination, and helps them think about voting as a form of nonviolent protest.

- **LESSON THREE: The March from Selma to Montgomery**—Through watching an excerpt from the “Bridge to Freedom” segment of the *Eyes on the Prize* video series, students learn about how children, men, and women risked their lives for the opportunity to vote.

- **LESSON FOUR: Voting Then and Now**—Guided by an understanding of the Voting Rights Act and current data related to voting in the United States, students consider the legacy of the march from Selma to Montgomery, including how learning about this moment in history informs their own ideas about voting.

MATERIALS: In addition to optional resources suggested with each lesson, the unit mainly draws from the following materials:

- *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 2, Episode 6, “Bridge to Freedom”*
- Personal Voting Rights Profile Packet: This packet prepares students to write their own personal voting profile. We expect teachers to adapt the worksheets in this packet to align with their own lesson ideas and assignments, as well as their students’ needs and interests. The lessons can be implemented without using the worksheets included in the Personal Voting Rights Profile Packet.
- Historical documents that are linked to the Internet from the website www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights

UNIT LEARNING GOALS: The purpose of these lessons is to help students . . .

- Use evidence from history and their own lives to distinguish between the right to vote, the opportunity to vote, and the obligation to vote.
- Identify examples of voter discrimination against blacks in the South before 1965.
- Understand the philosophy of nonviolence that was a hallmark of the civil rights movement in the South.
- Recognize that history is the result of particular decisions made by individuals and groups. To do this, students will learn to identify particularly important choices that were made, the factors that influenced these decisions, and the consequences of these actions.
- Develop their own ideas about the importance of voting to them and to people in their community.
- Gather relevant information from primary documents.

*For a transcript of this episode, follow this link: www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/about/pt_106.html*
• Recognize the connections between the past and the present; apply history to deepen their understanding of their own lives and use their own experiences to deepen their understanding of history.

**SUGGESTED FINAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THIS UNIT:**

**Essay questions:** You could select one of these or allow students to choose.

• Personal voting profile: The Personal Voting Profile Packet included at the end of the unit introduction prepares students to write their personal voting profile. This assignment asks students to write a personal essay (in the form of an editorial, speech, journal entry, or letter) about what voting means to them, comparing their own thoughts to those of protesters in 1965.

• Write a letter to someone who is turning 18 years old. The letter should answer the following questions:
  • In the United States, who has the right to vote? Where does this right come from?
  • What is voter discrimination? Why does it happen? Provide examples from this unit to illustrate your point.
  • How have people protested against voter discrimination? Why have they risked their lives for the right to vote? Provide evidence from this unit in your answer.
  • Who has the opportunity to vote today? Who should take advantage of this opportunity? Why? What are the benefits of voting? What are the consequences of not voting?
  • Describe the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. Who was protesting? Why? How did they protest? What does the march reveal about human behavior?
  • Identify an injustice you see in your community or larger society today. Write an essay explaining how you might confront this injustice. How does your approach compare to the approach used by protesters in Selma? What would you do similarly? Differently? How might John Lewis or Martin Luther King, Jr., have responded to your protest strategy?

**Projects:**

• Students could mount an exhibit about the history of voting rights. Each student could be assigned to pick three texts (images or documents) that they think should be included in this exhibit. These texts might come from the materials they explored during this unit and/or from outside research. Students could present (in writing or in speaking) their three texts along with an explanation of what the text means and a rationale for including it in the exhibit. Then, students can vote on the 10 to 12 texts that should become part of the exhibit. The project could end at that point, or you could actually mount the exhibit for the community. An extension activity would have students write scripts they will use as docents for the exhibit.

• Students can teach another audience about the information they learned during this unit. The audience might include younger students, family members, or the larger community. They might write a children’s book, design a pamphlet, or develop a PowerPoint presentation. Before designing their projects, students would first need
to identify the ideas they think are most important to remember from a study of voting rights history in the United States.
In this unit, students explore multimedia sources that document rampant voter discrimination in the South in the 1950s and early 1960s. Yet, voter discrimination against African Americans did not begin in the mid-twentieth century. As soon as the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified in 1870, powerful white Southerners looked for ways to maintain their power by curtailing the franchise of black Americans. Recognizing that enfranchising former slaves, who only a few years earlier had been considered property with no rights of their own, would be no simple matter. Congress passed the Enforcement Act of 1870, which imposed criminal penalties for voter discrimination, and the Force Act of 1871, which allowed for federal oversight of elections. Immediately after the passage of these laws, blacks enjoyed the most formal political power they would have for nearly 100 years. Indeed, in the 1870s, there were more than 300 black legislators elected to office, and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of freed slaves had registered to vote.

Yet, even with laws safeguarding the right to vote, white Southern officials were able to find ways to limit the franchise of black Americans. In the 1880s, hundreds of laws, such as literacy tests, poll taxes, and grandfather clauses, were passed by Southern legislatures. Additionally, many Southern whites used violence and intimidation, including lynching, to keep blacks away from the ballot box. The military presence in the South, a product of Reconstruction policy, provided some protection for Southern blacks’ voting rights. Even this minimal protection did not last. In 1876, President Rutherford Hayes withdrew federal forces from Southern states as part of a deal that allowed him to win a disputed presidential election against Governor Sam Tilden. With the end of Reconstruction, a sharp decline in black voting rights and political power followed.

The material students explored in Unit #1, such as the history of lynching, Jim Crow, and the murder of Emmett Till, helps illustrate the challenges black Americans faced in their struggle to vote. The vote—a right taken for granted by many white citizens—could be a death sentence for Southern blacks. As a result of intimidation, discrimination, and violence, by the 1950s, black voter turnout in the South was only in the single digits in some states. Thus, white officials in the South could largely ignore the needs of black Americans because they did not need their votes in order to get elected.

Because many black leaders and community members understood the relationship between political power and suffrage, voting rights protests began just as soon as blacks experienced discrimination at the ballot box. For example, at the South Carolina Constitutional Convention in 1895, William J. Whipple,
a black lawyer, politician, and rice planter, spoke against restricting the franchise of black citizens:

I am here as a man and a representative, not representing simply the negro, but representing the people. . . . Is the negro such a bad citizen that you should violate all law, human and divine, and chain him down? . . . What the negro asks now is that they be treated as men.

You say that you must rule this country; that it’s white man’s country.

We are here to ask you to stay your hand and do justice.5

Although this unit focuses on the nonviolent protests of the 1960s, it is important to note that black Americans, like William J. Whipple, had been fighting for the opportunity to vote for more than 100 years. Likewise, the practice of using nonviolent methods to protest injustice predated the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. For example, beginning in the early twentieth century, the NAACP was challenging segregation and discrimination by organizing public demonstrations, placing ads in the media, and bringing cases through the judicial system.

Thus, while the unit pinpoints a particular moment and place in United States history (the South from 1960–1965), we encourage you to help students see this moment as part of a larger context that begins with Reconstruction and continues to this day. Indeed, scholars Francis Fox Piven and Richard Cloward claim that the effects of discriminatory policies, prominent in the South but also applied in urban areas in the North, can be seen in low voting rates today. They argue:

[O]ur unrepresentative electorate and the resulting low voting rates have their historical roots in the exclusionary voter registration systems established at the end of the nineteenth century. Southern planters pushed through poll taxes, literacy tests, and obstructive voter registration policies to slash voting among blacks and poor whites. . . . As the new procedures took effect between 1888 and 1904, voting rates fell: from 64 percent to 19 percent in the South; from 86 percent to 55 percent in the North and West. . . . And as the electorate shrank, party appeals and strategies also narrowed.6

Yet, while Piven and Cloward maintain that the legacy of voter discrimination accounts for the political marginalization of blacks today, current data related to the rise in black elected officials, particularly in the South, demonstrate the rise of political power of black Americans. We hope students see the history of voting rights in the United States through this lens of “continuity and change”—noting themes that resonate today while recognizing the unique context of life in the South in 1965.
In only a few years, you will be of voting age. What does this make you think about? What is your opinion about voting? Will you register to vote? Do you think it is important for other people in your community and in your country to vote? Why or why not? The purpose of this unit, and this assignment, is to help you develop your own thoughts about voting. At the end of this unit, you will write a personal voting profile—something that explains your opinions about voting. Your personal voting profile may take the form of a letter to someone you know, an editorial you can submit to a newspaper, a journal entry, or even a letter to yourself when you turn 18 years old. Your personal voting profile must answer the following questions:

- Is voting a right, an opportunity, a privilege, and/or an obligation?
- Why did marchers in 1965 care so much about having the opportunity to vote? Do you share their sentiments? Why or why not? Compare your own thoughts about voting to theirs. What influenced their opinions about voting? What has influenced yours?
- How will your ideas about voting inform your actions? What next steps do you plan on taking? Will you register to vote? Will you talk to others about voting? Why or why not?

The lessons in this unit are designed to help you develop the ideas you might include in your personal voting profile. For each lesson, there is a corresponding page in this Personal Voting Profile Packet that you will complete. Consider this packet as prewriting for your personal voting profile.

**STEP ONE:** (to be completed during or after Lesson One) Voting Profile
**Anticipation Guide**

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements: (circle one)

1. Voting can make a difference. By voting, it is possible to influence issues you care about.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

2. The Fifteenth Amendment, passed in 1870, guarantees all American citizens the legal right to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

3. Today, all American citizens have the constitutional (legal) right to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

4. The Voting Rights Act, passed in 1965, guarantees all American citizens the opportunity to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

5. Today, all American citizens have the opportunity to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

6. All American citizens have an obligation and responsibility to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

7. Voting is important to me and my community.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

8. People who do not have the opportunity to vote are handicapped from protecting themselves from unjust acts.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

9. Voting can be an effective tool to protest injustice.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree
STEP TWO: (to be completed during or after Lesson One) Voting as a Right and an Opportunity

What is the difference between having the legal right to vote and the opportunity to vote? What is required for citizens to have the legal right to vote? What is required for citizens to have the opportunity to vote? Can you think of any other examples in which citizens are guaranteed a right by the Constitution, but do not have the opportunity to enjoy that right? Use evidence from history in your answer.

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Today, people in my community enjoy both the legal right to vote and the opportunity to vote. Explain your answer. To help answer this question, you may want to ask people of voting age in your school and community about their voting experiences.
STEP THREE: (to be completed during or after Lesson Two) Voting and Justice

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

Voting can be an effective tool to protest injustice.

| strongly agree | agree | disagree | strongly disagree |

Explain:

People who do not have the opportunity to vote are handicapped from protecting themselves from unjust acts.

| strongly agree | agree | disagree | strongly disagree |

Explain:
STEP FOUR: (to be completed during or after Lesson Three) The Importance of Voting

Compare your own thoughts about voting to those of protesters in Selma, Alabama, in 1965.

1. Voting is as important to me as it was to protesters in Selma, Alabama, in 1965.
   - strongly agree  - agree  - disagree  - strongly disagree

2. Why do you think the participants in the march from Selma to Montgomery felt so strongly about the importance of the vote?

3. What issues do you care about? What do you want to keep the same in your life and community? What do you wish would change?

4. Do you think you could influence any of these issues through voting [once you turn 18]? Explain your answer.
STEP FIVE: (to be completed during or after Lesson Four) Thoughts about Voting (Revisited)

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements: (circle one)

1. Voting can make a difference. By voting, it is possible to influence issues you care about.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

2. The Fifteenth Amendment, passed in 1870, guarantees all American citizens the legal right to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

3. Today, all American citizens have the constitutional (legal) right to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

4. The Voting Rights Act, passed in 1965, guarantees all American citizens the opportunity to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

5. Today, all American citizens have the opportunity to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

6. All American citizens have an obligation and responsibility to vote.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

7. Voting is important to me and my community.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

8. People who do not have the opportunity to vote are handicapped from protecting themselves from unjust acts.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

9. Voting can be an effective tool to protest injustice.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree
STEP SIX: (to be completed after Lesson Four) Writing Your Personal Voting Profile

Now you are ready to write your personal voting profile. The purpose of the profile is to explain your thoughts about voting. The profile could take different forms such as:

- A letter or email to yourself that you could read when you are voting age (18)
- A letter or email to someone else, such as someone you know of voting age
- An editorial for a newspaper
- A personal essay
- A storybook for children
- A song or poem
- A speech

1. In what format will you write your personal voting profile?

2. Look through this Personal Voting Profile Packet to help you identify the ideas about voting that are most important to you. You can highlight them or underline them.

3. Complete this list: "The main ideas I believe about voting." [Include at least seven ideas on this list.] These are the ideas that you will likely include in your personal voting profile.

   The Main Ideas I Believe about Voting:

4. How will these ideas inform your actions? What are three things you might choose to do (or not to do) as a result of your opinions about voting? [You should also include these action steps in your personal voting profile.]

Okay, now you are ready to write!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulates opinion about the importance (or not) of voting</strong></td>
<td>Opinion about the importance of voting is stated, but not supported by evidence from history and today.</td>
<td>Opinion about the importance of voting is supported by at least one piece of historical evidence and evidence from today.</td>
<td>Opinion about the importance of voting is supported by at least three pieces of historical evidence, as well as evidence from today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinguishes between voting as a legal right and an opportunity</strong></td>
<td>Explanation of how the right to vote differs from having the opportunity to vote is not clear and/or not supported by any historical evidence.</td>
<td>Explanation of how the legal right to vote differs from having the opportunity to vote is supported by some historical evidence (at least one piece).</td>
<td>Explanation of how the legal right to vote differs from having the opportunity to vote is strongly supported by historical evidence (at least three pieces of evidence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggests how opinions will inform future actions</strong></td>
<td>Suggests future action(s) but it is unclear how these actions are connected to opinions about voting.</td>
<td>Suggests one or two ways that opinions about voting might inform future action.</td>
<td>Suggests at least three ways that opinions about voting might inform future action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Personal voting profile and/or Personal Voting Profile Packet is incomplete.</td>
<td>Personal voting profile and Packet are complete and turned in on time.</td>
<td>Personal voting profile and Personal Voting Profile Packet are complete and turned in on time. Feedback is used to improve work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1965, Why Were Less Than 7 Percent of Blacks Living in Mississippi Registered to Vote?

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
Students begin this lesson by completing the Voting Profile Anticipation Guide in Step One that asks them to reveal their thoughts about voting. Throughout this unit, they will return to this anticipation guide, reflecting on how their ideas have strengthened or changed as a result of learning about the history of voting rights in the South in the 1950s and 1960s. This lesson focuses students’ attention on primary source documents that juxtapose the promise of the Fifteenth Amendment with the reality for black citizens living in the South. In so doing, this material reveals how citizens do not always enjoy civil rights just because they are promised them in the Constitution; rather, through the behavior of individuals and groups, theoretical rights are translated into lived experiences. As this lesson raises students’ awareness of the history of voting rights in America, it also can help students consider the difference between having the legal right to vote and the real opportunity to vote, as well as broader questions about the just (and unjust) application of laws.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• What did voting practices look like in the South, especially in Mississippi and Alabama, in the 1950s and 1960s? Why were so few blacks registered to vote?
• Why would some white Americans put forth great effort to make it difficult for African Americans to exercise their right to vote?
• If the Constitution says that citizens have the right to vote, then how is it possible that people were denied this right for so many years?
• What is the difference between voting as a legal right and voting as an opportunity?
• Who decides how laws or rules are applied? How can we ensure that laws and rules are applied to everyone in the same way? Are there ever circumstances when a rule should be applied to individuals differently? If so, why?
• Is suffrage important? Does voting matter? Why or why not?
Define These Key Terms:

- Constitutional or legal right
- Opportunity
- Fourteenth Amendment
- Fifteenth Amendment
- Voter registration
- Voter discrimination
- Literacy test
- Poll tax
- Freedom Summer
- Franchise/disenfranchisement/suffrage
- White Citizens’ Council
- Enforcement Acts

Note: Before this lesson, it would be helpful if students are familiar with the history of Reconstruction and Jim Crow, as well as the concepts of federalism and voter registration.

Practice These Skills:

- Gathering important details from primary source documents
- Using historical evidence to make a claim about what happened in the past

DURATION: Approximately 90–120 minutes

MATERIALS

Texts (print, video, audio):

- Primary documents—links found on website “Voting in the South Before 1965,” www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights
- (Optional) *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 3, Episode 6, “Bridge to Freedom” (0:40–1:10) or Selma images, www.crmvet.org/images/img-selma.htm
- (Optional) Map of Union and Confederate states, www.wtv-zone.com/civilwar/map.html
- (Optional) From the *Eyes on the Prize* study guide, Episode 5, “Mississippi: Is This America?,” pp. 66–85

HANDOUTS

- From the Personal Voting Profile Packet:
  - Step One: Voting Profile Anticipation Guide
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Investigating Voter Discrimination in the South (1964)
Document Investigation Questions: Voting Conditions in the South (1964)

BACKGROUND
In the 1960s, nearly half of Mississippi’s population was black, and in many counties, blacks were the majority. Yet, Mississippi’s blacks enjoyed virtually no political power. In March 1965, even after a concerted campaign to register black voters, less than 7 percent of blacks were registered to vote, compared to nearly 70 percent of white Mississippians. And for years, not a single black person from Mississippi had been elected to public office.

Mississippi’s political climate was not unique. Southern states (those that had formerly been members of the Confederacy) had dismally low black voter turnout and very few, if any, blacks had been elected to public office. From 1870–1900, in the years immediately following the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment (and other civil rights acts, known as the Enforcement Acts), more than 300 blacks had been elected as legislators at the state and/or national level; from 1960–1964, the South did not elect a single black legislator. Historian Michael Klarman explains, “Black voter registration in the South had increased from roughly 3 percent in 1940 to about 20 percent in 1952, but 80 percent of Southern blacks remained voteless, and many Deep South counties with black majorities still disenfranchised blacks entirely.”

What evidence can explain the lack of black voter participation and representation in the South? In this lesson, students will use historical evidence, such as voting records, images, and oral histories, to investigate how blacks were barred from exercising their constitutional right to vote. They will study legal documents that show that even though the Constitution, via the Fifteenth Amendment, guaranteed the right to vote, and despite the fact that Congress had passed laws, such as the Enforcement Acts, that protected black Americans’ right to vote, Southern states still enacted policies, such as literacy tests, aimed at keeping blacks from the ballot box. Faced with legal obstacles, many blacks still attempted to register to vote, only to be met with intimidation and violence. For example, students will learn about Private Macy Yost Snipes, who survived war only to be murdered because he had the courage to be the first black man in Rupert, Georgia, to register to vote. Students will hear from Fannie Lou Hamer as she describes how her white landlord kicked her out of her home because she also dared to register. Additionally, students will view posters, flyers, and photographs, all documenting the desire of black citizens to have the opportunity to cast their own ballots. They will study evidence of black and white Americans participating in voter registration efforts, and they
will read newspaper articles about “freedom workers” who were beaten and even killed as they tried to help blacks become enfranchised.

This unit focuses on voter discrimination that was prevalent in Southern states. Most of the materials used in these lessons focus on two states in particular—Mississippi and Alabama. Both of these states had a history of especially pronounced voter discrimination, low black voter turnout, and, as a result, particularly robust voter registration efforts. At the beginning of the lesson, you might take a few minutes to have students locate Mississippi and Alabama on a map. You can also explain that conditions in these states reflect the conditions for black citizens in other Southern states. If you have not done so earlier in the civil rights unit, now would be an appropriate time to clarify the historical distinction between Southern states and Northern states (or the South and the North). When referring to this period in American history, the South generally means those states that were members of the Confederacy during the Civil War, whereas the North represents states that were part of the Union. Viewing a map of Confederate and Union states can help students remember this distinction. At the same time, it is important for students to be aware that, just as before the Civil War Southerners and Northerners owned slaves, in the 1950s and 1960s racial discrimination was not only a Southern phenomenon. Unit 3 in this series explores how issues of civil rights played out in the North, focusing on school desegregation in Boston.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP

To introduce this unit, give students the opportunity to reflect on their knowledge and thoughts about voting. One way to do this is by asking students to complete the Voting Profile Anticipation Guide which is Step One in the Personal Voting Profile Packet. Explain that the purpose of this unit is to help students think more deeply about their answers to these questions, and that they will have the opportunity to review their answers to these questions at the end of this lesson and the other lessons in this unit. If you plan on having students write a Personal Voting Profile, or complete another final project or essay, you can describe this final assignment to them now.

MAIN ACTIVITY

After students view a video clip or a photograph, guide them through the following three-step reflection process:

1. Ask students to record what they saw and/or heard. What details do they recall?
2. Have students create a story to explain the images they saw. What events do they think led up to the moments they just observed?
3. Finally, students can record questions raised by these images. What do they need to know in order to understand what they just watched?

Between steps, students can turn to their neighbor and share ideas, or, if your time is limited, you might ask for several volunteers to share what they wrote.

The purpose of this lesson is for students to use primary source documents to help explain the voter discrimination that led to the moment they just observed in the “Bridge to Freedom” video footage. To establish context for this moment and the history they will be studying, you might want to show students a map of the United States. Ask them to locate Alabama and Mississippi on the map. Then ask them to identify the regions that are referred to as the North and the South. This is an appropriate time to review the historically political, social, and economic distinctions between the South and the North and to debunk any myths that racial prejudice only existed in the South.

This lesson draws on documents that can be accessed via the web page FHAO/BPS Civil Rights Curriculum Collaborative. Refer to the documents link on the website in the Appendix at the end of this lesson for the documents relevant to this lesson and unit. Although most of the documents reflect conditions in the 1950s and 1960s, voter discrimination on the basis of race had existed since the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment. Therefore, the site also contains sources from earlier years to establish the context for the voting experiences of blacks living in the South in the early 1960s. Since the late nineteenth century, blacks had been resisting this injustice. With the strengthening of the civil rights movement in the 1950s (the context of which should be familiar to students after studying about the murder and trial of Emmett Till), blacks and white allies took bolder steps to protest voter discrimination. One of these steps included sending reports of voter discrimina-
tion to the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. The testimony of Hosea Guice represents the kinds of evidence that the Civil Rights Division received from Southern blacks.

In 1961, Attorney General Robert Kennedy asked John Doar, a lawyer in the Civil Rights Division, to travel to Mississippi to investigate reports of voter discrimination. John Doar spent several weeks in Mississippi and then returned to Washington to provide a report of what he observed to the attorney general. Reflecting on his experience working in Mississippi as a civil rights lawyer, Doar remarked:

When we got exposed to what the conditions were really like, we were committed to work as hard as we could, with all the tools we had, to do something to change it. . . . The rural black residents down there were the finest people I ever met.

When they saw people were there to help, they got involved. That was a wonderful experience.

John Doar was the first of several lawyers from the Justice Department who were sent to investigate voting conditions for African Americans. One of the documents students will read includes the comments of Gerald Stern, another Justice Department lawyer who worked in Mississippi.

The documents listed on the FHAO/BPS Civil Rights Curriculum Collaborative website provide a snapshot of the data civil rights lawyers would have seen and heard. Thus, one way to structure this activity is to ask small groups of students to use the information found in these documents to explain what a lawyer working for the Justice Department, like John Doar or Gerald Stern, might include in a report to the attorney general about voting conditions in the South in 1964. Students can also make suggestions to Attorney General Robert Kennedy about how he might respond to their findings. The Appendix at the end of this lesson includes a graphic organizer, “Investigating Voter Discrimination in the South (1964),” which is designed to walk students through these steps.

In most classrooms, not all students will have access to a computer at the same time, so we suggest that you print out sets of the documents for groups of students to use. Students can take notes on the graphic organizer “Investigating Voter Discrimination in the South (1964)” or students can use the documents to answer the “Document Investigation Questions: Voting Conditions in the South (1964).” This activity can even be structured as a competition between groups to see which group can answer all of the questions in the shortest amount of time.

Ways to structure students’ investigation of the documents include the following:

- Stations—You can print out some or all of the documents from the website and organize them in stations around the room. Stations could be organized by type of document or by theme.
- Jigsaw—A jigsaw activity puts students in the position of becoming experts who share information with another group of students. First, small groups of students receive a small set of documents (one or two) printed from the website. After you are confident that students have a sufficient understanding of these documents,
new groups of students are formed. These new groups contain at least one member from each of the initial groups. Students teach their group about their documents. In this way, all students gain access to the material in all of the documents. Click here for more on how to structure jigsaw activities (or look under “Teaching Strategies” on the Facing History and Ourselves website).

- Group work—Student groups of three to five are given a set of documents selected from the website. They work together to use the documents to complete the graphic organizer “Investigating Voter Discrimination in the South (1964)” or to answer the “Document Investigation Questions: Voting Conditions in the South (1964).”

Regardless of the method you choose, students will need specific instructions including:

- The work they will be presenting and/or turning in.
- Specific questions they are responsible for answering.
- The number of documents they are minimally required to use (suggestion: require at least five documents).
- The amount of time they have to complete the task (suggestion: at least 45 minutes).

If you have time, you can have each group share the main points that they think a Justice Department lawyer should include in his report to the attorney general, as well as at least one policy recommendation. Since students will have looked at the same documents, it would not be surprising if their main points are similar. For this reason, if you do not have much time, it is not essential that groups share their findings with the rest of the class.

Optional: If you have time, you might want to introduce the following activity with a short clip from “Bridge to Freedom,” Eyes on the Prize. A brief excerpt from the middle of the segment (22:20–24:20) depicts a confrontation between nonviolent protesters and Alabama police officers, in an event that came to be known as “Bloody Sunday.” This clip demonstrates the violence that occurred on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Sunday, March 7, 1965, as protesters began a march to the state capitol to protest voter discrimination in the South. The explicit violence in this clip could provoke a strong emotional reaction in students. So, if you do not have much time to spend debriefing the warm-up activity, instead of the “Bloody Sunday” clip, you might choose to use the introductory clip from this episode (0:40–1:10). This clip includes poignant footage of African Americans demanding their right to vote as they are being blocked and pushed by white officials. Alternatively, you could show students an evocative photograph of the march from Selma to Montgomery. The Civil Rights Movement Veterans website includes several photographs you might use (http://www.crmvet.org/images/imgselma.htm).

FOLLOW-THROUGH
A critical examination of historical documents of this time period reveals the difference between the right to vote, guaranteed by the Fifteenth Amendment, and the opportunity to vote, or in this case, the lack of opportunity to vote. In his State of the Union Address on January 4, 1965, President Johnson recognized this distinction when he said, “I propose that we eliminate every remaining obstacle to the right and the opportunity to vote.”10
One of the important learning goals of this lesson is for students to recognize this disconnect between the promise of the Fifteenth Amendment and the reality of voter discrimination. A final discussion or homework assignment for this lesson might have students use evidence they gathered in class to answer questions such as: What is the difference between the right to vote and the opportunity to vote? What is required for individuals to have the right to vote? What is required for citizens to have the opportunity to vote? Can you think of any other examples in which citizens are guaranteed a civil right by the Constitution but do not have the opportunity to enjoy that right? These questions are included in Step Two of the Personal Voting Profile Packet. The final question in Step Two suggests that students interview people in the community about their own voting experiences.

This conversation could extend to a discussion of how students have seen laws applied in their own lives, such as at home, at school, or in their communities. You might ask students to brainstorm examples of a rule that they think is applied to everyone in the same way, as well as rules that they believe are unevenly applied. A final writing activity or debate could focus on the question: What leads to the uneven or inconsistent application of laws? Is it ever fair or just to apply laws or rules differently to particular individuals or groups or must laws always be applied in exactly the same way to all people?

HOMEWORK

- Students can complete Step Two in their Personal Voting Profile Packet.
- Historical writing activity: Students can prepare a report for Attorney General Robert Kennedy in the same way that Justice Department lawyers such as John Doar and Gerald Stern used evidence gathered from trips to the South to inform the attorney general about voting conditions. The following prompts might be used to structure the assignment:
  - Why is the federal Justice Department involved in this situation? Should the attorney general of the United States pay attention to issues related to voting rights? Explain.
  - Describe voting conditions in the South for black Americans, drawing on evidence found in at least seven historical documents.
  - Based on this information about voting conditions in the South for black Americans, what suggestions do you have for the attorney general?

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

- Collecting graphic organizers: The information students record on their graphic organizers could be assessed for depth (Did students record sufficient key ideas from the documents?); breadth (Did students refer to an adequate number of documents?); and relevance (To what extent were students able to discriminate between important details related to voting and other information presented in these documents?).
- Small-group presentations: You could assign small groups of students a subset of the documents to present to the rest of the class. Providing students with clear guidelines about the material they are expected to present will improve the quality of the presentations and make assessment of student work much easier. For
example, presentations might include one visual image that will help the rest of the class remember the material, one or two important quotations, and five main ideas.

• Historical writing activity: See the description under the Homework section.

EXTENSIONS
In his book *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights*, historian Michael Klarman writes, “Voting protects other rights, and in the postwar period many black leaders insisted that if southern blacks could win genuine protection for their voting rights they could secure other rights for themselves through politics.” In 1948, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reporter Ray Sprigle found evidence to support Klarman’s argument that Southern blacks saw voting rights as a gateway to many other rights. Posing as a black man, Sprigle traveled to the South and kept a diary of his experiences. Upon his return to Pittsburgh, the *Post-Gazette* published Sprigle’s diary to raise awareness of segregation and injustice in the South. The following excerpt from this series provides a powerful connection between the story of Emmett Till’s murder that students learned about in Unit 1 and the protests for voting rights students explore in this unit:

As for what he [the Negro] wants—two things. And in this order. First, the ballot. Second, proper and adequate education for his children. At first when they’d tell me this every where it was the same, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee—I’d try to argue. “Why not end murder first?” I’d demand. “Why not stop the senseless slaughter of Negroes in the South?” One answer I got in Georgia will do for all of them—they followed the same line. “Look,” this Negro leader said, “Voters don’t kill easy. Nobody’s going around shooting voters just to make a record. With the vote, the Negro will have a voice in picking his officials. That’s going to make it tougher for the candidate for sheriff whose only platform is the number of unarmed Negroes he killed.”

After reading this excerpt, students might write a response to the “Negro leader” quoted in this excerpt. Why does he think voting is so important? To what extent do they agree with his idea? How might Mamie Till-Mobley respond to his position that the right to vote is more important than stopping “the senseless slaughter of Negroes in the South”?
Investigating Voter Discrimination in the South (1964)

What information should be included in a report to the attorney general about possible violations of the Fifteenth Amendment in the South?

Part One: Gathering Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source (Title, type, number, author)</th>
<th>What does source tell you about voting in the South?</th>
<th>Does this information suggest that the Fifteenth Amendment is being violated? If so, how?</th>
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Part Two: Evaluating and Synthesizing Information

Based on your previous findings, what are the five most important points that should be included in a report to the attorney general?

Part Three: Generating New Ideas

What suggestions might a civil rights lawyer make to the attorney general about how to respond to the situation in the South?
Document Investigation Questions: Voting Conditions in the South (1964)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer (cite specific quotations, details, or images)</th>
<th>Where did you find the answer? (Document name or number)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What right is guaranteed by the Fifteenth Amendment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What laws were passed to protect voting rights? When were they passed? Why were they needed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. In the 1960s in the South, what was the difference between white voter turnout and black voter turnout?</td>
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<td>4. What are examples of laws that were passed to restrict blacks from voting?</td>
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<td>5. How many black Southern legislators were there in 1960? How does this compare to the number of black Southern legislators in 1872?</td>
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<td>7. What are the names of a group that opposed expanding the opportunity to vote to black citizens?</td>
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<td>8. What is the name of civil rights organizations that helped organize voter registration drives for black citizens?</td>
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<td>9. What did black and white activists do during Freedom Summer?</td>
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<td>10. How did some Southern whites explain their opposition to intervention by the federal government or activists aimed at increasing black voter registration?</td>
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<td>11. What could happen to volunteers who helped blacks register to vote?</td>
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<td>12. What could happen to blacks who tried to register to vote?</td>
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<td>13. What obstacles kept blacks from successfully registering to vote?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Why did blacks say that they wanted to vote?</td>
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Document Links on Website
FH/AO/BPS Civil Rights Curriculum Collaborative
“Voting in the South before 1965”

Document 1: Quotations by Southern whites
- William Simmons, spokesman for Mississippi White Citizens’ Council

Document 2: “A Soldier Who Came Home to Die,” Ray Sprigle, 1948, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
www.post-gazette.com/sprigle/199808SprigleChap10.asp

www.news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/4/newsid_2962000/2962638.stm

Document 4: Trying to Vote in Mississippi (from Eyes on the Prize study guide), p. 69.

Document 5: “Part of the Government Activity”: Testimony from an African-American Taxpayer Unable to Vote in Alabama
www.historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6334

Document 6: “There Was a Purpose in My Being There,”
Mr. Gustave Hulkower, Tucson, Arizona, white civil rights activist
www.voicesofcivilrights.org/Approved_Letters/204-HULKOWER-AZ.html

Document 7: “I Didn’t Know Anything about Voting,” Fannie Lou Hamer on the Mississippi Voter Registration Campaign (audio and text file)
www.historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6918

Document 8: Voter registration posters
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/workshops/civilrights1/voter_register_poster.jpg
www.stg.brown.edu/projects/FreedomNow/scans/GM0001-01.jpg
www.stg.brown.edu/projects/FreedomNow/scans/GM0001-02.jpg

Document 9: Mississippi Freedom Summer images
www.newseum.org/mississippi
www.crmvet.org/images/imgfs.htm

Document 10: PBS: The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow—Voting Then and Now Activity (includes literacy test)
www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/tools_voting.html

Document 11: Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution
www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.amendmentxv.html
www.civilrightsmuseum.org/gallery/civilrights.asp

Document 13: Statistics on voter turnout and elected representatives:
Voter Registration Rates (1965 vs. 1988)
www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting/intro/intro_c.htm

Number of Black Southern Legislators, 1868–1900 and 1960–1992
www.4uth.gov.ua/usa/english/laws/majorlaw/voting/intro_c.htm

Additional Background Information
Document 14: United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, “Before the Voting Rights Act”
www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting/intro/intro_a.htm

Document 15: Fighting Back: A Black Lawyer Argues Against Disenfranchisement—Early Evidence of Voter Discrimination After the Passage of the Fifteenth Amendment
www.historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5469

Document 16: Mississippi and Freedom Summer
www.watson.org/~lisa/blackhistory/civilrights-55-65/mississippi.html

Document 17: United States Voting Rights timelines
RATIONAL:
Lesson One of this unit familiarized students with voter discrimination tactics and the related violence that was occurring in the South in the 1960s. This knowledge prepares students to study how individuals and groups responded to rampant voter discrimination. In this lesson, students develop an understanding of the theory that was most influential in guiding the actions of civil rights protesters in the South in the 1960s: the philosophy of nonviolence.

As adolescents move into adulthood, they seek ways to act on their growing independence and responsibility. This lesson is designed to help students consider how nonviolence might apply to struggles in their own lives, schools, and communities. This unit’s focus on voting provides one example of a nonviolent way to be heard, gain power, and effect change. Indeed, civil rights historian Taylor Branch explains, “Nonviolence is an orphan among democratic ideas. It has nearly vanished from public discourse even though the most basic element of free government—the vote—has no other meaning. Every ballot is a piece of nonviolence, signifying hard-won consent to raise politics above firepower and bloody conquest.” At the end of this lesson, students will have the opportunity to reflect on the power of voting as a nonviolent response to injustice and a vehicle for change.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• What does it mean to protest nonviolently? What is the philosophy of nonviolence?
• Why do you think many civil rights activists practiced nonviolence?
• To what extent can voting be an effective nonviolent response to injustice and a vehicle for change?

Define These Key Terms:
• Protest
• Justice/injustice
• Philosophy
• Strategy
• Nonviolence
• Beloved Community
• Passive versus Active (aggressive)
• Reconciliation
• Civil rights organizations that practiced nonviolence: SCLC, SNCC, CORE, NAACP
• Civil rights leaders that espoused the philosophy of nonviolence: Martin Luther King, Jr., James Lawson, John Lewis, and Diane Nash
• Gandhi

**Practice These Skills:**
• Paraphrasing difficult text
• Supporting arguments with evidence when taking a stand on an issue

**DURATION:** Approximately 60–90 minutes

**MATERIALS**

**Texts (print, video, audio):**
• *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 3, Episode 6, “Bridge to Freedom” (8:20–9:50)
• (Optional) *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide
• From Episode 3, “Ain’t Scared of Your Jails”
  • “Nonviolence in Nashville,” pp. 44–45
  • “Student Power,” pp. 46–47
  • “Freedom Rides,” pp. 49–51
• From Episode 4, “No Easy Walk”
  • “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” pp. 56–57
• From Episode 14, “Back to the Movement”
  • “Nonviolence and Democracy,” pp. 221–223

**HANDOUTS**
• From the Personal Voting Profile Packet:
  • Step Three: Voting and Justice
• From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  • Glossary for Use with “Nonviolence and Racial Justice” by Martin Luther King, Jr.
  • Nonviolence and Racial Justice graphic organizer
  • (Optional) Selected quotations: Why Would Someone Follow the Philosophy of Nonviolence?”
BACKGROUND
The philosophy of nonviolence as it was practiced in the civil rights movement was inspired by Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi’s theory of nonviolent resistance, known as Satyagraha. This theory was based on the following three principles: (1) Satya—truth or openness and fairness, (2) Ahimsa—refusal to inflict injury upon others, and (3) Tapasya—willingness for self-sacrifice. Through the words and deeds of many civil rights activists, Gandhi’s ideas were integrated with Christian teachings to create a philosophy of nonviolent protest with a deeply spiritual foundation. Martin Luther King, Jr., stressed the relationship between nonviolence, God, and Christianity in many of his famous speeches and essays (including the essay students read in this lesson). For example, in “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” King writes, “I am grateful to God that, through the influence of the Negro church, the way of nonviolence became an integral part of our struggle.” In his biography on Martin Luther King, Jr., historian Taylor Branch explains that Dr. King “grounded one foot in patriotism, the other in ministry, and both in nonviolence.”

One of the greatest misconceptions of the philosophy of nonviolence is that it advocates passivity as a response to injustice. In his 1963 “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., articulates how nonviolence is a confrontational protest strategy:

You may well ask, “Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? . . . Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored.

Followers of nonviolence refer to their tactics as “nonviolent direct action,” emphasizing that they are acting to combat injustice. Practitioners of nonviolent protest developed specific tactics that would help them accomplish their main goal—to draw attention to injustice and bring about compassion for their cause. Civil rights activists attended workshops, many of them organized by James Lawson, where they learned about nonviolent strategy and practiced applying it in mock protest situations.

Many civil rights organizations and activists believed in nonviolence not only because they wanted to change unjust laws, but also because they wanted to change the hearts, minds, and customs of American citizens. They believed that these goals could be best accomplished through a method that exemplified the values of an interracial democracy. As John Lewis explained:
We, the men, women, and children of the civil rights movement, truly believed that if we adhered to the discipline and philosophy of nonviolence, we could help transform America. We wanted to realize what I like to call, the Beloved Community, an all-inclusive, truly interracial democracy based on simple justice, which respects the dignity and worth of every human being. . . . Consider those two words: Beloved and Community. “Beloved” means not hateful, not violent, not uncaring, not unkind. And “Community” means not separated, not polarized, not locked in struggle.15

Followers of a philosophy of nonviolence, like John Lewis, often hold specific ideas about human behavior that lead them to trust in the effectiveness of this approach. For example, practitioners of nonviolence might believe that most people value peace and justice, and would therefore feel compassion for those who are being victimized by hate and violence.

Within the civil rights movement, leaders debated whether nonviolence should be treated as a guiding philosophy or as one of many protest tactics. Former Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Chairman (SNCC) John Lewis remarked, “While nonviolence, for some, was merely a tactic for social change, for many of us it became a way of life.”16 For example, just a few weeks before he was assassinated, Dr. King remarked, “I plan to stand by nonviolence because I have found it to be a philosophy of life that regulates not only my dealings in the struggle for racial justice, but also my dealings with people, with my own self.”17 On the other hand, clarifying SNCC’s evolving approach to nonviolence, in 1966 newly elected Chairman Stokely Carmichael said, “We placed a strong emphasis on the fact that nonviolence for us was a tactic and not a philosophy.”18 In this lesson, we have chosen to focus on nonviolence as a philosophy because this represents the dominant thinking of leaders and activists in the civil rights context students are now studying—the movement in the South in 1965. As the goals and geography of the civil rights movement shifted in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the idea of nonviolence as a strategy (as opposed to nonviolence as a “way of life”) gained popularity, as did other responses to injustice, such as the strategy of self-defense espoused by the Black Panther Party (and reflected in its official name, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense).
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
In this lesson, students will read an excerpt from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s essay, “Nonviolence and Racial Justice.” King begins this essay with the question, “How is the struggle against the forces of injustice to be waged?” You might start this lesson by asking students to respond to King’s question in their notebooks or journals. Referencing students’ experiences or knowledge of protests can help them answer this question. So, you also include a prompt such as: Brainstorm a list of protests you have seen or heard about. What does it usually look like when people are protesting against injustice? What are the protestors doing? What might they be wearing or saying? After answering these questions in their notebooks, students can share their responses.

Then, show a brief clip (8:20–9:50) from the segment “Bridge to Freedom” of the Eyes on the Prize video series. This footage shows black schoolteachers in Selma, Alabama, attempting to register to vote. Dressing in formal suits and dresses and lining up in an orderly fashion outside of a courthouse might not seem like an act of protest to students. Yet, given the context, when the teachers lined up at the Selma courthouse on January 22, 1965, they were performing an act of civil disobedience with serious consequences. According to local law and custom, the schoolteachers could lose their jobs and even be arrested for their actions. In the video you can hear Sheriff Clark threaten to arrest the protesters.

After viewing this clip, students can describe what they saw. What were the people in the film doing? How were they dressed? What were they saying? These prompts can lead to a brief discussion focused on comparing students’ initial ideas about protest and protestors to their thoughts about protest after witnessing this footage of the teacher’s march. Students might refer to acts of violence and aggression when describing acts of protest. To be sure, at times, military action has been seen as an act of protest against injustice, and throughout history oppressed people have resorted to violence as a means of self-defense. Clarify for students that in this lesson, the material focuses on nonviolent protest methods because most of the leading civil rights organizations and leaders involved in the civil rights movement in the South embraced a philosophy of nonviolence.

You might segue from the warm-up activity to the main activity by asking students to construct a working definition of “nonviolence” or “nonviolent protest” and record it in their notebooks or journals. At the end of the class, after students have read the ideas of several civil rights leaders, they can refine their definitions.

MAIN ACTIVITY
Note: In preparation for this lesson, print out a copy of the essay “Nonviolence and Racial Justice” and number each paragraph. This step will help students know which paragraph they have been assigned to present to the rest of the class. Also, the Appendix at the end of this lesson includes a glossary of challenging vocabulary words used in this text, which you could distribute to students along with Dr. King’s essay.
In this essay, Martin Luther King, Jr., explains the philosophy of nonviolence as a response to injustice. A philosophy is a belief system that people use to guide their behavior. If students are unfamiliar with this term, share this definition with the class and ask them to record it in their notebooks. If you have time, you can give students a few minutes to consider philosophies that they use to guide their own behavior.

Introduce students to the text “Nonviolence and Racial Justice” by modeling the literacy strategy students will use when they work in small groups:

1. **Read the text aloud:** Start by reading the second and third paragraphs of the text out loud, beginning with the sentence, “... the basic question” and ending with the sentence “Five points can be made. . . .”
2. **Identify important words and phrases:** Ask students to select one word and/or phrase that stands out to them from this excerpt.
3. **Paraphrase text:** Ask students to summarize the main ideas of these paragraphs in one or two sentences written in their own voice. A student summary of these paragraphs might sound like, “It is better to respond to injustice with nonviolence because a violent response makes everything worse.”
4. **Visually represent main ideas:** Finally, ask the class to brainstorm what this summary would look like if presented as an image (picture or symbol). Connecting a text to an image is one way to improve comprehension and retention of ideas.

Students will interpret the rest of the essay in five small groups, with each group responsible for presenting one of the five points Dr. King outlines to the rest of the class. Groups might be responsible for reading the section out loud, presenting a summary of the point in their own words, and sharing a visual image that expresses the main idea of that point. The Appendix at the end of this lesson includes a graphic organizer that can help groups organize and record their ideas.

As groups present their work to the class, students can take notes in their notebooks or on a graphic organizer located at the end of this lesson. Also, if groups record their summaries and images on poster-size paper, this work can stay up for the remainder of the investigation to help students remember important ideas about the philosophy of nonviolence.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

After students have read Dr. King’s essay, ask them to brainstorm a list of nonviolent protest strategies. They can do this individually or in groups. This exercise allows you to gauge students’ understanding of nonviolence and provides students with an opportunity to discuss the concrete application of this theory. Discussing students’ lists provides an opening to analyze the relationship between nonviolent protest and voting. It is quite common for students to include sit-ins and marches on their list, but not the ballot. To help students think about voting as a nonviolent way to protest injustice, use the words of civil rights historian Taylor Branch: “Every ballot is a piece of nonviolence, signifying hard-won consent to raise politics above firepower and bloody conquest.” Write this sentence on the board and then read it aloud. Then ask for a student volunteer to rephrase this statement in his or her own words. Finally, ask students to respond, in writing or in a brief conversation with
a partner, to the following questions: In what ways is voting an effective way to challenge injustice? What are the drawbacks to using the ballot to respond to injustice?

Students can share their answers to this question through the barometer discussion strategy. First, post signs that state, “Voting is an effective way to challenge injustice” and “Voting is not an effective way to challenge injustice” at two ends of the room. Then ask students to stand at the place that represents their opinion. Have students explain their positions, drawing on material from their lives and history. Give students the opportunity to change their location based on what other students have said.

For homework or as a final class activity, students can complete Step Three in their Personal Voting Profile Packet.

**HOMEWORK**

- Students can complete Step Three in their Personal Voting Profile Packet.
- Students can share what they learned about the philosophy of nonviolence with someone over the age of 18—a friend, a family member, or a neighbor. They might even read Martin Luther King Jr.’s essay to this person. These conversations might include a discussion about the degree to which nonviolence is practiced today in the world or in the community. Students can turn in a short journal entry describing the conversation. Or, you might ask students to come to class with three interesting ideas or questions that came out of the conversation.
- Students can complete the following statements for homework. (Note: This makes for a powerful warm-up activity for the next lesson.)
  - Nonviolence means . . .
  - Nonviolent protest could lead to justice and social change because . . .
  - Nonviolent protest is not passive because . . .
  - What I like about the philosophy of nonviolence is . . .
  - I am unsure about the philosophy of nonviolence because . . .
  - I disagree with the aspect of the philosophy of nonviolence that says . . .
  - It would be easy for me to practice nonviolence if . . .
  - It would be challenging for me to practice nonviolence if . . .
  - The Beloved Community is . . .

**ASSESSMENT IDEAS**

- Students can turn in an “exit card” (a piece of paper turned in as students leave class) on which they have recorded their working definition of nonviolence.
- Students’ “Nonviolence and Racial Justice” graphic organizers can be evaluated for accuracy and completeness.
EXTENSIONS
“Save the Last Word” Activity: Why did protesters choose to follow a strategy of nonviolence?

You can extend students’ understanding of nonviolence by having them consider why civil rights activists would choose a nonviolent strategy. After decades of being the victims of violence and injustice, why would civil rights activists embrace a nonviolent strategy against their oppressors? Other civil rights activists, especially those working in the North in the late 1960s and early 1970s, made different choices. Before the Selma campaign began, Malcolm X explained, “In the areas of the country where the Government has proven itself unable or unwilling to defend Negroes when they are brutally and unjustly attacked, then Negroes themselves should take whatever steps necessary to defend themselves.”

Students might be quick to dismiss the philosophy of nonviolence as unreasonable or ineffective. Yet, the purpose of this particular lesson is not to critique the merits of a nonviolent strategy. A critical debate about when and where it may be appropriate to use violence to oppose injustice requires more historical background than is addressed in this lesson. Thus, if some students begin to debate the merits of nonviolence, we suggest that you steer the conversation in the direction of why activists have chosen and continue to choose to follow a strategy of nonviolence. The following activity describes one way to have such a conversation. (If you want to extend this lesson to include a discussion of other responses to injustice advocated by civil rights activists, refer to the recommended readings at the end of this section.)

In the quotations listed on the Selected Quotations: “Why Would Someone Follow the Philosophy of Nonviolence?” handout in the appendix at the end of this lesson, civil rights leaders and organizations articulate some of their reasons for supporting the philosophy of nonviolence. You can use these quotations as the basis of a homework assignment or to guide a structured discussion, such as a “Save the Last Word” activity. A variation of this activity would ask students, in groups of four or five, to read the quotations while thinking about the question: Why would a civil rights activist choose to follow a philosophy of nonviolence? They could record their ideas in their notebooks. After 5 to 10 minutes devoted to reading and writing, ask students to complete the following sentence: Many civil rights activist embraced the philosophy of nonviolence because. . . . Each student in the group has a turn completing the sentence. Then, the student who first responded has the honor of having “the last word.” This student gets to share a final thought or question with the rest of the class, representing main areas of agreement or disagreement expressed by the other students in the group.

As a final activity, you might ask them to revise the working definition for “nonviolence” they wrote at the beginning of class. Students can record their updated definition of nonviolence on an “exit card,” which can be turned in at the end of class. These exit cards will give you information about what students learned during this lesson.

- **Gandhi and nonviolence:** As you review the main ideas of these paragraphs, you might want to provide students with more information about Gandhi, whose ideas
and actions inspired this philosophy. For example, Gandhi’s theory of nonviolent resistance, known as Satyagraha, was based on the following three principles:

- **Satya**—truth or openness and fairness
- **Ahimsa**—refusal to inflict injury upon others
- **Tapasya**—willingness for self-sacrifice

Students can record these ideas in their notebooks as you record them on the board. Then, students can label the essay with these terms as they see these principles resurface in Dr. King’s text. For more information on the relationship between Gandhi’s ideas and the civil rights movement, refer to this link, published by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project, Stanford University: [www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/encyclopedia/gandhi.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/encyclopedia/gandhi.htm)

- **Nonviolent protest in the civil rights movement:** The Facing History and Ourselves website has published a series of lessons on the philosophy of nonviolence. The first lesson helps students understand the goals and rationale that provided a foundation for the philosophy of nonviolence as advocated by activists in the civil rights movement, including James Lawson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Diane Nash, Bayard Rustin, John Lewis, Ella Baker, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the SNCC, and many others. The second and third lessons explore how this philosophy played out in practice throughout the civil rights movement. In the second lesson, students become familiar with the overall strategy of nonviolence by identifying how these steps played out during one important struggle of the civil rights movement: the student protests in Nashville in 1960. The third lesson focuses on the direct-action tactics of nonviolence used at different points during the civil rights movement.

- **Other responses to injustice—Malcolm X, Black Power, and the Black Panther Party:** If you wish to extend this lesson to look at other responses to injustice, the following readings in the Eyes on the Prize Study Guide might be helpful:
  - “The Future of the Movement,” pp. 103–105
  - “Malcolm and Martin,” pp. 107–108
  - “The Black Panther’s Ten-Point Platform,” pp. 140–143
  - “Why We Are Not Racists,” pp. 143–145

To transition from this lesson on nonviolence to a discussion about other responses to injustice, you might begin by having students compare the “SNCC Statement of Purpose” on page 46 of the study guide to the “The Black Panther’s Ten-Point Platform” on pages 140–143.
Glossary for Use with “Nonviolence and Racial Justice”
by Martin Luther King, Jr.

- **Prevalent:** widespread, commonly used
- **Futility:** uselessness
- **Passive:** not active
- **Aggressive:** violent
- **Boycott:** refusing to do something, such as purchase items from a particular store, in order to prove a point, influence behavior, or change laws
- **Redemption:** releasing someone of blame or guilt
- **Reconciliation:** making peace, restoring friendship and goodwill
- **Beloved Community:** the goal of the civil rights movement, according to many activists. The “beloved community” is the idea that people of all races can live together in peace and understanding.
- **Indulge:** take part in
- **Retaliate:** respond, get back at
- **Projecting:** spreading
- **Agape:** the Greek word for “love,” which in Christianity has been taken to mean the love of God and the love of humankind
## Nonviolence and Racial Justice (graphic organizer)

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<th>Excerpt</th>
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<td>Paragraph 9 [Point 5]</td>
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Selected Quotations: Why Would Someone Follow the Philosophy of Nonviolence?

*If violence was effective at bringing about social change, we would be living in a utopia.*
—Diane Nash, civil rights leader and founding member of the SNCC

*We, the men, women, and children of the civil rights movement, truly believed that if we adhered to the discipline and philosophy of nonviolence, we could help transform America. We wanted to realize what I like to call, the Beloved Community, an all-inclusive, truly interracial democracy based on simple justice, which respects the dignity and worth of every human being. . . . Consider those two words: Beloved and Community. “Beloved” means not hateful, not violent, not uncaring, not unkind. And “Community” means not separated, not polarized, not locked in struggle.*
—John Lewis, member of the House of Representatives and former leader of the SNCC

*Why use nonviolence? The most practical reason is that we’re trying to create a more just society. You cannot do it if you exaggerate animosities. Martin King used to say, “If you use the law ‘An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,’ then you end up with everybody blind and toothless,” which is right. So from a practical point of view, you don’t want to blow up Nashville downtown, you simply want to open it up so that everybody has a chance to participate in it as people, fully, without any kind of reservations caused by creed, color, class, sex, anything else.*
—Reverend James Lawson, SCLC

*Through nonviolence, courage displaces fear; love transforms hate. Acceptance dissipates prejudice; hope ends despair. . . . By appealing to conscience and standing on the moral nature of human existence, nonviolence nurtures the atmosphere in which reconciliation and justice become actual possibilities.*
—SNCC Statement of Purpose
The March from Selma to Montgomery

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
In this lesson, students will draw on their understanding of voter discrimination and the philosophy of nonviolence as they watch an excerpt from the *Eyes on the Prize* video series, which documents the events that took place in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965. Students’ viewing is focused around the particular decisions made by individuals and groups in order to help them understand how the march from Selma to Montgomery was not inevitable; rather, the fact that the march happened represents the consequence of specific choices made by particular people who were influenced by their historical and social contexts. By focusing on the many choices people made that shaped this event, students come to understand that history is not inevitable, thus deepening their awareness of their own power to influence their community and world. Finally, studying the march from Selma to Montgomery reveals that many people were willing to risk their lives for the opportunity to vote free from harm or harassment. Comparing their own thoughts about voting to those of the protesters can help students develop their identities as future voters and citizens.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
- What happened in Selma, Alabama, in 1965? Who was protesting? Why? Did the protesters’ actions represent the philosophy of nonviolence? Why or why not?
- What important choices did individuals and groups make that resulted in the march from Selma to Montgomery? What important decisions have you made that have impacted others? What influenced your decision to act (or not act)?
- How did participants in the march from Selma to Montgomery feel about voting? How do you know? What do you think influenced their opinions about voting? What has influenced your opinions about voting?

Define These Key Terms:
- Selma, Alabama (Dallas County)
- Montgomery, Alabama
- Civil rights organizations that practiced nonviolence: SCLC, SNCC, CORE
• Nonviolence
• Jim Clark
• Martin Luther King, Jr.
• George Wallace
• John Lewis
• James Bevel
• Jimmie Lee Jackson
• Reverend James Reeb
• President Lyndon B. Johnson

Practice These Skills:
• Critically viewing a documentary for specific information
• Comparing personal beliefs and experiences to those of people from a different historical context

DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes

MATERIALS

Texts (print, video, audio):
• *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 3, “Bridge to Freedom”
• (Optional) *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide, Episode 6:
  • “Memories of the March,” pp. 87–90
  • “The Second March,” pp. 90–91
  • “We Shall Overcome,” pp. 93–95
  • “The Wrong Side of History,” pp. 96–97

HANDOUTS
• From the Personal Voting Profile Packet
  • Step Four: The Importance of Voting
• From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  • “Bridge to Freedom” Viewing Suggestions and Discussion Questions
  • “Bridge to Freedom” Note-Taking Guide
  • (Optional) Voting Rights Interview Chart

BACKGROUND

The march from Selma to Montgomery was significant for many reasons. Andrew Young, one of the leaders of the SCLC, and organizers of the march from Selma to Montgomery described the importance of the march as follows:

Our objectives were simple: we wanted to clearly demonstrate to the nation that black citizens were being effectively deprived of their right to register and vote in Selma, Alabama, and that Selma was not an
anomaly; it was representative of many other Southern towns in the black belt. Finally, we wanted everyone to know that we would continue to protest these conditions until the federal government passes legislation guaranteeing and protecting our right to the ballot.21

As Young explains, the march brought attention to voter discrimination not only in Alabama, but also in the South as a region. Second, the march exemplified the spirit of nonviolence that permeated the civil rights movement in the South. Also, the media’s role in covering the march brought national attention to the issue of voting rights in the same way that media coverage of events in Nashville and Birmingham called attention to de jure segregation, and the publication of photographs of Emmett Till’s mutilated body brought attention to the use of violence as a way to subjugate black citizens. Finally, the accounts in the media of black protesters risking their lives for the right to vote stirred the conscience of many white citizens. The struggle for voting rights became not only an African American cause, but also a cause for the triumph of freedom and democracy. Reflecting on the march from Selma to Montgomery, Coretta Scott King remarked:

It was a great moment to go back to Montgomery. Because you see for us, it was returning to Montgomery after ten years. And I kept thinking about ten years earlier, how we were visibly just blacks and when you looked at that march, you had Catholic priests and nuns, you had other clergy and you had a lot of white people.22

Thus, the Selma march does not only represent the origins of the civil rights movement as the work of Southern black Christians, but it also represents the growth and maturation of the movement, exemplified by the multiple civil rights organizations (e.g., SNCC, SCLC, CORE) and constituencies (e.g., blacks, whites, teachers, politicians, preachers, nuns, students) that participated in this historic event.

The Eyes on the Prize episode “Bridge to Freedom” includes footage of the important decisions that shaped this event. When studying this important event in civil rights history, it is vital to pay attention not only to the actions of the protesters, but also to those against whom they were protesting. The Dallas County police spraying tear gas on protesters on the Edmund Pettus Bridge influenced events as much as the long line of marchers walking proudly toward Montgomery two weeks later.

In the following excerpt from his autobiography, King recounted one “pivotal moment” in the campaign for justice in Selma—the difficult decision he faced regarding whether to ask protesters not to march until the ban had been lifted.
or advise the protesters to violate the state’s injunction on the march, knowing that this decision might lead to injuries, arrests, and even the possible deaths of activists:

The next question was whether the campaign in Selma had to be a violent one; here the responsibility of weighing all of the factors and estimating the consequences rests heavily on the civil rights leaders. It is easy to decide on either extreme. To go forward recklessly can have terrible consequences in terms of human life and also can cause friends and supporters to lose confidence if they feel a lack of responsibility exists. On the other hand, it is ineffective to guarantee that no violence will occur by the device of not marching or undertaking token marches avoiding direct confrontation. We decided to seek the middle course. We would march until we faced the troopers. We would not disengage until they made clear that they were going to use force. We would disengage then, having made our point, revealing the continued presence of violence, and showing clearly who are the oppressed and who are the oppressors, hoping, finally, that the national administration in Washington would feel and respond to the shocked reactions with action.23

Dr. King’s deliberations are indicative of the choices that challenged many of the participants in the civil rights movement. In Lesson Four, students will hear Linda Lowery describe the dilemma she faced when she was only a teenager: should she join the marches even though she knew that her life would be at risk? Bystanders and perpetrators of injustice also faced dilemmas about how to respond to the events around them. They had to wrestle with questions such as: Should we stop people from protesting? If so, how should we stop them? When is it appropriate, if at all, to use violent force on nonviolent protesters? If I see people who are injured, should I stop to help them or should I mind my own business?

**For more background and resources on the march from Selma to Montgomery:**

The National Park Service—Selma to Montgomery includes a map of the marchers’ route and other documents)

The Spider Martin Civil Rights Collection presents Selma to Montgomery and Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement websites post images of the march.

The PBS/American Experience *Eyes on the Prize* website includes audio, video, photographs, and press clippings.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
The purpose of the warm-up activity is to review students’ understanding of the philosophy of nonviolence. Here are some ways you might achieve this goal:

- If students had a conversation with someone about nonviolence (see homework activity for Lesson Two), they might share an interesting or surprising detail from that conversation.
- Students can complete a concept web for the word nonviolence. This could be done as a silent class writing activity (often called a “graffiti wall” or a “chalk talk”). You start by writing the word nonviolence in the center of the board. Students are invited to come up to the board to add their ideas and questions about nonviolence. They do not speak during this activity. Rather, they comment on each other’s ideas by drawing lines connecting their thought to someone else’s. Students could also complete concept webs for nonviolence in their notebooks. Then, small groups of three or four students can share their webs. Finally, students can have a few additional minutes to add to their concept webs.
- Students can share their responses to the “complete the sentence” activity. They could have been asked to complete these sentences for homework in preparation for this lesson. Or, they could complete the following statements (or a selection of them) at the beginning of class. Read the beginning of the sentence, and then have each student share his or her endings of the sentence one after another, without pausing for comments until all students have had a turn.
  - Nonviolence means . . .
  - Nonviolence looks like . . .
  - Nonviolent protest could lead to justice and social change because . . .
  - Nonviolent protest is not passive because . . .
  - What I like about the philosophy of nonviolence is . . .
  - I am unsure about the philosophy of nonviolence because . . .
  - I disagree with the aspect of the philosophy of nonviolence that says . . .
  - It would be easy for me to practice nonviolence if . . .
  - It would be challenging for me to practice nonviolence if . . .
  - The Beloved Community is . . .

MAIN ACTIVITY
Watching the segment “Bridge to Freedom” from the Eyes on the Prize video series gives students the opportunity to see how the philosophy of nonviolence informed the actions of participants involved in the struggle for voting rights in Selma, Alabama. This documentary includes interviews with civil rights leaders who articulate how the belief in nonviolence guided their decisions. It also shows the dilemmas activists faced as they debated how to best challenge injustice through nonviolent direct-action tactics. Thus, watching the video can deepen students’ understanding of nonviolence as not just an idealistic belief, but also as a set of practices that required faith, courage, and patience in the face of uncertainty, anger, and injustice. The segment “Bridge to Freedom” is almost one hour long. You might decide to show the segment in its entirety. In most cases, teachers choose to show an excerpt from this segment.
The 30-minute excerpt suggested here was selected because it highlights moments during which participants involved in events in Selma—from Governor Wallace to student activists—had to make important decisions. You might refer to these moments as *pivotal moments or turning points*, because if groups and individuals had made other choices, the events in Selma would have unfolded differently. If students participated in Unit 1, they should be familiar with the phrase *pivotal moment*. If not, you can introduce them to the phrase now. One way to do so is to ask students to demonstrate what it looks like to pivot, and then ask students to provide examples of *pivotal moments* from history or their own lives. (For more ways to introduce students to the concept of a *pivotal* event or moment, see the warm-up section of Lesson One in Unit 1.)

The Appendix at the end of this lesson includes a list of seven *pivotal moments* in the film. When you preview the film, you might select different moments to use with your students. At these points, we suggest pausing the film and asking students to record notes on their graphic organizers about what was happening and how the participants could have responded. Brainstorming the different options available to participants in the event (activists, white officials, leaders, etc.) emphasizes the importance of decision making and dispels any myth that events “just happen.” Because many students retain information more reliably if they can associate ideas with images, we suggest having students record images representing important moments in the film. Some students might actually draw pictures while other students might describe a memorable moment (e.g., “elderly black woman protester beaten by police on Edmund Pettus Bridge”). Alternatively, you could have students take notes directly in their journals or notebooks, pausing at particular moments and asking students to identify what they think are pivotal moments in that segment.

After students have finished “Bridge to Freedom,” ask them to review their notes and identify one particular moment, image, or turning point that stands out to them. It could be a decision that they admired or it might be a quotation with which they disagree. They can turn and talk to their neighbor about this moment and why it stands out to them. Then, partners can brainstorm a list of the most important ideas about the march from Selma to Montgomery—the ideas that they would most want to emphasize if they were teaching someone else about this event. For homework, students might be assigned to share these points with someone in their community.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

In his autobiography, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. explained the goals of the movement in Selma:

> The goal of the demonstrations in Selma, as elsewhere, is to dramatize the existence of injustice and to bring about the presence of justice methods of nonviolence. Long years of experience indicate to us that Negroes can achieve this goal when four things occur:
> 1. Nonviolent demonstrators go into the streets to exercise their constitutional rights.
> 2. Racists resist by unleashing violence against them.
> 3. Americans of conscience in the name of decency demand federal intervention and legislation.
4. The administration, under mass pressure, initiates measures of immediate intervention and remedial legislation.24

As a way to reinforce and evaluate students’ knowledge of events in Selma, you can distribute this passage to students and ask them to find evidence of these four factors from the video clip “Bridge to Freedom.” This could be done as a final class activity in small groups or as a homework assignment. In the final lesson of this unit, students will have more evidence of the fourth factor, as they learn about the passage of the Voting Rights Act several months after the marches crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

In class or for homework, students can complete Step Four in the Personal Voting Profile Packet. The questions in Step Four require students to compare their own thoughts about voting to those of protesters in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Answering these questions prepares students to engage in a class discussion about the different factors that influence our ideas about the importance of voting.

HOMEWORK

- Students can complete Step Four in the Personal Voting Profile Packet.
- To review material from this lesson and prepare for the next lesson, students can interview someone in their family or community (preferably someone over the age of 18) about their knowledge about the struggle for voting rights and their experiences related to voting. Reassure students that it is perfectly acceptable if their interviewee does not know anything about the events that took place in Selma in 1965. This provides an opportunity for the student to be the “expert.” The Voting Rights Interview Chart includes examples of interview questions students might ask.
- The follow-through or the extension activities could be used as a homework assignment.
- Now that students have seen one example of how the philosophy of nonviolence plays out in practice, you might ask them to revise the working definitions of nonviolence that they wrote during Lesson Two of this unit.

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

- Collecting students’ film notes is one way to evaluate students’ understanding of the material and hold them accountable for paying attention to the film.
- Students’ working definitions of nonviolence can be assessed for accuracy and thoroughness.
- Students can demonstrate their understanding of the main ideas of the march from Selma to Montgomery through their responses to the questions in Step Four of the Personal Voting Rights Packet.

EXTENSIONS

There are many ways you might help students connect the ideas in this film to their own lives. Since students just spent time focusing on the impact of individuals’ actions on a historical event, you might end this lesson by having students identify a “pivotal” decision they have made in their lives—a choice they think has been particularly significant because
of its impact on others. Students can write about these moments and then share them with a partner or the class. This exercise helps students understand that they too have the power to influence their communities and world, just like the individuals in Selma, Alabama, many of whom were young adults like themselves.
“Bridge to Freedom” Viewing Suggestions and Discussion Questions

*Murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson*—Begin at 15:40 (Chapter 4). pause at 19:48 (after Reverend James Bevel speaks).
- How did the activists describe their feelings after the murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson?
- Reverend James Bevel says, “In the nonviolent movement . . . you have to give people an honorable means and context in which to express and eliminate that grief and speak decisively and succinctly back to the issue. Otherwise, your movement will break down in violence and chaos.” What does Reverend Bevel mean by this statement?
- What might be a way that the movement could respond to the injustice of Jimmie Lee Jackson’s murder that would reflect Reverend Bevel’s sentiments?

*Protesters told to turn around*—Pause at 23:20 (after Major John Cloud issues his warning to the marches and the police begin to move toward them).
- What was the response of Governor Wallace and other white officials to the march from Selma to Montgomery?
- What happened once the marchers approached the bridge? How might they have been feeling and thinking? As they listened to Major John Cloud’s warning to disperse and as they watched the police move toward them, what options did the marchers have? What could they do?

*Bloody Sunday*—Pause at 29:04 (after Andrew Young speaks).
- What was the role of the media?
- When Americans heard about Bloody Sunday or watched images of this event on television, how might have they reacted?
- Who might have responded to Andrew Young’s “call to people of good will”?

*Turn-around Tuesday*—Pause at 32:55.
- Who was marching on Tuesday, March 9? How was this different from who was marching on Sunday, March 7? What accounts for this difference?
- What was the dilemma facing the marchers on Tuesday, March 9? What options did they have when they were on the bridge facing the police?
- What is the significance of the fact that the marchers decided to kneel and pray? What message does this action send to those who were witnessing this event (both in person and via the media)?

*The murder of James Reeb*—Pause at 36:47 (after Stokely Carmichael speaks).
- What happened to Minister James Reeb? Why? What was the response to this murder?
- Commenting on the outpouring of national attention paid to the murder of James Reeb, Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Toure) remarked that for the movement to be recognized “a white person must be killed.” To what extent do you agree with...
Carmichael that the murder of James Reeb was able to awaken the consciousness of Americans in a way that the murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson did not? How would you explain why the murder of a white minister from Boston would move more Americans to act than the murder of a young black man from Alabama?

- What do you think activists, both black and white, will do next?

**Judge Johnson lifts the injunction against the march**—Skip to 41:30, when the narrator begins speaking, pause at 45:42 (after Dr. King announces that Judge Johnson has lifted the injunction for the march).

- What do you think was the impact of President Johnson’s words on civil rights activists? How might these words have influenced many white Southern officials?
- Now that Judge Frank Johnson has lifted the injunction (ban) that Wallace had placed on the march from Selma to Montgomery, how do you think Governor Wallace might respond? What are his options? Will he provide protection for the marchers?

**The march from Selma to Montgomery**—Pause at 48:55.

- What images stay with you from the march from Selma to Montgomery?
- How was this march different from the one that began two weeks earlier?
- What needed to happen to make this peaceful march of more than 25,000 people possible?
- What was the role of women in the march?
“Bridge to Freedom” Note-Taking Guide

February 18, 1965—Murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:

March 7—Protesters told to turn around
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:

March 7—Bloody Sunday
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:
March 9—Turn-around Tuesday
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:

March 9—The murder of James Reed
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:

March 17—Injunction against the March to Montgomery lifted by Judge Frank Johnson
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:

March 21–March 24—March from Selma to Montgomery
Important ideas: What happened? What important choices were made? By whom?

Important image:
Voting Rights Interview Chart

Description of interviewee (age, race, gender, nationality, etc.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think all Americans have the right to vote? Why or why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think all Americans have the opportunity to vote? Why or why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you know about the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe your experience voting in the United States or in another country.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do you think some people vote and others do not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think could be done to encourage more people to vote?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think citizens have an obligation or a responsibility to vote in every election?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Voting Then and Now

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE
One of the main purposes of this lesson is to help students connect the struggle for voting rights in the 1960s to data about who votes (and does not vote) today. By having students connect what they know about the history of voting rights to current voting data, this lesson encourages students to think more deeply about the distinctions between voting as a right, an opportunity, and a responsibility. Students may not end this unit feeling a personal commitment to vote; but, they should be closer to developing an informed rationale that can guide their voting behavior.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• What is the legacy of the march from Selma to Montgomery?
• Is voting important today? To whom? How can you explain why many people today choose not to vote? Should they have to vote? Why or why not?
• What is the difference between voting as a right, an opportunity, or an obligation?
• What does voting mean to you? To what extent do you feel a responsibility to vote?

Define These Key Terms:
• Voting Rights Act (1965)
• Lyndon B. Johnson

Practice These Skills:
• Using evidence from history and social science to support an opinion
• Identifying the similarities and differences between different time periods and contexts; recognizing universal trends that span historical eras and particularities to a specific historical context

DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes
MATERIALS
Texts (print, video, audio):
- Lynda Lowery film clip
- Voting Rights Act
- (Optional) *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide, Episode 6:
  - Document 5, “Voting and Democracy,” pp. 97–100

HANDOUTS
- From the Personal Voting Profile Packet:
  - Step Five: Thoughts about Voting
  - Step Six: Writing Your Personal Voting Profile
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Voting Today

BACKGROUND
One of the most significant consequences of the march from Selma to Montgomery was the passage of the Voting Rights Act. On March 15, 1965, one week after Bloody Sunday and a week before the marchers finally were able to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge on their way to Montgomery, President Johnson introduced the Voting Rights Act to Congress with the following words:

> At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man’s unending search for freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama. There is no Negro problem. There is no southern problem. There is no northern problem. There is only an American problem. Many of the issues of civil rights are very complex and most difficult. But about this there can and should be no argument. Every American citizen must have the right to vote. . . . Yet the harsh fact is that in many places in this country men and women are kept from voting simply because they are Negroes. . . . No law that we now have on the books . . . can insure the right to vote when local officials are determined to deny it. . . . There is no Constitutional issue here. The command of the Constitution is plain. There is no moral issue. It is wrong—deadly wrong—to deny any of your fellow Americans the right to vote in this country. There is no issue of States’ rights or National rights. There is only the struggle for human rights.25

In this speech, President Johnson explicitly connects the expansion of voting rights to the protest efforts in Selma. Years later, one of the leaders of the SCLC, Andrew Young (who later went on to become mayor of Atlanta and United States Ambassador to the United Nations), explained how events in
Selma contributed to the passage of the Voting Rights Act and the subsequent enfranchisement of thousands (and later millions) of black Americans:

The monumental Voting Rights Act, which Congress passed and President Lyndon Johnson signed on August 6, 1965, just a few months after the Selma-to-Montgomery march, remains a lasting achievement of the civil rights movement. The Voting Rights Act helped to change the face of Southern politics. . . . In Alabama, in the space of just one year, black voter registration practically doubled—from 116,000 in August 1965 to 228,000 in August 1966.26

While 50 years ago black citizens may have had the right to vote, as guaranteed by the Fifteenth Amendment, they still lacked the opportunity to vote. The purpose of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 was to expand the opportunity to vote to all citizens, regardless of race. Indeed, in 2000, Mississippi and Alabama had more black elected officials than any other states, and in 2004, nearly 60 percent of blacks in the South voted (compared to a 64 percent turnout for white voters in the South).27 Scholars attribute much of the rise of black voter participation and political power in the South to the Voting Rights Act.28 Yet, as of 2005, the United States ranked 139th out of 172 countries for voter turnout.29 And, in 2004, more people, particularly young people, cast ballots for an American Idol than for an American president.30 More than 50 years after the march from Selma to Montgomery and the passage of the Voting Rights Act, some might argue that the United States has reached a point where citizens should feel a greater sense of responsibility to vote. In his 1996 autobiography, Andrew Young argued, “Voting is not just a right; it’s an obligation, like paying taxes.”31 Other countries such as Belgium and Australia have compulsory voting laws. After protesters in the 1960s fought so hard for the opportunity to vote, how can we make sense of the fact that the franchise is taken for granted by many citizens today? What can be done, or should be done, to encourage more citizens to vote?

The following resources provide more background information on voting today:

Electionline.org—The Pew Center on the States publishes current voting statistics and information about state election policies.

CIRCLE—CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) is a nonpartisan research center that publishes reports, including many easy-to-read graphs, documenting youth voting trends.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
If students interviewed family, friends, or community members about their voting experiences for homework (refer to Lesson Three for assignment), you might begin class by having students share the results of their interviews. Later in this lesson, students can connect what they learned during these interviews with current data on voting in the United States.

Before introducing students to one of the noted legacies of the march from Selma to Montgomery—the Voting Rights Act—provide students with an opportunity to review what they learned about this historic act of nonviolent protest. One way to do this is to have students watch a two-minute interview with Lynda Lowery, an African American woman who took part in both the march on Bloody Sunday and the march from Selma to Montgomery (on her fifteenth birthday!). Even after she was beaten by police officers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, suffering a head wound that required 18 stitches, she still participated in the five-day march from Selma to Montgomery. In the interview, she admits to being scared—so scared that she thought she was going to die. Still, looking back on this experience she remarks that she would “do it again in a heartbeat.”

As students listen to Ms. Lowery’s testimonial of her experience in Selma, ask them to record at least five important details. They might mention that she turned 15 years old on the day the Selma to Montgomery march began, or that she was beaten during the Bloody Sunday march, or that she was “scared she was going to die.” At this point, you might want to make it clear that she suffered a head wound that required 18 stitches. After students share what they have learned about Ms. Lowery, ask them to respond to her testimonial by writing silently in their notebooks or journals. You can use the following prompt to guide their reflections:

Lynda Lowery was beaten in the head during the “Bloody Sunday” march and admits to being scared that she was going to die. Yet, a few weeks later, on March 21, 1965, she still decided to participate in the five-day march from Selma to Montgomery. Why do you think she looks back on this time and says, “I’d do it again in a heartbeat”? Why would people, like Ms. Lowery, risk their lives for the right to vote? Why would 25,000 people march 54 miles for the purpose of expanding the opportunity to vote to all citizens, regardless of race?

(Note: To help students grasp the length of the march, you can use a tool such as Google Maps or Mapquest to determine how far students would be walking if they traveled 54 miles from your school. For example, the distance from Boston, Massachusetts to Manchester, New Hampshire, is 52 miles.)

After students have had at least five minutes to respond to Ms. Lowery’s interview, you can ask for volunteers to share some of their ideas about why many black citizens, as well as whites, risked their lives fighting for the right to vote. As a preview of material students are about to study, ask them to consider how citizens feel about voting today. What percentage of the voting age population do they think turns out to vote today? Who do they think
It turns out to vote? You can record some of these guesses on the board for students to refer to later in the lesson.

**MAIN ACTIVITY**

**Part One: What is the Voting Rights Act?**

Most historians and activists agree that one of the most important legacies of the civil rights movement was the passage of the Voting Rights Act in August 1965. John Lewis, a cofounder of SNCC (and member of Congress for more than 20 years), argues that one of the direct outcomes of the march was the passage of the Voting Rights Act, stating “The Voting Rights Act was literally written on the highway between Selma and Montgomery.”

You can provide students with information about the Voting Rights Act through a brief lecture or by having them read excerpts of the Act. The Department of Justice website provides a brief, accessible description of the Voting Rights Act as well. The Voting Rights Act is several pages long and includes many specific details, but its main points might be summarized as follows.

The Voting Rights Act:

- Outlawed practices that were applied to deny or limit the right of any citizens to vote on account of race or color, such as literacy tests.
- Authorized federal officials to register voters in the South.
- Allowed for federal oversight of voter registration and election policies in areas that the federal government identified as having a history of voter discrimination.

Another way to share this information with students is by going to the Voices of Civil Rights timeline. Projecting the timeline on a screen allows students to see the passage of the Voting Rights Act within the context of other major events in civil rights history that they have studied.

**Part Two: What is the legacy of the struggle for voting rights? Who votes in the United States today?**

Looking at current voting statistics reveals the complicated legacy of the struggle for voting rights. While on the one hand, minority voting participation, especially black voter turnout, has increased (and so has the number of black elected officials), on the other hand, nearly half of the voting age population does not vote in presidential elections, and far fewer vote in local and midterm elections. The handout “Voting Today” located in the Appendix at the end of this lesson includes statistics that illustrate both the triumphs of the civil rights movement and the challenges that still exist today. Students can read the statistics on the handout individually or in small groups. After reading the handout, ask students to answer the following three questions:

- What feels familiar to you about this information? (I already knew that . . .)
- What surprised you? (I had no idea that . . .)
- What would you want to know more about? (I am curious to know . . .)

You can briefly review students’ understanding of the information on the “Voting Today” handout by asking them to share some of their answers to these questions. One way to involve more students is to ask students to raise their hand if they agree with something
another student has said. For example, if a student shares that he or she was surprised that most other countries have a higher voter turnout than the United States, students should raise their hands if they were also surprised by this point.

FOLLOW-THROUGH
Drawing on the data on the handout “Voting Today,” historical evidence studied in this investigation, and personal experience, students can begin writing their personal voting profiles. Before they begin writing their profiles, help students evaluate and synthesize their ideas about voting by asking them if they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with statements such as:

- All American citizens have the right to vote.
- All American citizens have the opportunity to vote.
- All American citizens have the obligation to vote.
- The march from Selma to Montgomery was a success.
- Voting is a privilege that should be earned; it should not be a right that is automatically given to all citizens.
- Voting is one way that citizens can influence issues they care about.

Step Five in the Personal Voting Profile Packet includes statements such as these that students can respond to. Some of these statements are also included on the Voting Profile Anticipation Guide which is Step One in the Personal Voting Profile Packet. If students completed this during Lesson One, they can review their responses now. It is possible that some of their opinions may have changed based on what they have learned in this unit. Then, you can select several of these for students to discuss. One way to structure this discussion is by using the forced choice (or “four corners”) teaching strategy.

Directions for Forced Choice Activity:
Label the four corners of the room with signs reading: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree. Once students have had a few minutes to consider their personal response to the statements, read one of the statements aloud and ask students to move to the corner of the room that best represents their opinion. Once students are in their places, ask for volunteers to justify their position. When doing so, they should refer to evidence from history, especially from material they learned in this unit, as well as other relevant information from their own experiences. Encourage students to switch corners if someone presents an idea that causes a change of mind. After a representative from each corner has defended his or her position, you can allow students to question each other’s evidence and ideas. This is an appropriate time to remind students about norms for listening carefully to each other and responding respectfully.

HOMEWORK
- Students can write their personal voting profiles. Step Six in the Personal Voting Profile Packet helps students organize their ideas as they begin writing their profiles. Or, you might want to assign one of the suggested final assessment tasks described in the introduction to this unit.
- If students have not already interviewed someone over 18 years of age about their
voting experience, they could do so after this lesson. The “Voting Rights Interview Chart” (in the appendix of Lesson Three) could be used to help structure these interviews.

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

• You could quiz students on their understanding of the Voting Rights Act and current voting statistics today.
• For final assessment ideas, see the suggestions in the introduction of this unit.

EXTENSIONS

• Andrew Young argues, “We still await full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. There were and are so many subtle tools to discourage blacks, other minorities, and poor people from voting. . . . A nation committed to full voter participation would experiment with weekend voting, mail-in voting, proportional representation, and full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.” To extend this lesson, you might present Andrew Young’s argument to students and then ask them to conduct research about current issues related to voting rights and voter registration. Prompts and resources that might be used to guide such an inquiry include:
  • Research voter registration policies in your city and state. What time are polls open? Are people given time off from work to vote? Are citizens allowed to register to vote on Election Day? Does the state allow “early voting”—in person or absentee voting prior to the election? Does the state mail directions to polling places and/or sample ballots to registered voters? In what languages other than English are ballots written? Resources: Massvote.org. “America Votes.” NOW with Bill Moyers.
  • Some states, such as Georgia, have tried to pass laws requiring voters to show state-issued photo identification in order to vote. Find out more about voter identification laws. Why do some people support this idea? What concerns do others share about this policy? Ultimately, do you think voter identification requirements extend or limit the opportunity to vote? Resources: Projectvote.org. National Conference for State Legislatures. Electionline.org. “Must you have an ID to vote?” (Greg Fulton, Time magazine, May 2, 2005)
  • What should be the qualifications to vote? What are the qualifications today? Some towns are experimenting with lowering the voting age to 16 or 17 for local elections. Find out more about why the national voting age is 18. What are reasons to keep the voting age at 18? What are reasons to lower or raise the voting age? Resources: National Youth Rights Association. Pam Belluck, “Sixteen Candles, but Few Blazing a Trail to the Ballot Box.” New York Times, August 26, 2007, WK 3.
  • What attitudes do American youth have about voting and civic participation? How do these attitudes compare to youth in other countries? The CIRCLE (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement—civicyouth.org) website contains many resources that can help students answer these questions.
  • Several recent articles highlight the legacy of the march from Selma to Montgomery and the passage of the Voting Rights Act. In the op-ed “Johnson’s Dream.
Obama’s Speech,” historian Robert Caro, author of a multivolume biography on President Lyndon B. Johnson, connects the passage of the Voting Rights Act to Barack Obama’s securing the Democratic Party’s nomination for president of the United States:

“Abraham Lincoln struck off the chains of black Americans,” I have written, “but it was Lyndon Johnson who led them into voting booths, closed democracy’s sacred curtain behind them, placed their hands upon the lever that gave them a hold on their own destiny, made them, at last and forever, a true part of American political life.”

LOOK what has been wrought! Forty-three years ago, a mere blink in history’s eye, many black Americans were unable to vote. Tonight, a black American ascends a stage as nominee for President. “Just give Negroes the vote and many of these problems will get better,” Lyndon Johnson said. “Just give them the vote,” and they can do the rest for themselves.

The USA Today article “For a Mississippi Town, Voting Rights Act Made a Change” also describes a concrete example of how the Voting Rights Act is still relevant today. These articles, as excerpts or in their entirety, could be assigned for homework or could be used as a text for a Socratic seminar or big paper activity.
## Voting Today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data about Voting</th>
<th>Comments—Is this information familiar to you? Does it surprise you? What more do you want to know?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Voter turnout rates for presidential elections in Massachusetts  
  • In 2004, 46% of youth (18–24) voted, compared to 72% of voters over 25 years old.  
  • In 1972, 60% of youth (18–24) voted.  
  • In 2000, 40% of youth voted.  
  
2. In the 2004 election, nationwide, almost 50% of African American and white youth (18–24) voted, compared to 33% Latino youth, 35.5% Asian youth, and 36.6% Native American youth.  

3. Americans cast 63.4 million votes in last week’s [American Idol] election—nearly as many as were cast in the 2002 congressional elections, and more votes than George W. Bush got in 2004. Judging from the level of participation it inspires, “American Idol” isn’t just a wildly successful television program—it’s also a successful democracy. —Washington Post, May 5, 2006  

4. According to U.S. Census figures:  
  • In 2004, 65% voting-age citizens voted in the presidential election.  
  • In 2004, 72% of voting-age citizens were registered to vote.  
  • In the 2004 presidential election, among those who registered 89% reported that they voted.  
  • The voting rate was 72% for citizens 55 and older and 47% among 18 to 24-year-old citizens.  
  • Native citizens (those born in the United States) have a higher voter turnout rate (65%) compared to naturalized citizens [those who have immigrated to the United States] whose voter turnout rate in the 2004 election was 54.  


5. The United States ranks 139th out of 172 countries for voter turnout. Mid-term elections—36.4% of voting-age population voted.

6. According to a 2004 survey of youth voters (ages 18–24): Do you view voting as important?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. By the late 1970s, successful statewide candidates in Mississippi were no longer opposing civil rights but were openly seeking black votes. White officeholders were providing services for black constituents and ascertaining, if not always agreeing with, their views; black officeholders were doing the same for white constituents. Politics in Mississippi has moved an important distance toward being integrated. . . . So, in today’s Mississippi, politicians have incentives to treat blacks and whites fairly and civilly. The good news is that today in Mississippi black votes—all votes—count. —New York Times, July 22, 1990

8. The United States is the only major democratic nation in which the less-well-off are substantially underrepresented in the electorate.

Comments—Is this information familiar to you? Does it surprise you? What more do you want to know?
Sources for “Voting Today” handout (all websites accessed September 12, 2007):

1. www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/FS_04_state_vote.pdf
4. www.pbs.org/now/politics/votestats.html
   www.idea.int/vt/survey/voter_turnout_pop2.cfm.
ENDNOTES

1. Black Americans were not the only group to experience voter discrimination. According to Piven and Cloward (1988), “Northern businessmen reformers, claiming a ‘quality’ electorate as their goal, introduced similar practices [of voter discrimination that were prevalent in the South] (including poll taxes in a number of New England states)” (p. viii). It bears mentioning that black American males gained the right to vote 50 years before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment enfranchised American women. Francis Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, Why Americans Don’t Vote (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).


4. Much has been documented about the low voter registration rates of black Americans living in the South prior to 1965. Yet, it is difficult to find comparable data on black voting patterns in the North at the same time. Presumably, blacks living in the North were registering to vote at higher rates because Northern states did not have the same degree of explicit policies and practices aimed at disenfranchising black citizens. Historical evidence supports this assumption. For example, in 1948 Truman advocated for stronger civil rights legislation, an issue that was important to many black Americans. Understood within the context of the “Great Migration” of blacks that began at the start of World War I and continued until after World War II, Truman’s desire to court black voters goes hand-in-hand with more blacks living in the North, where presumably they were taking advantage of their increased access to the ballot box. Accordingly, as Southern blacks moved to the North, the black community started to gain more political clout in national elections. This point demonstrates the relationship between suffrage and political power—one of the important ideas students will consider throughout this unit. If students want more specific information about black voting patterns in the North prior to 1965, you might ask them to consider why these data are so difficult to find, especially in relation to comparable information about the South. See: Doug McAdam, Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 81; Miller Center for Public Affairs, University of Virginia, “The Campaign and Election of 1948,” www.millercenter.virginia.edu/Ampres/essays/truman/biography/3?PHPSESSID=1a7b138b3bb079d7eda02cc66d23b5cc (accessed September 7, 2007).


14. Ibid.


16. Ibid.


24. Ibid.


33. Ibid.
Education and Civil Rights: School Desegregation in Boston

RATIONALE
The civil rights movement is often taught as a Southern phenomenon. Yet, the struggle for racial justice occurred all over the country, especially in Northern cities. In this unit, students learn about one episode in the civil rights movement in the North: the conflict over how to resolve racial segregation in Boston’s public schools in the 1960s and 1970s. These lessons focus on the context and decisions that resulted in court-ordered busing, rather than on the violence and tension that followed busing. Investigating the years prior to court-ordered busing helps students better understand current debates about segregation in public schools. Nearly 50 years later, the same conditions that led to racially imbalanced schools in the 1960s and 1970s, namely residential segregation, exist in most American cities and suburbs. Furthermore, many of the strategies suggested by educators, parents, and activists in the 1960s are being proposed today. The lessons in this unit also provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their educational experiences and develop their opinion about school segregation. As the United States becomes an increasingly racially diverse nation, it is particularly relevant for students to think about how people from different backgrounds build relationships based on mutual respect and shared understandings, and the role of schools in this endeavor.

UNIT OUTLINE: This unit is divided into the following four lessons:

• LESSON ONE: Education as a Civil Right—Students discuss the relationship between education and civil rights as they begin to explore the conditions that caused many in Boston’s black community to claim that their civil rights were being violated by the Boston School Committee.

• LESSON TWO: In the 1960s, Why Were Boston’s Public Schools Racially Segregated?—Students learn about the de facto causes of school segregation as they explore how Boston’s neighborhoods became segregated by race.

• LESSON THREE: Responses to Racially Imbalanced Schools—Students study responses to segregated and unequal schools in order to more deeply understand why Judge Garrity found the Boston School Committee guilty of de jure school segregation.
• **LESSON FOUR: Desegregation and the Courts**—Students watch a segment from the *Eyes on the Prize* video series to learn about the power and limits of court orders to remedy school segregation.

**MATERIALS:** In addition to optional resources suggested with each lesson, the unit mainly draws from the following materials:

- *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 7, Episode 13, “Keys to the Kingdom.”
- Reporter’s Notebook. This collection of handouts accompanies the suggested final assignment. We encourage teachers to adapt these materials to their own classroom use.

**UNIT LEARNING GOALS:** The purpose of these lessons is to help students . . .

- Review the relationship between education and civil rights.
- Describe conditions in Boston’s public schools in the 1960s and explain how housing policies and practices contributed to these conditions.
- Distinguish between de jure and de facto segregation.
- Identify responses in the Boston community to segregated and unequal schools.
- Analyze the use of court mandates as a remedy for school segregation.
- Develop their own opinions about school desegregation.

**SUGGESTED FINAL ASSESSMENTS FOR THIS UNIT**

**Newspaper Article:** The lessons in this unit are designed to help students write a newspaper article chronicling attempts to create more racially balanced schools in Boston in the 1960s. During each lesson, students record what they have learned in “fieldnotes.” At the end of the unit, students will develop a “better ending” to this story—an alternate scenario that represents their beliefs about school desegregation. The purpose of this assignment is twofold: (1) Writing the article provides an engaging way for students to demonstrate their understanding of this history, and (2) developing their own ending gives students the opportunity to connect this history to their own beliefs and experiences related to school desegregation.

Although the lesson plans refer to this assignment and the fieldnotes in the Reporter’s Notebook you can also teach this material without this assignment. The questions and charts in the Reporter’s Notebook can easily be adapted for your classroom use.

**Essay questions:**

- Studies show that many school systems are becoming more segregated by race. Given what you have learned about Boston’s experience with school desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s, what advice would you give to a community that is trying to figure out how to desegregate its school system?
- Commenting on the court-ordered desegregation in Boston Public Schools, Jean McGuire, director of the METCO program¹ and civil rights activist, said, “I felt that what took place absolutely had to happen. It may not have had to happen that way. . . .” To what extent do you agree or disagree with Ms. McGuire’s comment that busing had to happen, but that it could have happened in a different way?

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¹For a transcript of this episode, follow this link: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/about/pt_106.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/about/pt_106.html)
Describe “what took place” (what happened) in Boston in 1974. Why did this happen?
Do you agree with Jean McGuire that this “absolutely had to happen”? Why or why not?
Describe the way that members of the Boston community responded.
What might Bostonians have done differently to result in a more peaceful and productive response to school desegregation?

Projects:
- Students could work in groups or individually to create an exhibit that tells the story of Boston’s struggle to achieve desegregated schools. Members of the school and local community might be invited to tour the exhibit.
- Boston’s Civil Rights Oral History Project: Following the example of students in the Digital Legacies Project, students could select a local community member who lived in Boston before and after Judge Garrity’s ruling in *Morgan v. Hennigan*. The Library of Congress website provides helpful information about how to organize an oral history project ([www.memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/oralhist/ohguide.html](http://www.memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/oralhist/ohguide.html)). (Refer to Lessons Two and Three for detailed information about events in Boston preceding and immediately after Judge Garrity’s ruling in *Morgan v. Hennigan*.)
In the 1960s and 1970s, Boston, Massachusetts, where the neighborhoods were segregated along racial and ethnic lines, was a particular hotbed of conflicts and a focus of national media attention. Black educators argued that the school system operated in a manner that amounted to de facto segregation, and that this racial segregation resulted in unequal educational opportunities for black students. They reported that the majority of students in “black schools” were squeezed into overcrowded classrooms where they received far fewer resources than schools with predominantly white student populations. The Boston School Committee, which was responsible for policy in the Boston Public Schools (BPS), refused to discuss de facto segregation and made little attempt to remedy the situation. Their grievances ignored, black parents filed a complaint with the Federal District Court. They asked the presiding Judge W. Arthur Garrity, Jr., to compel the school committee to desegregate the schools. Judge Garrity ruled in their favor, stating that the school committee was guilty of consciously maintaining two separate school systems. Without an alternative from the school committee, in 1974 Judge Garrity ordered the implementation of a plan previously drafted by the State Board of Education. The plan called for busing of students, black and white, from Boston’s poorest neighborhoods to public schools outside their neighborhoods. While some families supported court-ordered busing, many Boston residents, especially those living in the South Boston neighborhood, resisted the judge’s ruling. Reactions to court-ordered busing ranged from compliance, to peaceful demonstrations, to violence to withdrawal from the public school system.

While this historical investigation focuses on a specific moment in Boston’s civil rights history—the attempt to desegregate Boston’s racially imbalanced schools in the 1960s and 1970s—it is important to situate this event in the broader context of Massachusetts’ deep civil rights history. Massachusetts is known for being at the forefront of civil rights issues. In the early colonial days, blacks in Massachusetts, many of whom were slaves, had greater rights than in many other states, particularly those in the South. Influenced by Puritan beliefs about educating all to read spiritual texts, slaves were often taught how to read and write. They also had legal rights, such as the right to own property and the right to sue whites in court.

The ability of Massachusetts’ slaves to utilize the justice system opened the way for them to sue whites for their right to freedom. Slaves found allies in many white citizens of Massachusetts who spoke against the injustice of slavery. Even before the American Revolution, Massachusetts colonists such as Abigail Adams recognized the hypocrisy of slavery, writing, “It always appeared a most iniquitous scheme to me to fight ourselves for what we are daily robbing and
plundering from those who have as good a right to freedom as we have.”² As a result of efforts of both black and white residents, in 1783, Massachusetts became one of the first states to declare slavery unconstitutional.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Commonwealth continued to make strides in the area of civil rights. In 1843, Massachusetts lifted its ban on interracial marriage, more than 100 years before the Supreme Court ruled in the case Loving v. Virginia (1967) that “race-based” marriage laws are unconstitutional. Moreover, in 1855, reacting to lobbying by blacks and whites, the Massachusetts legislature passed a bill outlawing racially segregated schools. In the nineteenth century, blacks in Massachusetts could serve on juries, and not only could they run for office, but they also consistently won seats in the state legislature.³

Within this landscape of civil rights progress (relative to the national context), Boston has its own particular history. For example, in 1833, Boston became a stronghold of the abolitionist movement when 12 white men, including William Lloyd Garrison, founded the New England Anti-slavery Society in the capital city. In the early twentieth century, Boston boasted the country’s largest and most integrated chapter of the NAACP.⁴ Moreover, many national leaders in the black community, including W.E.B. Du Bois, Coretta Scott King, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Bob Moses, lived in Boston for some time. Local ministers, like James Breeden, traveled to the South to participate in the civil rights movement. The murder of James Reeb, another minister from Boston, by segregationists in Selma, Alabama, galvanized national attention to the issue of racial injustice.

Thus, with this long and deep connection to the struggle for civil rights, it is not surprising that the civil rights movement that was strong in the South in the 1950s would spread to Boston. Boston had institutions, such as the Freedom House and the NAACP, that could organize and mobilize the black community and white allies. Civil rights activists in Boston also had a history of pro–civil rights legislation they could lean on when making their case. At the same time, Boston’s history also includes the story of proud, immigrant communities, especially the Irish-Catholic community, which had fought for nearly a century to achieve equal rights and power from Boston’s “Yankee” establishment.

Boston’s busing story is so interesting and complicated because it tells the story of not one, but two communities who historically have had to struggle for civil rights in the United States. Common Ground is the title journalist J. Anthony Lukas gave to his Pulitzer Prize–winning book about school desegregation in Boston. This phrase, “common ground,” holds many meanings. First, it can
represent geographic space. Theoretically, the black and white communities of this story shared common ground as citizens of the same city. In actuality, residential segregation determined that these communities would not share common ground.

Another meaning of “common ground” could refer to the democratic purpose of public schools. As the Civic Mission of Schools report explains, “Schools are the only institutions with the capacity and mandate to reach virtually every young person in this country." As such, historically, schools have been represented as civic spaces—sites where future citizens develop a shared sense of what it means to be democratic citizens. In Boston in the 1960s, opponents of school segregation questioned whether it was possible for schools to fulfill their civic mission if white and black students were not developing an interracial understanding.

Finally, the act of reaching consensus or compromise is often referred to as seeking “common ground.” At a time when the city of Boston was fighting over how to share the resources and physical “common ground” of public education, the city’s leaders were not paying enough attention to the process of taking groups and individuals who came from different perspectives and figuring out what values and interests they had in common. Because little ideological “common ground” was ever reached between opponents and proponents of school desegregation, white residents fled the public school system and Boston’s schools never became integrated.

Today, schools in the metropolitan area of Boston are more racially segregated than they were before Judge Garrity’s ruling. According to a 2004 study, 70 percent of students in the Boston metropolitan area attend schools that are more than 90 percent white, most of them in the suburbs. More than 75 percent of black and Latino students attend schools in the city of Boston, or one of the other urban centers in the Boston area. In other words, most of the students of color (many of whom live in urban areas) in metropolitan Boston learn in classrooms with predominantly students of color, while most of the white public school students (most of whom live in the suburbs) learn in classrooms with predominantly white students. Indeed, in 2007, the percentage of white students in Boston’s public schools had dropped to 14 percent, down from 64 percent in 1970. The segregation that persists in Boston’s public schools is hardly unique. Research shows that public schools nationwide are becoming more racially segregated. According to a study by the National Center for Education Statistics (2001), the average white student attends a school that is 80 percent white, while the average black student attends a school where approximately two-thirds of the students are black or Latino.
Should school segregation matter? To whom? In the unanimous 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Justice Warren declared, “... the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine ... has no place in the field of public education.” Today, how should we interpret this statement? In June 2007, the Supreme Court answered this question with a 5–4 ruling that severely limited the ability of school districts to use race as a factor in making school assignments. Writing for the majority, Chief Justice John Roberts declared, “The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.” As a result of this ruling, many predict that schools will become even more segregated by race (and class) because, just as most court-ordered desegregation plans have been phased out, voluntary desegregation plans are now being called into question.

Responding to the Supreme Court’s recent decision, some people, like journalist Juan Williams, argue that we are in a new era where “Brown’s time has passed.” Williams asserts that today, black and white parents want “better neighborhood schools and a better education for their children, no matter the racial make-up of the school.” On the other hand, nine university-based civil rights centers, including those at UCLA, Harvard University, and Ohio State University, emphasize that school integration is more important now than ever. In a joint statement, they argue:

In our increasingly multiracial, multiethnic and multilingual nation, it is more crucial than ever that we continue to develop and promote working models of educational institutions that approximate the larger society students will someday join. ... More than ever, social science research offers powerful evidence of the strong benefits of diversity for students, communities, and a democratic society. Similarly, research has also long demonstrated the detrimental effects of segregation and its ever-present attendant, concentrated poverty, in our public schools on educational opportunity, race relations, and the psychological development of young people.

Supporting this statement, the Civil Rights Project website cites numerous studies that document the costs of segregation and the benefits of integration. Ultimately, the questions about segregation, integration, civil rights, and education that students will confront in this historical investigation are as relevant today as they were in Boston in the 1960s and 1970s.
Final Assignment: 1975 Newspaper article covering school desegregation in Boston

Deadline: __________________________

You are a newspaper reporter assigned to cover a story about school desegregation in Boston. To give your readers information they need to understand this story, your editor expects that you will:

1. Describe conditions in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s.
2. Explain why in the 1960s most of Boston’s public schools are racially segregated, with white students attending schools with predominantly white students and black students attending schools with predominantly black students.
3. Identify steps taken by black parents and white allies to create more racially balanced schools and the responses to these actions by the Boston School Committee.
4. End your article with an alternate scenario that reflects what you wish would have happened in Boston starting in 1970. Your original ending should represent your beliefs about racial segregation in schools.

Journalists take notes as they research a story. These are often called fieldnotes. During and after each lesson in this unit, you will record information in your fieldnotes. That way, when it is time to write your article, all of the information you need will be readily available to you.

Good luck!
FIELDNOTE 1 (to be completed during and after Lesson One): PART ONE

Conditions in Boston’s Public Schools in the 1960s

The room in which I taught my Fourth Grade was not a room at all, but the corner of an auditorium. The first time I approached that corner, I noticed only a huge torn stage curtain, a couple of broken windows, a badly listing blackboard and about thirty-five bewildered-looking children, most of whom were Negro. . . .

—Jonathan Kozol, Boston school teacher

When we’d go to white schools, we’d see these lovely classrooms, with a small number of children in each class. The teachers were permanent. We’d see wonderful materials. When we’d go to our [predominantly black] schools, we would see overcrowded classrooms, children sitting out in the corridors, and so forth. And so then we decided that where there was a large number of white students, that’s where the care went. That’s where the books went. That’s where the money went.

—Ruth Batson, education chairperson of the Boston branch of the NAACP

When compared to schools with predominantly white students, schools with predominantly black students received 10% less for textbooks, 19% less for library and other reference books, and 27% less for students’ health care. Overall, the school system spent 29% more on students in predominantly white schools than on students in schools with a predominantly black student body.¹¹⁰

—1964 Harvard Divinity School report on school expenditures

Based on the film clip from Eyes on the Prize and the preceding statements, list facts about the conditions in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s that you might include in your article:
FIELDNOTE 1: PART TWO

Reflections on School Segregation

Based on your own values and experiences, share your thoughts about racial integration in public schools. You can write freely on this subject, or you can respond to one of the following questions. To help you reflect on this subject, you might want to have a discussion with friends, relatives, or community members about their ideas related to racial segregation and integration in public schools.

• Mrs. Hicks was not the only person to argue that “racially imbalanced” schools were not educationally harmful. Black parents also argued that the way to improve the quality of education for their children was not to desegregate schools, but to equalize resources. How would you respond to their argument? Can separate ever be equal?

• Why do you think civil rights activists fought so hard to achieve integrated schools? Who benefits when students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds attend school together?

• In the 1800s, Thomas Jefferson wrote that a strong democracy needs educated citizens. Supporters of racially integrated schools have argued that it is important for citizens to know how to get along with people of different backgrounds. They say that racially segregated schools are harmful to our democracy. What do you think of this argument?
**FIELDNOTE 2 (to be completed during and after Lesson Two): PART ONE**

**Why were Boston’s schools segregated in the 1960s?**

Word bank: neighborhood schools, Federal Highway Act, Federal Housing Act, block-busting, redlining, public housing discrimination, suburbs, Boston neighborhoods (East Boston, South Boston, Charlestown, Back Bay, Mattapan, Dorchester, Roxbury, South End)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Ideas</th>
<th>Details and Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools were racially segregated because blacks and whites lived in different neighborhoods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where did most white Bostonians live?</td>
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<td>Why?</td>
<td>2.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where did most black Bostonians live?</td>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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FIELDNOTE 2: PART TWO

What impact does segregation have on individuals and society?
Draw from your understanding of history and your personal experience in your answers. Consider both the impact of living in segregated communities as well as the impact of learning in segregated schools. (This answer will help you determine the ending for your newsstory.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs of Segregation</th>
<th>Benefits of Segregation</th>
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<tr>
<td>To individuals in that community</td>
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<td>To larger society</td>
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FIELDNOTE 3: PART ONE

What was done to address racial imbalance in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What was done to address racial imbalance in Boston Public Schools and improve the quality of education for black children in the 1960s?</th>
<th>How did the Boston School Committee respond?</th>
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FIELDNOTE 3: PART TWO

Why were Boston’s public schools racially segregated in the 1960s?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>De Facto (as a matter of fact) Causes</th>
<th>De Jure (as a matter of law) Causes</th>
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Now what?
In the 1960s, who do you think was responsible for fixing the problem of unequal, segregated schools? Parents? Students? Teachers? Government officials? Other community members? All of the above? Explain.

Today, what role could students, teachers, parents, government officials, and other community members play in the effort to improve schools? Who do you think is most responsible for improving the quality of education in your community?
FIELDNOTE 4: PART ONE

What happened after Judge Garrity issued his ruling mandating busing?

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<tr>
<th>List Responses to the Busing Order</th>
<th>Evidence (quotations, phrases, images) What do you see and hear?</th>
</tr>
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FIELDNOTE 4: PART TWO

The Courts and School Desegregation

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. In 1974, court-ordered busing was the only strategy that could have desegregated Boston’s public schools.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:

2. Court-ordered desegregation plans do more harm than good. Questions about schooling should be left to communities to solve.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:

3. Students and society benefit when more children are able to attend racially integrated schools.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:

4. To create a desegregated school system, a judge should be able to tell parents where their children must attend school.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:

5. Courts have the power to reduce the effects of racial discrimination.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:

6. Courts are powerless to combat prejudice.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:

7. Schools should not be used as battlegrounds to address inequality and discrimination.
   
   strongly agree                    agree                    disagree                    strongly disagree

   Explain:
FIELDNOTE 5 (to be completed during or after Lesson Four): PART ONE

Boston School Desegregation Crisis: Imagining Alternate Scenarios

Besides Judge Garrity’s plan for the busing of students (primarily students in Roxbury, Dorchester, South Boston, and Charlestown), what else could have happened in the 1970s as a reaction to racially imbalanced schools in Boston? Brainstorm at least five alternate scenarios. At least three of these scenarios should represent an alternate scenario that you believe is better than what actually happened.

Take notes on alternative scenarios suggested by other groups that you find interesting or appealing.
FIELDNOTE 5: PART TWO

Boston School Desegregation Crisis: Imagining Alternate Scenarios

Select one of these scenarios, or come up with a new one, to use in your story. It should represent the scenario that you find most appealing because it reflects your beliefs about segregation and education.

Describe the scenario in as much detail as possible.

Why did you pick this scenario? How does it reflect your beliefs about segregation and schools?

Why do you think this scenario did not come to pass? What would have had to happen to make this scenario a possibility?
Writing your article.

All of the information you need to write your article should be in your fieldnotes. Here is one way you might organize your article. (Note that a section may be a paragraph or several paragraphs, depending on how much information you provide.)

First section: Describe the conditions in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s. [Fieldnote 1]

Second section: Explain the relationship between residential segregation and racially imbalanced schools in Boston in the 1960s. [Fieldnote 2]

Third section: Identify how individuals and groups in the Boston community responded to this situation. What efforts were made to create greater racial balance in Boston’s public schools? How did the Boston School Committee react to these efforts? [Fieldnote 3]

Fourth section: What happened next? Describe your alternate scenario. Explain why this is a desired outcome for Boston’s students and the larger community. [Fieldnote 4]
SAMPLE RUBRIC FOR BOSTON SCHOOL DESEGREGATION NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

(Note: We suggest that you adapt the format and content of this rubric for your own classroom use. We also recommend sharing an assessment rubric with students before they begin writing so that they understand what is being expected of their work.)

HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of conditions in BPS schools in the 1960s</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shows an awareness of separate and unequal conditions in schools for black students, but article needs more evidence to support this claim.</td>
<td>Includes at least three pieces of evidence to support claim that BPS schools were racially imbalanced and that black students were often in schools with inferior conditions.</td>
<td>Includes more than three pieces of specific evidence, including at least one quotation, to support claim that BPS schools were racially imbalanced and that black students were often in schools with inferior conditions. Article also presents different arguments about racially imbalanced schools (why they may and may not be a problem).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation for why BPS schools were racially imbalanced in the 1960s</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies the de facto cause of school segregation in Boston—residential segregation—but does not explain the causes of residential segregation.</td>
<td>Identifies the de facto cause of school segregation in Boston—residential segregation—and explains at least three causes of residential segregation.</td>
<td>Identifies the de facto cause of school segregation in Boston—residential segregation—and explains at least three causes of residential segregation. Also describes the impact residential segregation may have on individuals living in that community and greater Boston.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of what was done to help desegregate schools prior to bringing the case to federal court</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shows an awareness of de jure causes of racially imbalanced schools [i.e., policies established by the Boston School Committee kept black and white students in separate schools], but does not provide enough evidence to support this claim.</td>
<td>Identifies at least three ways activists and parents in Boston tried to create more racially balanced schools, and provides evidence to show how the policies of the Boston School Committee intentionally segregated black and white students.</td>
<td>Identifies at least three ways activists and parents in Boston tried to create more racially balanced schools, and provides evidence to show how the policies of the Boston School Committee intentionally segregated black and white students. Provides an explanation for who bears responsibility for improving conditions in Boston’s schools.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development of original solution to the school segregation situation</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describes a scenario that is different from what actually happened, but needs to provide more details to explain this situation.</td>
<td>Description of alternate scenario is thorough. Article provides information about why this scenario is desirable for Boston’s students and/or the greater community.</td>
<td>Description of alternate scenario is especially detailed. Article provides information about why this scenario is desirable for Boston’s students and/or the greater community. Article also explains what happened to help this scenario become a reality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beginner</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Some paragraphs may contain more than one main idea. Supporting evidence does not always support the main idea of the paragraph.</td>
<td>Paragraphs contain one clear, main idea and all of the information in that paragraph supports that idea.</td>
<td>Paragraphs contain one clear, main idea and all of the information in that paragraph supports that idea. Transitions are often used to connect one idea to the next.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language (vocabulary and sentence structure)</strong></td>
<td>Some of the language is not appropriate for a newspaper article.</td>
<td>All of the language is appropriate for a newspaper article.</td>
<td>Language used is appropriate and especially clear; the article incorporates many key terms to explain ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>The article contains many grammatical errors, making ideas difficult to read.</td>
<td>The article may contain a few grammatical errors, but these do not interfere with understanding ideas.</td>
<td>The paper is extremely easy to read with virtually no grammatical errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Article and/or reporter fieldnotes are incomplete.</td>
<td>Article and reporter fieldnotes are complete and turned in on time.</td>
<td>Article and reporter fieldnotes are complete and turned in on time. Feedback is used to improve article.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Education as a Civil Right

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
Students begin this lesson by thinking about the concept of education as a civil right—as something that the government is obligated to provide “to all on equal terms.” This understanding lays the groundwork for students’ investigation of responses by black parents and civil rights activists to unequal conditions for black students in Boston’s public schools in the 1960s. After identifying details about these unequal conditions (from text and video), students will have the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs about racial integration in public schools.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• Why is education considered to be a civil right?
• What were the conditions in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s?
• Why do some people argue that quality, equal education demands that schools be racially integrated? What are arguments against using race as a factor in making school assignments? Which ideas do you most agree with? Why?

Define These Key Terms:
• Civil right
• Brown v. Board of Education
• Segregated/racially balanced
• Discrimination

Practice These Skills:
• Paraphrasing difficult text
• Identifying relevant details in film and text
• Participating in a group discussion
• Listening attentively to a discussion
• Making informed judgments based on personal experiences, values, and historical understanding

DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes
MATERIALS
Texts (print, video, audio):
  - *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 7, Episode 13, “Keys to the Kingdom”* (1:20–5:20)
  - (Optional) From the *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide, Episode 13, “Keys to the Kingdom”

OTHER:
  - (Optional) For additional historical information, students can be assigned to read the Background section from this lesson.

HANDOUTS:
  - From the Reporter’s Notebook:
    - Fieldnote 1
  - From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
    - (Optional) Civil Right or Privilege?
    - (Optional) Civil Right? Human Right? Privilege?

BACKGROUND
The idea that education is a civil right is a relatively modern one. For most of history, schooling has been considered a privilege, mostly for the wealthy and for males. Religious institutions, not the state, have traditionally been responsible for administering schools. Concerned with the need for an educated citizenry, Thomas Jefferson was one of the first Americans to argue for a public education system in the United States. It would take nearly a century for all American schoolchildren to have access to an elementary education. In 1852, Massachusetts was the first state to affirm the right of all children to a free, publicly financed education, and by 1918, all states required children to attend at least primary school. Once the state got into the business of providing education, schooling shifted from being a privilege to being a civil right. The unanimous decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* articulates this idea of education as a right. Writing for the Supreme Court in 1954, Justice Earl Warren asserted:

> In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms. [Italics added for emphasis.]

The story of school desegregation in Boston exemplifies how Americans, especially those in the black community, hold the promise of education as a civil

*For a transcript of this episode, follow this link: [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/about/pt_207.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesontheprize/about/pt_207.html).*
right in high regard. Improving the education for black children was one of the most important goals for civil rights activists in the 1950s and 1960s. “African Americans have, with an almost religious fervor, regarded education as the key to liberation,” writes historian Kevin Gaines. The episode from *Eyes on the Prize* documenting the school desegregation crisis in Boston is aptly titled “Keys to the Kingdom,” representing how civil rights activists viewed education as the gateway to political, economic, and social power.

Denied the privilege of schooling during slavery, black Americans have a keen appreciation for the power that comes from a quality education. Ignorance and illiteracy was a tool used by slave owners to control slaves, because plantation owners worried that if slaves could read and write, then they might rebel. Consequently, to protect the institution of slavery, Southern states adopted laws criminalizing the education of slaves. A South Carolina law passed in 1740 read:

> And whereas the having of slaves taught to write, or suffering them to be employed in writing, may be attended with great inconveniences: Be it enacted, that all and every person or persons whatsoever, who shall hereafter teach, or shall use or employ any slave as a scribe in any manner of writing whatsoever, hereafter taught to write, every such persons or persons shall, for each offense, forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds current money.

Thus, both law and custom discouraged white Southerners from teaching blacks. Records show that teachers found educating blacks were run out of town, imprisoned, or fined. Moreover, on most plantations, slaves were not even permitted to own books, ink, or paper, making it difficult for them to become literate on their own. Despite these obstacles, some blacks in the South did receive an education. For example, Frederick Douglass was taught to read and write by his white mistress. And free blacks and educated slaves often ran underground schools in the South.

Free blacks in the North had greater educational opportunities than blacks in the South, both before and after the Civil War. Still, this was not saying much. Although blacks were not punished for learning in the North, discriminatory practices were the norm in public schools in the North. In Boston, black children were initially required to attend racially segregated public schools. In 1848, Benjamin Roberts challenged this policy. In the case *Roberts v. School Committee of Boston*, Congressman Charles Sumner, a white abolitionist and lawyer, argued that, “The separation of the schools, so far from being for the benefit of both races, is an injury to both. It tends to create a feeling of degradation in the blacks, and of prejudice and uncharitableness in the whites.”
He lost the case. But, in 1855, in response to intense lobbying by black and white Bostonians, the state legislature passed a law banning racial segregation in schools—the first of its kind in the nation.23 In this lesson, students will begin to learn about the conditions of public schools in Boston in the 1960s that led many parents and activists to express the same concerns about school segregation that had been introduced 130 years earlier in the Roberts case.

While civil rights activists were challenging Jim Crow in the South in the 1950s, less attention was paid to the more subtle forms of Jim Crow that existed in the North. Yet, as hundreds of thousands of blacks migrated to cities in the North after World War II, racial segregation became more prominent in Northern cities, including Boston.24 Ruth Batson, chairperson of the Education Committee of the NAACP branch in Boston, described how Boston’s black students experienced the segregated and unequal treatment typically associated with Southern Jim Crow:

> When we’d go to white schools, we’d see these lovely classrooms, with a small number of children in each class. The teachers were permanent. We’d see wonderful materials. When we’d go to our [predominantly black] schools, we would see overcrowded classrooms, children sitting out in the corridors, and so forth. And so then we decided that where there was a large number of white students, that’s where the care went. That’s where the books went. That’s where the money went.25

The segregated and unequal conditions in Boston’s schools inspired Batson’s strong remarks to the Boston School Committee in 1963:

> There is segregation in fact in our Boston Public School System. . . . Inadequate educational standards, unequal facilities, and discriminatory educational practices exist wherever there is school segregation.26

Thus, when black parents in Boston noted the unequal conditions between schools that were serving primarily white students and schools that were serving primarily black students, they had both local (i.e., the Roberts case) and recent (i.e., the Brown decision) legal precedents motivating them to take action to desegregate schools. Because Americans consider education to be a civil right, when they feel as if they are not getting an “equal” education as protected by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, they can take legal action. The connection between education and civil rights explains why citizens can advocate their elected officials and use the judicial system if they feel they are experiencing discrimination in the public school system, a feeling held by many parents of black students in Boston in the 1960s.
Refer to the following resources for additional background on the history of schools and civil rights:

The Massachusetts Historical Society’s website, “Long Road to Justice,” contains more information about the Roberts case.


www.americanhistory.si.edu/Brown/history/2-battleground/pursuit-equality-1.html
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
To prepare students to think about the relationship between education and civil rights, ask them to respond to the following question in their notebooks or journals: Imagine that the federal, state, and city governments no longer paid for public schools. How might your life be different? How might your community be different? How might the United States be different as a country without free public education?

After volunteers share their responses, you might ask students to brainstorm reasons why the government pays for every student to attend public schools. Students might also discuss whether they think the government should pay for public education. You might point out that other services, such as cable television, Internet connections, and even health care, are not fully funded by the United States government. Should education be any different? If so, why? Students can discuss this question in small groups so that more students have the opportunity to participate.

MAIN ACTIVITY
Part One: What Does It Mean for Education to Be a Civil Right?
Students may have already mentioned that, in the United States, education is considered to be a legal or civil right and that is why all young people in this country can attend public schools, free of charge. This would be an appropriate opportunity to inform students about the history of education in the United States—that education was not always considered to be a civil right. In fact, the United States Constitution does not even mention education. Yet, since the early twentieth century, every state has passed laws mandating public education. Accordingly, for about 100 years, children in the United States have had the right to an education, and local governments have had the responsibility to provide some degree of schooling to all of their young residents.

Defining Civil Rights
If you are not sure whether your students understand the concept of civil rights, you could review this concept with them now. You might begin by asking students to respond to the questions: What are civil rights? Where do they come from? This step reinforces basic concepts explored throughout a civil rights unit. Students can draw on previous knowledge to brainstorm a list of civil rights. Or, you could share the list of rights and privileges found on the handout “Civil Right or Privilege?” in the Appendix to this lesson. Ask students to label the items as a civil right or privilege. You could also ask students to consider why certain rights are called “civil” rights. You might explain that the word civil is derived from the Latin word civilis or civis, which means “citizen.” Thus, civil rights are often defined as those rights that are provided to citizens through the laws and policies of their government.

Before introducing the history of racial segregation in Boston’s schools, review students’ understanding of Brown v. Board of Education, especially how this Supreme Court case explicitly established in the law that education is a civil right. To emphasize the idea that education is a civil right in the United States, have students read aloud the following point from the preamble of Justice Warren’s opinion in the Brown case:
(c) Where a State has undertaken to provide an opportunity for an education in its public schools, such an opportunity is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

Then ask small groups of students to rephrase this statement in their own words. Specific points you might ask groups to discuss include the following: How does an opportunity become a right? What does it mean to make this right available “to all on equal terms”?

Next, ask students to read aloud the next two points from Justice Warren’s preamble:

(d) Segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race deprives children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities. . . .

(e) The “separate but equal” doctrine. . . . has no place in the field of public education.

Again, ask students to paraphrase these statements. Students should come away from this exercise understanding that by the 1960s, the Brown decision made it clear that racially segregated schools were unconstitutional because segregated schools provided an unequal education experience for students.

**Defining Discrimination**

You could use this material as an opportunity to review the meaning of *discrimination*. People naturally divide each other into groups, noticing different characteristics such as gender, height, skin color, age, etc. Unlawful discrimination exists when people are denied a civil right simply because of these differences. To gauge students’ understanding of discrimination, you can ask them to identify examples of discrimination they have studied in history or know about from personal experiences.

**Part Two: Education as a Civil Right in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s**

If students have studied the history of the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957, they are probably familiar with the idea that schools in the South were slow, and often resistant, to integrate. What they may not know is that schools in the North were also racially segregated. The purpose of the next activity is to help students understand that even though the Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation of students in schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment, many black students throughout the country, including Boston, were being taught in segregated and inferior conditions in the 1960s, and thus were being denied their right to an equal education. To introduce students to the conditions in Boston Public Schools in the 1960s, ask for student volunteers to read the following quotations aloud to the class.

*The room in which I taught my Fourth Grade was not a room at all, but the corner of an auditorium. The first time I approached that corner, I noticed only a huge torn stage curtain, a couple of broken windows, a badly listing blackboard, and about thirty-five bewildered-looking children, most of whom were Negro. . . .* 27

*When we’d go to white schools, we’d see these lovely classrooms, with a small number
of children in each class. The teachers were permanent. We’d see wonderful materials. When we’d go to our [predominantly black] schools, we would see overcrowded class-
rooms, children sitting out in the corridors, and so forth. And so then we decided that where there was a large number of white students, that’s where the care went. That’s where the books went. That’s where the money went.\

When compared to schools with predominantly white students, schools with predomi-
nantly black students received 10% less for textbooks, 19% less for library and other reference books, and 27% less for students’ health care. Overall, the school system spent 29% more on students in predominantly white schools than on students in schools with a predominantly black student body.

Following the reading of these quotations, ask students to guess where they think the class-
rooms described by these writers were located. Once students are aware that Ruth Batson and Jonathan Kozol were describing schools in Boston, explain that they will watch a clip from a video that will give them more information about conditions in Boston’s schools in the 1960s—the same time period as the march from Selma to Montgomery and other major civil rights events. In the first four minutes of the Eyes on the Prize segment “The Keys to the Kingdom” (1:20–5:20), prominent Boston civil rights activists, such as Ruth Batson and Jean McGuire, describe the inferior conditions for black students in Boston’s segregated schools, while Louise Day Hicks of the Boston School Committee remarks that racially imbalanced schools are not educationally harmful. As students watch the video, have them take notes in their journals or in Part One of Fieldnote 1.

FOLLOW-THROUGH

As students learn about segregation in Boston’s public schools in the 1960s and 1970s, they will likely think about the degree of racial diversity in their own school. Before mov-
ing ahead with a deeper investigation of Boston’s history, give students the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and thoughts related to racial diversity in schools. One way to do this is by asking students to review the following quotations from the Eyes on the Prize clip they just watched:

MRS. JOHNSON (Boston parent): I said that any school that is predominantly Negro in Boston is an inadequate school.

MRS. HICKS (school committee member): Mrs. Johnson, the Superintendent of Schools has stated as his policy that a racially imbalanced school is not education-
ally harmful.

Before asking students to respond to the following questions, take a few minutes to make sure students understand the main ideas from the quotations. The phrases “inadequate school” and “racially imbalanced school” surface repeatedly in this unit. So, it is especially important that students can define what these terms meant to people in Boston in the 1960s:

• When Mrs. Batson and others referred to schools with mostly black students as “inadequate schools,” they did so because of the inferior resources (buildings, books, overcrowded classrooms, etc.) in these schools when compared to schools
with mostly white students. Parents and activists were not referring to the quality of students in the school as “inadequate.”

- Mrs. Hicks used the phrase “racially imbalanced school.” At this time, a racially imbalanced school was defined as one in which more than 50 percent of its students were nonwhite.

Once students have clarified the meaning of the quotations, ask them to react to these statements in writing or through a class discussion. The point of this discussion is not for students to compare schools in the 1960s to schools today; students do not have enough data to make informed comparisons. Rather, the purpose of the discussion is to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their own ideas about racial segregation in schools.

Follow-up prompts that could be used to guide a writing assignment or a class discussion include:

- What do these words make you think about? In what ways are these arguments relevant or irrelevant today? What might you say to either of these women if you had the opportunity to do so?
- Mrs. Hicks was not the only person to argue that “racially imbalanced” schools were not educationally harmful. Some black parents also argued that the way to improve the quality of education for their children was not to desegregate schools, but to equalize resources. How would you respond to this argument? Can separate ever be equal?
- Why do you think civil rights activists fought so hard to achieve integrated schools? Who benefits when students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds attend school together?
- In the 1800s, Thomas Jefferson wrote that a strong democracy needs educated citizens. Supporters of racially integrated schools have argued that it is important for citizens to know how to get along with people of different backgrounds. They say that racially segregated schools are harmful to our democracy. What do you think of this argument?
- What do you know about the historical context of the 1960s in the United States? What is going on in relation to race relations and civil rights at that time? In light of this context, how might conversations in the 1960s about racial segregation in schools be different from conversations today about racial segregation in schools? How have issues of civil rights and racial prejudice changed since the 1960s? What themes present in the 1960s might still resonate today?

Hints for structuring a discussion: This conversation could be structured as a “fishbowl.” In a fishbowl discussion, half of the class sits in a circle in the middle of the room while the other half listens carefully to the discussion. This activity works best when the listeners are given a specific task, such as to listen for two ideas they disagree with and two ideas they agree with, or to note the strongest three points that were made. After about ten minutes, students switch roles. Explain that students’ attentive listening and engagement in the fishbowl will help them with part two in their fieldnotes for this lesson.
Some ideas you might want to introduce in the discussion, if the students do not do so themselves, include the suggestion that there may be benefits to being in racially homoge-
enous schools. Also, in the 1960s, the debate about school segregation focused on two com-
munities: black and white. Today, we realize the cultural and ethnic diversity within racial communities. So, while students may attend what appear to be racially imbalanced schools, you might draw their attention to the incredible diversity that still exists within the stu-
dent body. Finally, encourage students to consider the implications of racially imbalanced schools not only on the students attending those schools, but also on the city or the nation.

HOMEWORK
- Students can finish Fieldnote 1 in their Reporter’s Notebook.
- Read Document 1, “De Facto Segregation,” pp. 194–195, in Eyes on the Prize study guide. Students can answer all or some of the Connections questions for homework. Students could also read the background section of this lesson for homework.
- Students can write a reflective journal entry responding to any of the prompts in the follow-through section of this lesson.
- Students can begin writing section one of their newspaper articles.

ASSESSMENT IDEAS
- Students’ paraphrases of Justice Warren’s statements will provide you with evidence about their understanding of the relationship between civil rights, education, and racial segregation.
- Part One of students’ fieldnotes can be reviewed for accuracy and depth.

EXTENSIONS
The warm-up activity in this lesson focuses on the difference between a privilege and a civil right. You could extend this portion of the lesson to explore the similarities and differ-
ces between civil rights and human rights. One way to do this would be to give students a list of rights and have students organize these rights on a Venn diagram, like the one on the handout, “Civil Right? Human Right? Privilege?” in the Appendix of this lesson. Additionally, you could ask students to compare the rights articulated in the Bill of Rights and the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

In the quotations used in this lesson and other documents referenced in this unit, blacks and whites often use the term Negro when referring to blacks/African Americans. Until the late 1960s, this was standard practice. A major shift occurred when Stokely Carmichael and other leaders of the Black Power Movement stopped using the word Negro, except as a derogatory reference to blacks they believed were complacently following the status quo. It only took a few years before black became the label preferred by members of the African American community and was commonly used by both blacks and whites. So that students do not misinterpret the quotations in this unit, you can provide them with this historical context, explaining that Negro was the accepted language at the time. You might also extend this discussion to talk about the power of names and labels. Why would the Black Power Movement reject the term Negro and replace it with black? In the 1980s, why would leaders such as Jesse Jackson advocate the use of African American instead of black? Recently, many
African Americans have chosen to call themselves people of color. What different meanings do these labels carry? For more information on this subject, students can read the New York Times article, “‘African American’ Favored by Many of America’s Blacks” (1989) or the second part of columnist and language-expert William Safire’s column, where he writes, “Thus we have come from blacks to colored people and Negroes (at first negro, later Negro), then back to blacks — ‘black power’ and ‘black is beautiful’ were slogans of the 1960s — and now to Afro- and African-Americans.”
# Civil Right or Privilege?

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civil Right</th>
<th>Privilege</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Voting in government elections</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Elementary and secondary education</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. College education</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Access to the Internet</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Equal protection under the law (government can’t have policies that discriminate against you based on your race, religion, or gender)</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Health care</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Free speech</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Practicing whatever religion you choose</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Not to be imprisoned without a trial</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Civil Right? Human Right? Privilege?

1. Housing
2. Transportation
3. Freedom of religion
4. Freedom of speech
5. Affordable health care
6. Clean drinking water
7. Primary education
8. Secondary education
9. College education
10. Not to be jailed without a trial
11. Not to be discriminated against because of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation
12. Travel to other countries
13. Access to the Internet
14. Not to be hungry
15. To marry whom you want

Civil Rights

Human Rights
Lesson Two: In the 1960s, Why Were Boston’s Schools Racially Segregated?

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
In this lesson, students learn about the root of Boston’s school segregation—residential segregation. Materials in this lesson help students understand how government policies and prejudicial real estate practices shaped the demographics of Boston’s neighborhoods. At the end of this lesson, students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of segregation by reflecting on their own experiences in segregated and integrated settings.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
- What is the difference between de jure and de facto segregation?
- Why were Boston’s schools and neighborhoods segregated by race?
- What impact might segregation have on the individuals living in that community? What impact might segregation have on the larger society?

Define These Key Terms:
- Segregation/integration
- De jure
- De facto
- Neighborhood schools
- Residential segregation
- Redlining
- Blockbusting
- Federal Highway Act (1956)
- Federal Housing Act (1934)

Practice These Skills:
- Identifying and recording main ideas and relevant details from a lecture
- Drawing from personal experience to deepen understanding of historical and social science concepts
- Analyzing costs and benefits of a situation

DURATION: Approximately 60 minutes
MATERIALS

Texts (print, video, audio):
- Map of Boston
- (Optional) *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide, Episode 13, “Keys to the Kingdom”

HANDOUTS:
- From the Reporter’s Notebook:
  - Fieldnote 2
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Talking Points: Lecture on the Residential Segregation in Boston in the 1960s

BACKGROUND

In the South, segregation in public schools had been largely de jure—based on explicit laws banning black and white students from attending the same schools. In the North, however, school segregation was often viewed as de facto—based on the fact that black students and white students lived in separate neighborhoods and therefore were assigned to separate “neighborhood” schools. Thus, understanding school segregation in Boston first requires understanding residential segregation.

Although some degree of self-segregation based on ethnic group affinity accounted for some degree of residential racial segregation, for the most part residential racial segregation has been explained by historians as being caused by federal policies that encouraged suburbanization and discriminatory real estate practices, such as blockbusting and redlining, which made it difficult for black families to buy or rent homes in white communities. Yet, even with black and whites often living in separate neighborhoods, there were opportunities for them to attend the same schools. The fact that the Boston School Committee thwarted multiple efforts aimed at creating more racially balanced schools, despite residential segregation, will be explored in Lesson Three.

Residential segregation remains an issue across the United States today. The 2000 Census reveals that Americans often live in racially and ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods, with the increasing isolation of white Americans from Americans of minority backgrounds. The fact that residential segregation is growing at a time of increasing ethnic and racial diversity in the United States raises questions about the various factors that influence where people live. Clearly, income influences where a family can afford housing. Yet, other factors may be at play as well. According to Bill Bishop, author of *The Big Sort,*
Americans are not only segregated by race and class, but also by ideology, with people choosing neighbors who hold similar political and religious beliefs. When Bill Bishop writes about residential segregation, he does so from the perspective of Americans with the power, more or less, to choose where they want to live. In Boston in the 1960s, however, the choices of most blacks were restricted by the policies of banks, realtors, and government offices.

Refer to the following resources for additional background on residential segregation in Boston and the United States:
The City of Boston website includes Neighborhood Data Profiles, which document the racial composition of Boston’s neighborhoods today. Also, you might want to have students analyze maps from a 2003 report illustrating residential segregation in Boston.


The Racial Residential Segregation Measurement Project, affiliated with the Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan, publishes indexes showing residential segregation by city and county. The site also provides background information and reports.

National Public Radio posts a podcast and a blog, which include a discussion about the findings in Bill Bishop’s book, *The Big Sort*. *The Economist* magazine (June 19, 2008) included an article about the book and what it reveals about American society.
**LESSON PLAN**

**WARM-UP**

The purpose of the warm-up activity is to prepare students to think about the main themes of this lesson: neighborhoods, schools, and segregation. This can be achieved by posting the words *neighborhoods* and *schools* on the board and asking students to describe the relationship between their neighborhood and their school. You could also ask students the follow-up question: What should be the relationship between a neighborhood and a school? They could do this in their notebooks or journals, or in a conversation with a partner.

Another way to approach this topic is to ask students whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: The people who live in my neighborhood are mostly the same as the people who attend my school. Remind students to think beyond just race; neighborhoods and schools can be segregated or integrated by other factors, including economic class, language spoken, religion, political party, ethnicity, nationality, and age. You can also ask students the extent to which they agree with this statement: It is important for students to attend schools in their own neighborhoods. This warm-up activity can be structured as a journal exercise or brief discussion, or as a forced-choice activity where you post the signs “strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree” in four corners of the room and students have to move to the corner that best represents their opinion.

You could also begin this lesson by asking students to share one idea or question from their previous night’s homework about school segregation.

**MAIN ACTIVITY**

Review the material from the lesson by asking students, “How is it possible that many black students and white students in Boston were attending different schools 10 and 20 years after the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown* that racially segregated schools are unconstitutional?” As students share their responses, listen carefully for any references to the fact that in the *Brown* case the Supreme Court was mostly reacting to de jure, not de facto, segregation. Linda Brown was assigned to a school solely on the basis of her race, just as white children in her neighborhood were assigned to all-white schools. In Boston, the situation was more complex, with a combination of de facto and de jure factors resulting in racially imbalanced schools. In this lesson, students will learn about the de facto conditions that resulted in school segregation. De jure factors will be covered in Lesson Three.

**Defining de Jure and de Facto**

To understand why Boston students attended racially segregated schools, students need to know the difference between de facto (as a matter of fact) segregation and de jure (as a matter of law) segregation. If you have not yet introduced the terms *de jure* and *de facto* to students, one way to do so is by asking students to explain why seven-year-olds do not drive cars. There are de facto and de jure explanations for this. The de facto reasons include the “fact” that most seven-year-olds are too short to drive cars, as well as the fact that most seven-year-olds do not have their own car to drive (and most parents would not allow their seven-year-old to drive their vehicle). Seven-year-olds also cannot get their driver’s license;
this is a de jure explanation for why seven-year-olds do not drive automobiles. Students can record definitions of de jure and de facto in their notebooks or journals.

In this lesson, students will learn about the de facto cause of racially imbalanced schools in Boston: residential segregation. Students can learn about residential segregation in Boston through a brief, interactive lecture. Suggested talking points for the lecture are provided in the Appendix at the end of this lesson. Fieldnote 2 (Part One) includes a graphic organizer for note-taking. This information will be very useful to students as they write their articles. The map of Boston from the mytown33 website can be printed out for students and/or projected onto a screen during your lecture. After the lecture, students can review their notes in small groups. This provides an opportunity for you to go around the room and clear up any misconceptions or explain information some students have missed. Alternatively, students can read the talking points and then take notes on what they have read.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

Now that students are aware of the causes of residential segregation in Boston, they can consider the impact of residential segregation on the people living in those neighborhoods. Their understanding of the impact of residential segregation can be deepened by giving students the opportunity to draw from their own experiences as part of both segregated and integrated communities. At this point, you might want to reinforce students’ awareness that segregation does not always happen along racial lines. Students might have experiences in racially segregated communities with religious or class diversity, for example.

Here are four questions you might use to prompt students’ reflection:

1. Describe an experience you have had in a segregated setting (e.g. in a classroom, on a sports team, at a party, or at a concert). In what ways were the people in this setting similar? How were you influenced by being with people who shared similar characteristics?
2. Describe an experience you have had in an integrated setting (e.g. in a classroom, on a sports team, at a party, or at a concert). In what ways were the people in this setting different? How were you influenced by being with people who did not share the same characteristics as yourself?
3. How might living in a racially segregated neighborhood impact people living in this community?
4. How might the existence of racially segregated neighborhoods impact larger society (the larger city or nation)?

You could have students respond to these questions in their journals or notebooks. After they have had a few minutes to respond, you might use the “circle discussion” teaching strategy to structure students’ sharing of ideas. This activity will provide students with ideas they might use to record information in Fieldnote 2: Part Two. After the circle discussion, small groups of students could work together on Part Two. Or, this can be assigned for homework.
Circle Discussion Directions:
This teaching strategy helps students flesh out their ideas by having a conversation with their peers. Students will stand in either an inner circle or an outer circle. Students in the inner circle should be facing students in the outer circle so that they can talk to each other. Ask students to discuss their responses to question one with the purpose of helping their partners expand on their ideas. Encourage students to listen carefully to each other and ask follow-up questions. You might even require all students to ask at least one follow-up question. After about five minutes, announce that students in the inner circle should move to the left. Now, students begin a conversation about question two with a new partner. You can repeat this process for questions three and four, as well. Before beginning this activity, it can be useful to brainstorm possible starters for follow-up questions including:

- I’d like to know more about . . .
- What did you mean by . . .
- Why do you think that . . .
- I am confused about . . .

HOMEWORK
- Students can finish Fieldnote 2.
- Students can do some field reporting in their own neighborhoods. You could ask them to walk around noting different characteristics of the people they see. A deeper analysis of their neighborhoods would also involve interviewing people they meet to learn about other factors that shape identity, including hobbies, careers, interests, and beliefs.
- Students can begin writing section two of their newspaper articles.

ASSESSMENT IDEAS
- Reviewing lecture notes would help you gauge students’ understanding of residential segregation in Boston.

EXTENSIONS
The history of school desegregation in Boston involves the relationships among different neighborhoods. To reinforce students’ awareness of Boston’s neighborhood geography, give students blank maps of Boston and a list of Boston’s neighborhoods. See if they can label the map with the names of the different neighborhoods.
Talking Points: Lecture on the Residential Segregation in Boston in the 1960s

**POINT 1:** Residential segregation in Boston in the 1960s
- In the 1960s, the black population in Boston was strongly concentrated in Roxbury, North Dorchester and the South End.
- Back Bay/Beacon Hill, South Boston, East Boston, and Charlestown are known to be predominantly white communities.

**Question:** Based on these points, label your map where the majority of black families lived in the 1960s. Where did the majority of white families live in the 1960s?

**POINT 2:** The “Neighborhood School”
Louise Day Hicks, Boston School Committee: “We all believe in the Boston public school systems in the neighborhood school; that the children go to school in the neighborhood where they live and with the children with whom they play.”

**Question:** Looking at your map, how would Louise Day Hicks explain the fact that many schools are racially imbalanced in Boston—that some schools have mostly white students while other schools have mostly black students?

One way Hicks answered that question was to explain that schools reflected the racial makeup of their neighborhoods. “[W]e have heard it said that many of our schools are predominantly Negro, but this merely reflects the ethnic groups of the neighborhood.”

**POINT 3:** To understand why schools were racially segregated, you need to understand the reasons for residential segregation in Boston. While there was some degree of self-segregation by members of different ethnic groups (even Irish and Italians lived in their own neighborhoods), this does not account for the significant degree of neighborhood segregation evident in Boston in the 1960s and 1970s. Many factors contributed to the segregation of whites and blacks in Boston, including:

- In the 1950s and 1960s, many white [middle-class] Bostonians moved out of the city and into the suburbs.
  - **Federal policies:** The Federal Highway Act (which funded the construction of Route 128) and the Federal Housing Act (which made it easier to get mortgages) encouraged middle-class Boston residents, most of whom were white, to move into Boston’s suburbs.
  - **Blockbusting:** Real estate agents instigated panic selling in white neighborhoods. Referred to as “blockbusting,” this tactic involved telling white owners that their property values were about to go down because of the arrival of black families to their areas. Real estate agents would offer to purchase their homes, and most of these white families would relocate to the suburbs. Then, the agents would sell the same homes to black families at a higher price. Blockbusting activities were reported in Roxbury and Mattapan.
Question: What were some reasons that Boston residents, especially white residents, moved to the suburbs beginning in the 1950s? What factors made it easier for them to move to the suburbs? What other factors might have motivated them to move?

- After World War II, many blacks moved to Boston from the South in search of jobs and greater civil rights. Most of these black residents moved into neighborhoods in Mattapan, North Dorchester, Roxbury, and the South End. Why did they move into these specific neighborhoods instead of other neighborhoods, such as South Boston or East Boston?

  a. Housing availability: Housing was more available in Roxbury, Mattapan, Dorchester, and the South End than in other areas of Boston because these were the areas where the most whites left for the suburbs. For economic and cultural reasons, the primarily Irish and Italian working-class Bostonians who lived in Charlestown, East Boston, and South Boston were less likely to move to the suburbs than other white Bostonians. As Catholics they were tied to their parish church and therefore less likely to move. Employed in working-class jobs, many did not have enough money to purchase homes in the suburbs.

  b. Discrimination and segregation in public housing: Public housing assignments were made based on race, so that white families who applied for public housing were placed in certain projects while black families were placed in other projects. Most of the black families who applied for public housing were placed in projects in Roxbury, Dorchester, or Mattapan.

  c. Discrimination and segregation in private housing: Discriminatory real estate practices made it difficult for black families, including middle-class black families, to move to the suburbs. It was harder for black families to acquire mortgages, and real estate agents often steered black families away from purchasing homes in white neighborhoods. Also, redlining, the practice of marking a red line on a map to delineate areas where banks would not give loans to homeowners, ensured that these areas would remain economically and often racially segregated from other areas. Typically, “redlined” areas were those where poor and/or minority residents lived. The “redlined” areas in Roxbury, Mattapan, and Dorchester were the places where blacks could most easily find affordable housing and the places where real estate agents often steered black families into renting. Thus, discriminatory real estate practices were used both to keep blacks out of white neighborhoods and to discourage whites from purchasing homes in black neighborhoods.

Question: Knowing that neighborhoods were racially segregated, what could supporters of school integration in the 1960s suggest in order to achieve more racially balanced schools?
Responses to Racially Imbalanced Schools

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
While Lesson Two helped students identify de facto causes of school segregation, this lesson reveals the de jure causes of school segregation that provided the basis for the discrimination case against the school committee. Through watching a student-produced interview with Boston civil rights activist Jean McGuire and by creating a historical timeline, students will learn about various attempts by black parents and white allies to desegregate Boston’s public schools—attempts that ultimately failed because of the policies enacted by the Boston School Committee. Thus, this lesson helps students understand that court-ordered busing was not the inevitable, or even the desired, solution for improving the quality of schooling for black children. The material presented in this lesson also reveals how many people—from students, to teachers, to parents, to elected officials—took responsibility for improving conditions for students in Boston Public Schools. In doing so, it highlights how an entire community bears responsibility for making sure that public services are provided equitably and effectively.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
• What was done to address racial imbalance in Boston Public Schools and improve the quality of education for black children in the 1960s? How did the Boston School Committee respond to these actions?
• To what extent were racially segregated schools a result of government action (de jure factors)? To what extent were racially segregated schools a result of circumstances beyond the law (de facto causes)?
• Who bears responsibility for ensuring that public services, including education, are provided equitably and effectively? Who do you think is responsible for improving the quality of education in your community?

Define These Key Terms:
• De jure
• De facto
• Segregation/desegregation
• Operation Exodus
• Jean McGuire and METCO
Stay Out for Freedom (school boycotts)
- Freedom House
- Racial Imbalance Act
- Kiernan Commission
- *Milliken v. Bradley*
- *Morgan v. Hennigan*

**Practice These Skills:**
- Identifying main ideas from film and text
- Drawing cause and effect relationships
- Collaborating with others to complete a task
- Synthesizing information to draw conclusions

**DURATION:** Approximately 60–90 minutes

**MATERIALS**

**Texts (print, video, audio):**

The *Digital Legacies Project* is a collaboration between Facing History and Ourselves, the Boston Public Schools, and the Digital Arts Alliance. During the summer of 2007, BPS students participated in an in-depth study of local and national civil rights history. The students interviewed important activists from the civil rights movement in Boston, including Mel King, Jean McGuire, James Breeden, and Sara-Ann Shaw. They used these interviews and other background research to produce short videos about Boston’s civil rights history. The student-produced videos, as well as quotations from students’ interviews with local civil rights activists, are used throughout this historical investigation. These materials not only help students learn about Boston’s civil rights history, but they also provide an example of how youth can be involved in the writing and memorializing of history. (Short biographies of these activists are included in the Appendix at the end of this lesson.)

**HANDOUTS**
- From the Reporter’s Notebook:
  - Fieldnote 3
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Timeline of Responses to Racially Imbalanced Schools in Boston in the 1960s (cut into slips)
Images for Timeline Activity (cut out as separate images)
(Optional) Quotations for Timeline Activity
(Optional) Links to Primary and Secondary Sources Related to School Segregation in Boston (1960–1974)

OTHER
• Large pieces of paper
• Tape or glue stick

BACKGROUND
When many people think about school segregation in Boston, their minds immediately jump to court-ordered busing and the social upheaval that came in its aftermath. Yet, parents, students, and civil rights activists tried many approaches to achieving greater racial balance in schools before they took the Boston School Committee to court in 1972. First, they tried to go through formal channels to improve the quality of schooling for black children. But, their meetings with school committee members did not yield results. They could not even get school committee members to agree that racial segregation existed in Boston’s schools or that Boston’s black children were receiving an inferior education. At the same time, activists in the black community tried to gain power through fielding their own candidates in local school committee elections. Since blacks made up less than 10 percent of Boston’s population, the at-large electoral process made it difficult for black candidates (or pro-integration candidates) to receive enough votes to win. Accordingly, trying to use the school committee as a tool for change was an unsuccessful strategy for advocates of school desegregation.

Desegregation proponents also tried to influence Boston’s public schools through state-level policy makers. After intense lobbying by activists, in 1964 state officials agreed to study the issue of racial imbalance in public schools. A year later, the Kiernan Commission (chaired by the state commissioner of education, Owen Kiernan), published a report, “Because It Is Right Educationally,” which found that racially imbalanced schools were educationally harmful. The findings in this report led to the passage of the Racial Imbalance Act (1965), a law that required local school boards to desegregate racially imbalanced schools. Even with this law, the strongest of its kind in the nation, the Boston School Committee still did not budge and Boston’s schools grew more racially imbalanced.

While activists worked through formal policy channels, a grassroots movement led by black community leaders and parents, often in partnership with organizations such as the NAACP or Freedom House, employed other
strategies to improve the quality of education for black youth. For example, they led marches and school boycotts designed to draw attention to the issue of school segregation and inequality. Parents and activists established community schools or “freedom schools.”* They also organized Operation Exodus, a program that placed more than 400 black youth from overcrowded schools in underenrolled white schools. As part of Operation Exodus, the community raised money and coordinated volunteers in order to transport students from their neighborhoods to majority-white schools.

As many in the black community and local civil rights activists responded to school segregation through both formal and informal channels, many white Bostonians responded to school segregation through their support of school committee members who ardently resisted desegregating Boston’s schools. Indeed, Louise Day Hicks, a vocal opponent of school desegregation, was the top vote-getter in school committee elections in 1963 and 1965. In 1967, she was only 12,000 votes shy of becoming Boston’s mayor. Of course, there were white Bostonians who supported desegregation, just as there were blacks in Boston who were not against segregated schools, so long as their children were getting equal resources. But, for the most part, many in the white community either actively resisted attempts to desegregate Boston’s schools or passively ignored the issue. It was not until 1974, after Judge Garrity issued his decision in Morgan v. Hennigan and the subsequent busing order, that some in the white community started an organized, grassroots antibusing campaign.

In 1974, the Boston School Committee controlled public schools in Boston. Had any of the five school committee members chosen to take a more forceful stand against school segregation, the crisis caused by “forced busing” might have been avoided. Of course, to take this kind of stand, one risked losing re-election. In an interview 30 years after busing began, James Hennigan, a member of the school committee throughout the 1960s, reported, “What everyone remembers is busing’s turmoil. What few recall is how close the city came to avoiding it.” In 1971, Hennigan had tried to get his colleagues to support limited school desegregation. He thought he had the three votes he needed to approve a redistricting plan that would have created a racially balanced student body in three newly built schools (in accordance with an agreement the Boston School Committee had made with the state). But, at the last minute, school committee member John Craven switched his vote, and was applauded by the audience for doing so. As a result, when the Lee School opened in 1971 with a predominantly black student body, civil rights activists had sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the Boston School Committee’s actions had resulted in de jure segregation of Boston’s schools.

*“Freedom schools” were alternative, free schools run by parents and community members. In Boston, they were established to protest inferior conditions in the public schools, especially for black students. Many of the freedom schools offered a curriculum especially designed to support black students, such as by emphasizing African American history and by refusing to use books with racist undertones.
Accordingly, in spite of a decade of activism to desegregate Boston’s schools, in 1971 Boston’s schools were more racially imbalanced than they had been in 1960. In 1965, the state counted 46 racially imbalanced schools in Boston, and by 1972, that number had increased to 75. Moreover, within these schools, the percentage of black students had increased from 68 percent to nearly 80 percent. Tom Atkins, a Boston City Council member, explained how black parents and civil rights activists saw filing a case in federal court as a last resort to resolving the growing problem of school segregation:

We started dealing at the city level because that was the most logical thing to do. And nothing succeeded. We got no support. We went to the state. By 1972, the efforts at the state level were so clearly thwarted that the feeling was if relief is going to come it will come only at the federal level. And if it’s going to come at the federal level in 1972—you got Richard Nixon in the White House. I mean, he’s not going to help us. So, if it’s going to come at the federal level, there’s only one place it’s going to come from. And that’s out of the courts. That’s why we got to the courts in the first place. It was by a simple—not very quick—process of elimination. We eliminated all of the other alternatives except filing the federal lawsuit.

The federal lawsuit filed by the Harvard Center for Law and Education on behalf of 15 parents and their 43 children was called Morgan v. Hennigan, representing Boston student Tallulah Morgan, the lead plaintiff in the case, and James Hennigan, who was president of the Boston School Committee in 1972 when the case was filed.

Months before Judge W. Arthur Garrity ruled on this case, the Supreme Court’s decision in Milliken v. Bradley in 1974 limited the remedies he could pursue. The Milliken decision stated that suburban districts could not be included in urban desegregation plans, unless it could be proven that the suburban districts deliberately implemented policies that resulted in school segregation. As much as any prior local action, this national case had significant bearing on Judge Garrity’s decision. In the next lesson, students will learn about his ruling in the case of Morgan v. Hennigan, as well as responses to this ruling.
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
In this lesson, students will watch a digital video created by BPS students who participated in a summer program, the Digital Legacies Project (DLP). Two students were given the task of interviewing Jean McGuire, director of METCO and a civil rights activist in the Boston community. Before they interviewed her, students had to draft interview questions based on their own interests as well as their understanding of Boston’s civil rights history. To help your students review the material in the previous lessons, put them in the position of the DLP student interviewers by having them respond to the following prompt in their notebooks or journals:

Imagine you were asked to interview someone who lived in Boston 50 years ago. What questions might you ask this person to learn more about Boston’s schools at that time?

As students share their interview questions, write them on the board. You might use these questions to help structure a homework assignment in which students interview people in their communities who lived in Boston during the 1960s. (See the homework section for more details.)

MAIN ACTIVITY
You can segue to the main activity by giving students some information about the Digital Legacies Project. Explain that Boston students, like themselves, developed questions about Boston’s civil rights history, just as they did in the warm-up activity, and then interviewed activists in the Boston community. In this lesson, students will watch the video, “The Struggle for a Good Education,” where two Boston students interviewed former teacher and current director of METCO Jean McGuire. In the video, Jean McGuire describes conditions in Boston’s public schools for black students and then highlights some of the ways black parents and civil rights activists in Boston responded to their belief that black children were receiving an inadequate education. The first three minutes (0:00–3:13) of the video focus on the students’ interview with Ms. McGuire. For the purpose of this lesson, students only need to watch the first three minutes of the film. (In the final 90 seconds, the student-producers, Teeyana and Sophia, share information about their experiences attending suburban schools as students in the METCO program.)

Because the film contains detailed information and Jean McGuire and the students speak quickly, you might want to have students watch the film twice. The first time, students can watch the film without taking notes. During the second viewing, students can record information about how members of the Boston community tried to improve conditions for black students in Boston’s public schools. Fieldnote 3: Part One includes a graphic organizer where they can take notes now and throughout this lesson.

Students will use the information from the video to help them construct a timeline of Boston’s school desegregation history. In preparation for class, print out multiple copies of the timeline found in the Appendix at the end of this lesson. Students will be working on these timelines in small groups, so print at least one copy per group. After you copy the
timelines, cut them into slips. Each group receives a packet of slips, a packet of images, a large piece of paper, and tape or a glue stick.

**Directions for Timeline Activity**

Groups have three tasks:

1. Organizing the slips in chronological order.
2. Writing a three-to five-word caption that represents the main idea of each event on the timeline, and recording these captions on the timeline.
3. Attaching an image to events on the timeline.

Option: Included in the Appendix located at the end of this lesson are selected comments about school desegregation made by members of the Boston community. You could also distribute these quotations to students, cut into slips, and ask them to paste them on the place in the timeline that represents when that remark might have been made.

By the end of the activity, each group will have a timeline that includes captions and images. This exercise is not only designed to help students learn about responses to school segregation in Boston, but it also is designed to strengthen students’ literacy skills and their ability to determine cause-and-effect relationships. The timeline is written so that students have to read the text carefully in order to figure out the order of events. Often dates are provided. In a few places, dates have been left out, but the text on the slip provides clues about where the event belongs on the timeline.

After you have checked to make sure students’ timelines are organized properly, you can have students record the main ideas (i.e., captions) from their timelines in Fieldnote 3-Part One. This step reinforces students’ retention of the material and also will make it easier for students to retrieve important information they might wish to include in their articles. After students record notes, they can post their timelines on the wall. Then you can give students a few minutes to compare how other groups wrote their captions and used the images.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

The last item on the timeline refers to the court case *Morgan v. Hennigan*, the class-action lawsuit filed by black parents in Boston alleging that the Boston School Committee engaged in practices that amounted to de jure segregation in Boston Public Schools. To help students synthesize the information on their timelines and the material about de facto causes of school segregation from Lesson Two, ask them to consider the same question posed to Judge W. Arthur Garrity: In 1974, was there sufficient evidence that the Boston School Committee was promoting policies that resulted in the racial segregation of Boston Public Schools? Students could discuss this question in small groups or as a whole class, and record their ideas in Fieldnote 3: Part Two (a two-column chart, with one side labeled “de facto causes” of segregation and the other side labeled “de jure causes” of segregation). This step could also be assigned for homework.
The final questions on Part Two ask students to think about who is responsible for improving conditions in separate, unequal schools. The film “The Struggle for a Good Education” and the timeline exercise show how black parents, civil rights activists, students, and state officials tried to remedy segregation in Boston’s schools. Government officials studied the issue of racial imbalance in public schools and passed the Racial Imbalance Act. Parents, students, and civil rights activists organized protests, established their own schools, spoke at school committee meetings and went around school officials to find empty seats in under-enrolled schools.

After students have had the opportunity to think about who is responsible for fixing the problem of unequal schools, you can have a class discussion where students are invited to share their ideas and connect their thoughts to their own experiences. Some questions that you might use as prompts during this discussion include: When public services, such as schools, are not working properly, who has the responsibility for improving the situation? Are community residents immediately affected by the problem more responsible for resolving it than government officials whose job it is to maintain public services? How does what you have learned about community and government responses to school segregation in the 1960s compare to your own experiences confronting problems with public services in your community? Who takes responsibility for improving public services where you live? Who should assume this responsibility?

**HOMEWORK**

- Students can complete Fieldnote 3: Part Two for homework.
- Using the interview questions generated during the warm-up exercise, students can interview someone in their community who lived in Boston during the 1960s. Students can share the results of their interviews during the warm-up activity of the next lesson. This would be excellent information to add to their articles.
- Students can begin writing section three of their newspaper articles.

**ASSESSMENT IDEAS**

- The accuracy of students’ timelines will indicate that they understand the events that led to *Morgan v. Hennigan* and mandatory busing in Boston. Additionally, reviewing Fieldnote 3 will provide information about which ideas students think are most important. If major events are missing from their notes, you can review this material so that they can add this information.
- Completing Fieldnote 3: Part Two could be used as a take-home test of the material studied thus far.

**EXTENSIONS**

- The Appendix includes a list of websites containing primary and secondary sources documenting school segregation in Boston in the 1960s. If you have more time, you can give groups of students a collection of documents (or links to these documents if you have access to a computer lab). Students can create a timeline based on the information they gather. They can also use these resources to find extra information for their articles. You could even require all students to gather
additional information for their articles from sources on this list or from other sources (library, interviews, Internet, etc.).

- Because this historical investigation focuses on events in Boston, it provides the opportunity for students to engage in hands-on research. The Boston City Archives includes an entire project dedicated to school desegregation records. For more information, visit their website.
- You could also have students conduct oral histories in various neighborhoods of Boston. The Library of Congress website provides helpful information about how to organize an oral history project.
Timeline of Responses to Racially Imbalanced Schools in Boston in the 1960s

Boston’s neighborhoods are racially segregated. Schools are assigned by neighborhood. Therefore, many students in Boston attend schools with mostly students of their own race.

Frustrated by the unequal resources provided to majority-black schools, in 1963 Ruth Batson, as chairperson of the Education Committee of Boston’s NAACP, argues for the desegregation of Boston’s public schools. Louise Day Hicks states, “There is no de facto segregation in Boston.”

In 1964, thousands of black students and hundreds of white students boycott school for one day to protest the inequalities of segregated schools. The “Stay Out for Freedom” school boycott gets the attention of state education officials. They create a special committee, called the Kiernan Commission, to study the impact of racial imbalance in schools.

The Kiernan Commission finds that racial imbalance is harmful to both black and white students. Responding to the Kiernan Commission’s suggestions, Massachusetts lawmakers pass the Racial Imbalance Act. This law requires districts with racially imbalanced schools, like Boston, to desegregate schools. Boston School Committee fights the new law.

In September 1965, black parents in Roxbury begin Operation Exodus. More than 400 students are bused daily from overcrowded black schools to underenrolled schools in predominantly white communities within the city of Boston. A year later, the METCO program begins to bus minority students in Boston to suburban schools.
Following the success of Operation Exodus and METCO, parents and community groups open their own “community” schools. With limited public funding, many of these schools struggle to pay teachers and buy supplies.

Six years after the state passed the Racial Imbalance Act, the number of racially imbalanced schools in Boston has increased from 46 to 65. The Massachusetts Department of Education says it will not give Boston Public Schools state money if they do not begin to desegregate their schools. The state even gives Boston extra money to build new schools, with the promise that these schools will open with a mix of black and white students. Still, in 1971, the new Lee Elementary School opens with a predominantly black student body.

In 1972, black parents file a lawsuit against the Boston School Committee. They argue that school committee policies have resulted in the de jure racial segregation of students in Boston Public Schools and have therefore violated the Racial Imbalance Act and the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. Judge W. Arthur Garrity presides over this case, which is called Morgan v. Hennigan.

Months before Judge Garrity issues his decision in the case of Morgan v. Hennigan, the Supreme Court rules in a different case (Milliken v. Bradley) that suburban districts cannot be included in desegregation plans.
Images for Timeline Activity

Louise Day Hicks at a demonstration to repeal the state’s racial imbalance law

Children arrive at the Lee School

Courtesy of the Boston Public Library, photo taken by the Boston Herald staff
A bus sponsored to drive children out of their school district in Boston

Protesting de facto segregation outside of the Boston School Committee building
Teacher reads story to her students at Freedom House School

[Image: Teacher reading to students]

Archives and Special Collections, Northeastern University Libraries, Freedom House, Inc. Records, Photographs and Video, Box 70, photograph taken by Irene Shwachman

Students walking to school in their neighborhood

[Image: Students walking down the street]

Archives and Special Collections, Northeastern University Libraries, Freedom House, Inc. Records, Photographs and Video, Box 70, photograph taken by Irene Shwachman
Map of Boston neighborhoods

Map prepared by The Boston Redevelopment Authority, City of Boston.

The United State Supreme Court

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USF34-005615-E
Racial imbalance in the Boston Public Schools

Racial Imbalance in the Boston Public Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of imbalanced schools</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Ruth Batson testifying before the Boston School Committee

©The Boston Globe
Charles B. Carey
Quotations for Timeline Activity

The NAACP’s position on Northern school segregation is clear. We must work to reduce and eliminate school segregation wherever it exists. . . . We feel it is the responsibility of school officials to take an affirmative stand on the best possible education for all children. This “best possible education” is not possible where segregation exists. Inadequate education standards, unequal facilities, and discriminatory education practices exist wherever there is school segregation.

—Ruth Batson

Roxbury has a great need for a showcase school that can show parents and show the public schools what a really good school is all about. For as long as the Boston Public Schools fail Negro children so badly, it is up to the community to provide them with some alternatives.

—Parent in Roxbury. MA

The Kiernan commission is “. . . a small band of racial agitators, non-native to Boston, and a few college radicals who have joined in the conspiracy to tell the people of Boston how to run their schools, their city and their lives.”

—Louise Day Hicks

Neighborhood schools for neighborhood children.

—Louise Day Hicks

We have not come down a nine-year road only to turn our backs on those who deserve their place in the sun, their right to a quality education. I will not repeal the racial imbalance law.

—Francis Sargent, Governor of Massachusetts, 1969–1975

We organized the Freedom Stay Out mainly with kids. We did it mainly with high school students and junior high school kids . . . to say, “Hey, look. You can be part of bringing attention to a major issue that is going on in your community.”

—Reverend James Breeden, civil rights activist

[We] were selling cakes and [raising] money for the gas and to get kids over to these underenrolled schools.

—Jean McGuire, civil rights activist and director of the METCO program
Links to Primary and Secondary Sources Related to School Segregation in Boston (1960–1974)

“Diploma granted to Freedom House for its participation as a Freedom School in the second ‘Stay Out for Freedom’ boycott of the Boston Public Schools, February 1964”
www.lib.neu.edu/archives/freedom_house/Diploma.htm

Massachusetts State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Report on Racial Imbalance in the Boston Public Schools (January 1965): This text is long, so you might want to direct students to particular pages, such as pages 1, 2, 7, 24, and 43, as well as the “Conclusions and Recommendations” chapter on pages 48–53.
www.lib.neu.edu/archives/freedom_house/full_text/racial_cover.htm

Fact Sheet: Freedom Stay Out Day in the Boston Public Schools (1964)
Statement of Canon James P. Breedon (1964)
www.lib.neu.edu/archives/voices/aa-political7.htm

“Chronology in the early development of METCO” timeline
www.metcoinc.org/history.htm

Map of Boston’s neighborhoods
www.mytowninc.org/index.php?base_id=54


Time magazine article that focuses on Louise Day Hick’s response to attempts by black parents to send their children to schools outside their neighborhood
www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,834372-1,00.html

Boston Magazine article about the steps leading to the court case Morgan v. Hennigan and how this case might have been avoided
www.bostonmagazine.com/articles/the_road_to_perdition/

Newspaper article about Stay Out for Freedom school boycott
www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=127310

Description of Milliken v. Bradley decision
www.africanamericans.com/MillikenvBradley.htm
Background sources:
Boston City Archives, Desegregation-era records collection, “Selective Historical Timeline”
www.cityofboston.gov/archivesandrecords/deseg-era.html#hist

www.americanhistory.si.edu/Brown/history/index.html
Digital Legacies Project (DLP):
Interviewee Biographies

James Breeden:
According to Dartmouth College Library, “[James] Breeden’s career has spanned civil rights activism, education and the ministry. . . . James Breeden’s interest in civil rights activism began in 1961, when he was arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, while seeking restaurant service in a local bus terminal. He has worked with several civil rights organizations, including the Episcopal Society for Racial and Cultural Unity (ESCRU) to fight racial discrimination within the Episcopal Church. Breeden’s role as executive director of the Citywide Coordinating Council in Boston brought him into the heart of the turbulent struggle over desegregation of the public schools in that city.”

James Breeden is known for his work with Freedom House. (Freedom House was established in 1949 as a civic center for the black community in Roxbury and greater Boston. Freedom House coordinated school desegregation efforts throughout the 1960s and 1970s.) Drawing from the nonviolent protest strategies Breeden witnessed in the South, he helped organize the “Stay Out for Freedom” school boycott in 1964. An ordained minister, James Breeden is also an educator. He has taught at numerous universities including the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Dartmouth College, and the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

Mel King:
Mel King has been a community activist and politician in Boston for over 50 years, focusing especially on how to improve the quality of housing and education for Boston’s black community. In the 1950s, he founded the Community Assembly for a United South End (C.A.U.S.E.) that aimed to give tenants and residents a voice in their community. Mr. King was also actively involved in improving the quality of education for Boston’s students, especially Boston’s black students. He ran unsuccessfully for the Boston School Committee in 1961, 1963, and 1965. All the while, he maintained his interest in fair housing in Boston. In the 1960s, C.A.U.S.E. organized protests against the demolition of housing without finding proper housing for residents who were forced to relocate. In 1968, these protests culminated in “Tent City,” a temporary residence for people on land that was slated to be a parking lot. (Twenty years later, the parking lot was eventually transformed into Tent City Development, home to several hundred families.) He served in the Massachusetts legislature from 1973–1982. Mel King is the author of the book *Chains of Change: Struggles for Black Community Development*. He recently retired from MIT, after teaching there for 25 years. Now Mr. King directs the South End Technology Center at Tent City, which is committed to giving residents free and low-cost access to computers and information technology. In 2003, he created The New Majority, an organization that strives to unite people from all of Boston’s communities around political candidates.
Jean McGuire:
Jean McGuire began her work in education as a teacher. She was a Freedom School teacher from 1960–1962. In 1965, she helped establish Operation Exodus, a community-organized program that arranged for black students to attend majority-white schools in Boston. While Operation Exodus was successful, it could not serve all of the black students that were stuck in overcrowded schools. So, in 1966, she helped found the METCO program. She has served as executive director of METCO since 1973. For more information about METCO, see www.metcoinc.org.

Sarah Ann Shaw:
Sarah Ann Shaw comes from a family that was very active in the life of the Boston community. Her mother belonged to several women’s organizations and her father was a member of the Roxbury Democratic Club. She joined the NAACP youth council as a teenager. Before Ms. Shaw began her journalism career, she worked in antipoverty and health education programs in the Roxbury community. In the 1960s, she became involved with the newly formed Boston Community Media Council, a group established to increase the diversity of journalists working in radio, television, and newspapers. Later, she accepted a position at Channel 4 as a reporter and soon after she was covering stories about school desegregation in Boston.
Desegregation and the Courts

LESSON-AT-A-GLANCE

RATIONALE
In this lesson, students will watch an excerpt from the *Eyes on the Prize* video series that documents reactions to Judge Garrity’s ruling ordering the mandatory busing of Boston students from South Boston and Roxbury. This history invites students to question the potential of court mandates to alter behavior, as well as the limits of the court to change long-held values and attitudes. An exploration of the history of school desegregation in Boston raises profound questions about the relationship between law, behavior, rights, and freedom. Through discussing their reactions to particular moments in the *Eyes on the Prize* documentary or by formulating their opinion about the role courts should play in desegregating schools, this lesson provides multiple opportunities for students to engage with perennial dilemmas that Americans faced in the 1970s and that continue to confront us today.

OBJECTIVES: This lesson will help students . . .

Answer These Guiding Questions:
- What are the different ways individuals and groups responded to Judge Garrity’s ruling? What arguments did people provide to explain their response?
- What role should the courts play in desegregating schools? What do courts have the power to change? What is it difficult for the courts to change?
- What do you wish could have happened to resolve the conflict over racially imbalanced schools in Boston?

Define These Key Terms:
- Judge W. Arthur Garrity
- Morgan v. Hennigan
- Court-ordered busing (also referred to as “forced busing,” especially by antibusing advocates)
- South Boston
- Roxbury
- Louise Day Hicks
- Ruth Batson
- Tom Atkins
DURATION: Approximately 60–90 minutes

MATERIALS
Texts (print, video, audio):
- *Eyes on the Prize*, Volume 7, Episode 13, “Keys to the Kingdom” (5:20–23:05)

HANDOUTS
- From the Reporter’s Notebook:
  - Fieldnote 4
  - Fieldnote 5
- From the Appendix at the end of this lesson:
  - Viewing Guide for “Keys to the Kingdom”
  - (Optional) Perspectives on Court-Ordered Busing in Boston
  - (Optional) Quotations Related to June 2007 Supreme Court Decision
  - (Optional) Boston’s Story of School Desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s: A Latino Perspective

BACKGROUND
On June 21, 1974, United States District Judge W. Arthur Garrity found the Boston School Committee guilty of perpetuating de jure segregation. In the decision of the case of *Morgan v. Hennigan*, he wrote, “The court concludes that the defendants took many actions in their official capacities with the purpose and intent to segregate the Boston public schools and that such action caused current conditions of segregation in Boston public schools.”

State law mandated that a plan to remedy racially imbalanced schools be in place at the beginning of the new school year in September. As a temporary measure until the school committee put forward a plan of their own, Judge Garrity adopted the desegregation plan drafted by the Massachusetts Board of Education—a plan that included busing students between South Boston and Roxbury. As the school year was about to begin, the Boston School Committee still had not proposed a plan to help desegregate schools, and the state plan went into effect.

The chief architect of this plan, the Episcopalian minister Charles Glenn, was a veteran of the civil rights movement; he had marched in Selma and joined “freedom choirs” in North Carolina. As the director of the State Education...
Department’s Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity in 1971, he was responsible for developing plans that would help school districts, like Boston, comply with the Racial Imbalance Act. Although he expressed a strong belief in the value of racially integrated schools, Glenn conceded that this task was “largely mechanical.” He explained his process as follows:

We simply took a large map and started moving across the city in a big arc from northwest to southeast, dividing it into districts so that each school would include the right proportions of black and white kids. When we got to the end of the arc, we were left with South Boston and Roxbury. We didn’t have any other choice but to mix those two neighborhoods.58

While educators and activists argued that there were other options,59 Glenn’s plan was the only clearly articulated remedy available to Judge Garrity in 1974. Had he chosen to wait a year to restudy this plan and gather more feedback from the community, perhaps the desegregation of Boston’s schools would have been more successful. Yet, by 1974, after more than a decade of failed attempts to desegregate Boston’s schools and a decade of intransigence from the Boston School Committee, many in the civil rights community were eager to begin the process of desegregation. Moreover, since the state court had already ordered that a plan should be in place in the fall of 1974, Garrity could not justify overriding this decision.

The decision to bus students between Roxbury and South Boston was met with anxiety from all constituencies. Not only was South Boston known to have strong opposition to desegregation, but it was also unfamiliar territory for Boston’s black community. Indeed, in the preceding ten years only three black students had ever attended South Boston High.60 Understanding the tension caused by this plan requires an awareness of neighborhood pride that existed in many of Boston’s communities. Neighborhoods such as Charlestown, East Boston, and South Boston were ethnic enclaves for Irish and Italian immigrants. They were geographically, economically, and to some degree, culturally, segregated from the Protestant, middle-class “Yankee” heritage of Boston’s center. To this day, these communities have their own celebrations, songs, and institutions. Roxbury was (and still is) a strong place of pride for the black community, with the Freedom House serving as a political and cultural anchor. Court-ordered busing infringed upon the sovereignty and integrity of these neighborhoods.61 Even Judge Garrity recognized the problems with his plan, stating, “If there was a way to accomplish desegregation in Boston without transporting students to schools beyond walking distance, the court and all parties would much prefer that alternative.”62 But, as the material in Lesson Three shows, attempts to influence the Boston School Committee to desegre-
gate schools by other means had failed, and the Supreme Court made it impossible to include the suburbs in any desegregation plan. Thus, in 1974, court-ordered busing appeared to be the only way to immediately begin desegregating Boston’s schools.

Although race is a central issue in this event, it is important not to overlook the class issues that were also at play. South Boston was one of the poorest white communities in the United States. Roxbury also suffered from high poverty rates. According to Anthony Lukas, author of *Common Ground*, “The federal court orders of 1974 and 1975 . . . assured that the burden of integration would fall disproportionately on the poor of both races.” Psychologist Robert Coles called the busing plan a “scandal” because it was imposed “on working-class people exclusively.” He argued, as did others, that any busing plan “should cross these [class] lines and people in the suburbs should share in it.” Yet, the Supreme Court ruling in *Milliken v. Bradley* dictated that any desegregation plan could not involve the suburbs.

In *Boston Against Busing*, author Ronald Formisano describes how the court’s desegregation plan affected Bostonians of different socioeconomic classes in particular ways. He writes, “[T]he lower classes did the segregating, the middle classes did the fleeing, either immediately or after a short trial (some stayed because their children traveled on insulated or relatively safe tracks to sixth grade and then escaped into the six-year Latin schools), while the affluent were exempt from the start.” Thus, while the media and most Bostonians were focusing on the racial differences between South Boston and Roxbury, there was a missed opportunity for members of these neighborhoods to connect over shared concerns brought about by similarities in their economic circumstances. Boston native and historian Nat Hentoff summarizes this point as follows:

> In 1974, when a federal court ordered busing to integrate Boston’s public schools, black students from Roxbury were sent to working-class South Boston to the rage of many of its white residents. But little notice was paid to the fact that the previously nearly all-white South Boston High School had a very low percentage of graduates who went on to college. Their parents did not recognize that they shared a class grievance with the black parents from Roxbury.

Michael MacDonald, author of *All Souls: A Family Story from Southie*, recounts the situation differently. In the midst of the busing crisis, he recalls how residents of South Boston “were starting to talk about how this wasn’t about race. That it was about poor people being told that they have to do things that rich people don’t have to do.” He remembered his mother saying, “Our kids have just as little,” comparing the students in South Boston to those in Roxbury.
Yet, MacDonald also points out that this recognition of shared economic challenges did not lead to the building of relationships based on class solidarity. Even before Judge Garrity announced his ruling, desegregation opponents announced that any busing plan would only create a more racially imbalanced system—and they were right. Boston schools are more segregated today than they were in 1974. White enrollment declined throughout the 1970s, as white families moved to the suburbs or enrolled their children in private school. In 1970, 64 percent of Boston’s public school students were white. By 2007, the percentage of white students had dropped to 14 percent. While the numbers of Asian and Latino students have increased, today many of Boston’s public schools have a predominantly black student body.

There are numerous explanations for why court-ordered busing did not integrate Boston’s schools. As stated earlier, one of the chief criticisms was that the plan involved two communities that did not have adequate economic and political resources to cope with the desegregation order. Another criticism was that court-ordered busing did not treat the cause at the root of school segregation: residential segregation. According to Ron Formisano, Judge Garrity’s ruling could never have reversed powerful demographic trends influenced by federal policies, economic conditions, and fear of school integration. He explains:

The answer to why things went so badly in Boston runs more nearly into Boston’s post–World War II history, to the population shift from 1950–1970, which led to a rapid rate of increase in the African American population, an expanding ghetto, and deterioration of housing and of schools in black neighborhoods. . . . Simultaneously, whites migrated to the suburbs so that by 1970 Boston’s population of some 600,000 was ringed by a “suburban noose” consisting of over a million and a half persons, more than 98 percent white in racial composition.

A third complaint concerns the lack of strong civic leadership that could have guided Boston through this tense period. Finally, some argue that changes in laws do not result in changes in attitudes, in this case attitudes about local control of schools and about racial integration. Educational researcher Elliot Weinbaum explains:

Supporters of change seemed to assume that changes in attitude would follow changes in law. Positioning people in a new context with respect to their neighboring communities was not nearly as easy as passing a law or drafting a court decision. The hard work of changing the beliefs and practices of students, staff, families, and communities either before, during, or after the start of mandatory busing may have served to make the changes more palatable. However, this hard work was largely
neglected. The possibility exists that by developing a more thoughtful dialogue about race and segregation, Boston, and many other Northern cities, could have avoided some of the re-segregation that occurred following Garrity’s involvement.74

What might the “thoughtful dialogue” have looked like? What might have equipped the Boston community to constructively figure out how to design the best possible system for all students? We will never know the answer to these questions. Still, so that these events do not get boiled down into simplistic tales of good versus evil, an exploration of civil rights in Boston asks that we look at school segregation from multiple perspectives. Ironically, the antibusing community in Boston used the same constitutional principles of equal protection when arguing for their right to send their children to neighborhood schools that civil rights activists used to argue for the desegregation of schools and public facilities. While black parents wanted the right for the children to have an equal education (one they thought could be best achieved in desegregated schools), white parents wanted the right to send their children to the familiar schools in their neighborhoods. As Ron Formisano explains,

For the opponents of busing the threat to their neighborhoods and lifestyles constituted a trampling on their freedom. . . . For many antibusers who were not racists and not prejudiced, the court orders amounted to having other people’s values forced on them, a situation made all the more unpalatable by the evident fact that the others did not need to abide by those same values.75

Americans value personal freedom, but what happens when one person’s (or group’s) choice violates another person’s (or group’s) civil rights? This episode of Boston’s history highlights the challenges of living in a democratic community, where often individual needs must be compromised for the benefit of the larger society. “Freedom is a matter of degree,” writes Formisano; “We trade some of it, in effect, for social order, comity, civility, and sometimes, for social justice. If everybody were left alone, we would never come close to achieving integration or equity, so obviously everyone, not just some, and particularly not the lower classes and the poor, must give up some of that freedom.”76

The violence and tension that followed Judge Garrity’s ruling demonstrates how “giving up some of that freedom” sometimes comes at a tremendous cost. Students had to be escorted to school by police officers. One can only imagine how students’ learning was affected by the pervasive racial tension and the immediate threat of violence that permeated the schools and the communities most affected by Judge Garrity’s order. Members of both the white and black community were injured and even killed during mob riots and other
racially motivated violence. Reflecting on court-ordered busing in Boston, Jean McGuire is quoted as saying, “I felt that what took place absolutely had to happen.” She continues with the statement, “It may not have had to happen that way,” raising the question of how struggles over how to achieve civil rights, exemplified by the conflict over school segregation in Boston, can be resolved in a more peaceful, productive manner.

(Note: The desegregation of Boston public schools in the 1970s has typically been characterized as affecting black and white students and their families. While the black and white communities, for demographic reasons, were most affected by forced busing, other minority groups in the city were also impacted by the events of school desegregation. The handout “Boston’s Story of School Desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s: A Latino Perspective” in the Appendix at the end of this lesson describes the complex ways in which Boston’s Latino community experienced the school segregation conflict.)
LESSON PLAN

WARM-UP
To prepare students for viewing an excerpt from the *Eyes on the Prize* episode “Keys to the Kingdom,” review material from previous lessons. Based on the historical evidence they gathered during Lesson Three, how do they predict Judge Garrity will rule in this case? Students can refer to Fieldnote 3: Part Two as they answer this question. If they have not already completed this chart, they could work with a small group to do so now.

Once students are aware that Judge Garrity found the Boston School Committee guilty of de jure segregation, you can ask students to predict what happened next—what did Judge Garrity do to remedy this situation? Many students may already know something about the history of court-mandated busing in Boston. They may know people who lived through this event. If you asked students to interview family or community members about school desegregation efforts in Boston (see homework assignment for Lesson Three), this would be an appropriate time to have students share the results of their interviews or other information they know about what happened after Garrity’s ruling in *Morgan v. Hennigan*.

When viewing “Keys to the Kingdom,” students will learn about different reactions to busing. To pique students’ interest, you can ask them to read the selection of quotations on the handout “Perspectives on Court-Ordered Busing in Boston” in the Appendix at the end of this lesson. Different students can be assigned a quotation to read aloud. (In preparation for this activity, you might cut the quotations into slips that you can distribute to student-presenters during class.) While the quotations are read aloud, students can record words and ideas that stand out to them. You can also ask them to brainstorm a list of questions about busing in Boston. They can look for answers to these questions as they watch “Keys to the Kingdom.”

MAIN ACTIVITY
Students will watch an 18-minute clip from the “Keys to the Kingdom” episode of *Eyes on the Prize* (5:20–23:05). As students watch the film, they can record ideas about how Boston’s residents are responding to court-ordered busing. Fieldnote 4: Part One includes a template students can use to record this information. Encourage students to jot notes about what they see and hear, just like newspaper reporters would do if they were on the scene. Remind students that taking detailed notes will help them when it comes time to write their article.

We suggest pausing the film several times to give students the opportunity to record notes, ask questions, check their comprehension, and turn to their neighbor to discuss issues raised in the film. We have provided a viewing guide for teachers in the Appendix at the end of this lesson. This guide suggests interesting moments when you might pause the film, as well as questions you can use to check students’ comprehension of main ideas and to encourage discussion.

For the purpose of this unit and lesson, we do not suggest showing the final eight minutes of this episode. This part of the documentary depicts the violence that followed the imple-
mentation of the busing order. (The extension section includes some ideas about how to include the end of “Keys to the Kingdom” in this lesson.) Rather than show this footage, you might ask students what they know about what happened in the immediate years following court-ordered busing. You could explain that anger over busing incited riots and even murders, and that many parents pulled their children from the public school system. Also of note, in 1977, Louise Day Hicks lost her bid for mayor and John O’Bryant was elected to the Boston School Committee—the first black representative on the school committee in the twentieth century.

**FOLLOW-THROUGH**

Throughout the civil rights movement, activists used the courts as a way to advance civil rights. Typically, after a judge, or even the Supreme Court, issued a ruling, the situation on the ground did not change overnight, especially when these rulings related to education. This was as true in Little Rock, Arkansas, as it was in Boston, Massachusetts. Exploring the consequences of Judge Garrity’s decision is an exercise in understanding both the potential and the limits of the courts as a tool to advance civil rights. One way to help students think more deeply about the role of the courts as a tool to advance civil rights is through a barometer activity. Before beginning this activity, ask students to complete Fieldnote 4: Part Two.

During the barometer activity, some students will likely express frustration with Judge Garrity’s decision to mandate the busing of students from one neighborhood to another. Other students may be less frustrated by the idea of busing, but critical of how this busing plan was implemented. Help students channel any frustration into a creative outlet by asking them to brainstorm other “endings” to this story. What else could have happened in 1972, before the case was brought to court? What else could have happened in 1974? What do they wish would have happened? Small groups can complete Fieldnote 5: Part One. Then, groups can share their ideas with each other. You may wish to structure this as a jigsaw (where one member from each original group joins a new “mixed” group). This exercise will help students develop alternate “endings” for their own articles.
Instructions for Barometer Activity

**Step One:** Remind students of class rules about respect and courtesy. Because this activity deals with students literally putting themselves and their opinions on the line, it has potential for outbursts that result from some not understanding classmates’ perspectives. You might want to review the difference between constructive and disrespectful disagreement. One concrete suggestion you can provide is for students to speak from the “I” rather than from an accusatory “You” viewpoint.

**Step Two:** Place “Strongly Agree” and “Strongly Disagree” signs at opposite ends of a continuum in your room. After having students reflect (often in writing) upon a prompt that calls for agreement or disagreement, have students align themselves along the spectrum, telling them that if they stand on either extreme they are absolute in their agreement or disagreement; they may also stand anywhere in between the two extremes, depending on how much they do or do not agree with the statement. Although students may feel solid in their position, they do not have to stay there if their opinion changes.

Prompts you might use for this activity include the following. (These statements are included in Fieldnote 4: Part Two. If you write some of your own prompts, be sure to change the statements in the Fieldnote page, as well.)

- In 1974, court-ordered busing was the only strategy that could have desegregated Boston’s public schools.
- Court-ordered desegregation plans do more harm than good. Questions about schooling should be left to communities to solve.
- Students and society benefit when more children are able to attend racially integrated schools.
- To create a desegregated school system, a judge should be able to tell parents where their children must attend school.
- Courts have the power to reduce the effects of racial discrimination.
- Courts are powerless to combat prejudice.
- Schools should not be used as battlegrounds to address inequality and discrimination.

**Step Three:** Once the students have lined themselves up, ask them to explain why they have chosen to stand where they are standing. Encourage students to use historical evidence and personal experience to defend their position. It is probably best to alternate from one end to the middle to the other end, rather than allowing too many voices from one end to dominate. After about three or four viewpoints are heard, ask if anyone wishes to move, whether further toward the end where they were standing or toward another end or somewhere in between. Run the activity until you feel most or all voices have been heard.

**Step Four:** Have students review their original responses to these statements. Encourage them to change their responses if their opinions have changed as a result of this activity.
**HOMEWORK**

- Students can complete Fieldnote 5 for homework. Then they can begin drafting their articles.
- Students can read more about responses to Judge Garrity’s court-ordered busing. The *Eyes on the Prize* Study Guide includes a reading, “Desegregation: Responses to the Court Order,” on pages 196–198. They can answer all or some of the Connections questions, which follow the reading. Or, they could record the sentence that most surprised or interested them in their notebooks or journals along with a reaction to this sentence.

**ASSESSMENT IDEAS**

- Listening to students’ comments during the barometer activity will give you a sense of how deeply students understand the role of the courts in desegregating schools. Note how students are drawing from historical evidence as well as from their own experience.
- Fieldnote 4: Part One can be evaluated for historical accuracy and thoroughness. A quick review of students’ charts will reveal what students learned about reactions to court-mandated busing from watching *Eyes on the Prize*.
- The questions on the “Keys to the Kingdom” viewing guide can be used to create a quiz or test about the effects of Judge Garrity’s decision.

**EXTENSIONS**

- One way to help students better understand the consequences of Judge Garrity’s decision is to ask them, as a whole class or in small groups, to complete a chart that depicts the limits and power of the court to influence school segregation in Boston. On one side of the chart, students can list what the court had the power to control in terms of school desegregation. From watching the *Eyes on the Prize* excerpt, students have learned that Judge Garrity had the power to enforce the busing of students to schools outside of their neighborhoods. On the other side of the chart, students can list what the court did not have the power to control, such as parents’ decisions to remove their students from school and the attitudes of people who did not want their children to attend schools in other neighborhoods.
- To help students understand the complexity of resolving the problems of school (and residential) segregation in Boston, you might ask them to consider Judge Garrity’s decision from the perspectives of particular members of the Boston community. The Appendix to this lesson includes some quotations you might use to structure this activity. You could divide students into small groups, assigning each student two or three quotations to read aloud to the group. As students read quotations, the group can keep a chart of reasons to support busing and reasons to oppose busing. After all of the quotations have been read, you might challenge groups to come to a consensus about how the problem of school segregation should be resolved in Boston. Groups might debrief the challenges they faced in trying to reach consensus. Through this process, students might come to better appreciate why it was so difficult for the Boston community to figure out a solution that satisfied all parties involved.
• Students can learn more about the turmoil that followed Judge Garrity’s decision by watching the rest of *Eyes on the Prize*, Episode 13, “Keys to the Kingdom” (23:05–31:03). In the final part of this episode, South Boston High students reflect on the violence that occurred in their schools and communities as a result of court-ordered busing. This part of the documentary includes graphic footage of verbal and physical violence, including mob riots and inflammatory language. We strongly recommend that you watch this part of the episode before deciding to show it to students. If you decide to include this excerpt in your lesson, we suggest you leave adequate time for students to debrief what they have seen and heard, as some of the images have the power to disturb, offend, anger, and sadden viewers of this documentary. After giving students the opportunity to reflect on this film in writing, a conversation that follows might include a discussion about the different viewpoints represented in this film. Students could come away from watching this episode believing that all black Bostonians supported busing while all white Bostonians did not. However, the documentary provides some examples of white parents who bravely sent their students to schools, despite the violence, and of black parents who refused to send their children to school in South Boston.

• Boston television station WGBH has posted clips of their news coverage of court-ordered busing beginning in 1974. Students can watch this footage as another way to explore this complicated history. Comparing these news segments to the *Eyes on the Prize* documentary provides the opportunity to develop students’ media literacy skills. Students can consider how the audience and format of these different videos might be influencing the message and content. (Note: To browse WGBH’s collection, search under the heading “Busing for School Integration.” The collection houses clips from 1974 to 1991.)

• In his memoir *All Souls: A Family Story from Southie*, Michael Patrick MacDonald describes his experience as a young teenager living through the school busing crisis in Boston. The chapter “Fight the Power” is particularly relevant to this unit. You can recommend this book to students who are particularly interested in this topic. Or, you can assign excerpts of this book for homework.

• Following this lesson, students might be curious to know about how Boston Public Schools currently address the issue of school desegregation. In 1974 and subsequent years, the courts upheld policies that allowed schools and districts to account for race when making decisions about student enrollment. In 1989, Judge Garrity turned over authority of Boston Public Schools to the school committee with a final order that schools could not be resegregated. The following year, the city implemented a new plan for making school assignments called “controlled choice.” The idea behind controlled choice was to allow students to attend schools in their neighborhoods, as much as possible. Controlled choice divided the city into three zones, each with a similar racial composition. Students could then select from one of the schools within their zone. Student assignments were made so that each school’s racial make-up reflected the racial composition of the students living in that zone. This kept individual schools from becoming segregated. While many people considered controlled choice to be a success (it was even copied by other cities), in 2000 the Boston School Committee voted to eliminate race as a factor for making school assignments. The school committee’s decision was influenced
by two lawsuits. First, in 1998, in the case *Wessmann v. Gittens* the United States Court of Appeals ruled that Boston’s use of race as a factor in making assignments to Boston Latin School (a selective and highly sought-after exam school) was violating the equal protection clause of the Constitution.77 Second, in 1999, the group “Boston’s Children First” brought a different case against the city of Boston, charging that white students were being denied their place in neighborhood public schools.78 As an extension activity, you might ask students to do their own research on the recent cases of *Wessmann v. Gittens* and *Boston’s Children First v. City of Boston*. They could also find out more about the current process for assigning students to Boston’s schools. Ultimately, students might be asked to design their own plan for making school assignments in a way that would balance the community’s desire for neighborhood schools without creating segregated schools.

- School desegregation is an issue that is still being debated today. Many educators and scholars have argued that over the past decade public schools are experiencing “resegregation,”79 and a 2007 decision by the United States Supreme Court makes it more difficult for districts to use race as a factor in making school assignments. The following resources will help students consider different perspectives on the current debate about school segregation.
  - Editorials by scholar Charles Ogletree, Jr., and journalist Juan Williams offer different perspectives on the legacy and future of school integration
  - “Quotations Related to June 2007 Supreme Court Decision” handout (in the Appendix at the end of this lesson)

- Students can read the handout “Boston’s Story of School Desegregation in the 1960s and 1970s: A Latino Perspective” in the Appendix at the end of this lesson to learn about how the Latino community experienced the conflict over school segregation in Boston. Of particular interest is the way that studying this event from a Latino perspective complicates our understanding of race and the categorizing of people into racial groups. A mother, Jovita Fontanez, sums this up by explaining: We had to show them that we are Puerto Rican and that in our families we can have whites and we can have blacks. How can you classify one child in the family as black and another as white and bus them in different directions?80

- In his book *Dismantling Desegregation*, education professor and director of the Civil Rights Project Gary Orfield distinguishes between desegregation and integration. He writes: “Desegregation, properly understood, is an attack of an underlying system of inequality and a demand that the effective institutions and opportunities be shared with those who have historically been treated the most unfairly.”81 In other words, desegregation is the process of fixing a broken and unjust system of discrimination that has intentionally (or not) separated people based on race (and often class). On the other hand, “Integration is not desegregation (thought that is a necessary first step),” according to Orfield. “Integration is the goal of sharing major institutions in a way that recognizes and teaches respect for our different
cultures as well as our shared goals.” Here are some ways you might help students consider the distinction between desegregation and integration:

- You can share Orfield’s definition of integration and desegregation with students and ask them to discuss the difference between the two. Rather than do this in words, you might have students demonstrate the difference between desegregation and integration by modeling these concepts with small objects such as different colored Legos or pieces of paper.
- You can also ask students to share examples of communities they think are segregated, desegregated, and integrated. Consider events when communities might experience moments of integration, such as at a sporting event, a concert, a shopping mall, a movie theater, or in a public park. What creates these moments? What would need to happen so that these moments could be created on a larger scale? Finally, students might explore the question of the degree to which the Internet, or communities that live on the Web, represent segregated or integrated communities.
Viewing Guide for “Keys to the Kingdom”

First, we suggest stopping after the narrator announces Judge Garrity’s decision so that you can be sure all students understand his ruling.

(9:00) NARRATOR: On June 21, 1974, federal district court judge W. Arthur Garrity ruled that the Boston School Committee was guilty of consciously maintaining two separate school systems, one black, one white. He ordered an immediate remedy, city-wide busing to start in September. Less than a mile separated two of Boston’s poorer neighborhoods. Roxbury was the heart of the black community; South Boston was Louise Day Hicks’ home and the center of white resistance. Students were to be bused between the two neighborhoods.

Comprehension questions: How did Judge Garrity rule in this case? Based on his ruling, what did he order to fix the situation?

Discussion questions: Why do you think Judge Garrity ordered that students should be bused between South Boston and Roxbury? What did he hope to achieve? What do you think might be different responses to his ruling?

The following four moments were selected because they highlight different responses to the busing order, based on the different perspectives from which individuals and groups viewed this event.

1. (10:50) AL LUPO: Boston is a very hidebound, distrustful, turf conscious, class conscious, parochial city full of people who did not make much progress over the years. I’m talking about white folks. They were not middle income people. They were poor folk, and they were running hardscrabble operations. And they were scared. By the time busing came around, these people were ripe for revolution.

Comprehension questions: What does Lupo mean when he says “these people were ripe for revolution”? Who are the people he is referring to?

Discussion questions: How are issues of class played out in Garrity’s busing order? Who is being bused? Who is not being bused? Why do you think poor people were disproportionately bearing the brunt of the busing order?

2. (13:19) JANET PALMARIELLO: Just because I’m white doesn’t mean that the Fourteenth Amendment doesn’t refer to me, either. I am white and I want my rights.

Comprehension question: What right is protected by the Fourteenth Amendment?

Discussion questions: Why does she feel like her rights are being violated? How can she use the language of the Fourteenth Amendment to support her claim that her rights are being violated? What happens when protecting the rights of one person or group conflicts with protecting the rights of another person or group?
3. (18:30) TRACY AMALFITANO: I did not support the boycott and I sent my son to school from the very first day. And for a long period of time, he rode the bus by himself.
FIRST WOMAN: I know who you are, and you’re a sellout, too, lady.

Comprehension question: Why did the woman call Ms. Amalfitano a sellout?

Discussion questions: Why do you think Tracy Amalfitano sent her son to school, even though many of her neighbors supported the boycott? What did she risk in doing so? Why did other parents, both black and white, send their children on busses across town, in spite of the threats to their safety?

4. (22:10) TOM ATKINS: About a week later, I was sitting in my office one night, and I reached into my briefcase and here were these forms. So I took them out, and I began sort of absently to read through them. As I read through one after another of these forms, what I saw was that these kids couldn’t spell. They could not write a simple declaratory sentence. And as I read these forms, none of which were grammatically correct or spelling proper, I just started to cry. It was impossible to explain the feeling of pain on the one hand, but on the other hand, I knew we were right.

Comprehension question: When Tom Atkins says, “I knew we were right,” what is he referring to?

Discussion questions: Why do you think Tom Atkins cried? According to Mr. Atkins, what is the relationship between kids not being able to spell and desegregated schools? Do you agree with this idea?
Perspectives on Court-Ordered Busing in Boston

Ruth Batson, chairperson of the Education Committee of the NAACP branch in Boston: We decided that where there were a large number of white students, that’s where the care went, that’s where the books went, that’s where the money went. So therefore, our theory was move our kids into those schools where they’re putting all of the resources so they can get a better education.83

Ray Herman, white administrator and part-time gym teacher: All those wars [Korea and Vietnam] were caused by people bullying people. People who hadn’t the singlet right in the world to force other people to do things against their will. That’s busing in a nutshell. It’s got nothing to do with racial prejudice. . . . I couldn’t care less what Negroes do with their children. They want to send them to their schools, ship them off to our schools, I couldn’t care less. But telling people, ordering them, you gotta go here or there. . . . Nobody can make such a policy. They may think they can, but no one has that kind of power. . . . No, you don’t want to blame this antibusing attitude on people being prejudiced. . . . It isn’t the mixing of kids, it’s the pushing people around. Telling a man, I don’t care that you’ve spent your life working to make the money to live in this one small block of one small community in the middle of this city. I don’t care that you want to live near the people you grew up with and your parents and maybe grandparents grew up with. I don’t care that you want to keep your children with their own kind so they can see how important it is for them to learn about their own kind, the history of their people and their neighborhood.84

Annie London, black teacher in Boston: Busing is more than a political or legal decision, it’s more than anything you read about in the papers. It’s peoples’ lives and lives don’t start and stop with busing . . . You can survive eating the worst food but you won’t grow from it. You only grow from eating the best foods . . . I say the bus makes it possible for a few children to eat steak once in a while instead of cold pork everyday . . . When they make it possible for poor children, black children, Spanish-speaking children, all children to eat steak every time they feel even the littlest bit of hunger in their insides, then I say you can take all the buses and shove ‘em in the ocean. . . .85

Betty Johnson, black mother: I feel like they should go over here to our school over here. Instead of busing them way across because they can’t defend themselves, they can’t fight.86

Judge W. Arthur Garrity: I think that time will bring about an understanding on the part of most people that there’s no alternative to compliance with the principles set out by the Supreme Court of the United States.87

White mother: I wouldn’t care if they were green or purple, it’s the idea of putting my kid on a bus when I have a school right across the street from where they should go. I don’t care what color they are.88

Nell Armstrong, white mother and pro-busing activist in Boston suburbs: Nell Armstrong . . . discovered a group of women working on a metropolitan busing program. . . . Their project was one in which city and suburban students might be transferred to one another’s schools and communities. There was no sense, the women agreed, for the suburbs to keep out of the turmoil that school desegregation was causing. . . . “If you aren’t part of the solution,” Nell would say, “you’re part of the problem.”89
Cassie, white student being bused to a school in Roxbury: We got new books in the school, and a lot of those other [black] kids aren’t as dumb as everybody said they were. . . . But, they’re as smart as us. Fact, two of their girls are smarter than any of us. . . . It ain’t so bad like I thought it would be . . . I’m learning a lot of things that you can’t read about in books. It’s like, when we’re not supposed to be learning we’re learning anyway. That’s one good thing about the school.92

Mother of Claudell, a black student being bused to school in South Boston: Claudell really likes school. I don’t even think he misses the kids from around here. Have you heard the latest? He was invited by John Doherty’s family to go to a movie for the Doherty boy’s birthday.91

Marjorie Milliken, white mother and antibusing activist: We want good schools for all children, white, black, rich, poor. But, on one’s using our kids for any cheap experiment . . . I’m not about to let our race be trampled on. Our race, our income group, our neighborhoods. If I have to, I’ll educate the children myself . . . rather than let them push those buses down our throats.92

Henry George Macon, black man and school janitor: The black man, see, he got to say he stands for busing . . . Now he knows too, they going to get a lot of good things coming from the busing. . . . Right off, his children going to be in a better school building. Probably be reading better books, having better teachers. And he’s going to learn from those white kids. . . . I see those children black and white, going to teach each other a whole lot of things. Got to have busing for something like that happening in a school. Never saw a white child in all the years I went to school. When I did, I remember, I stared at them same way they stared at me, probably. Couple of animals in the jungle trying to scare each other half to death, and inside everybody’s feeling lonely and scared.93

Louise Day Hicks, school committee member: I believe that little children should go to schools in their own neighborhoods with the children with whom they play — it’s as simple as that.94

White mother: Times haven’t changed that much. . . . There’s always been rich folks making the laws—like where you can send your children to school—and poor folks obeying those laws. . . . If the law were the same for all people, I’m not sure all these government people would be pushing so hard for desegregating the schools. If it was their children riding these buses every morning, they’d play it different.95

Young black student: I’m not going near any school where I might get hurt. I’m going to school for one reason: I want college and I want a profession. . . . When it’s cool, I’ll go.96

Michael MacDonald, white student from South Boston: I threw a rock once. I had to . . . I didn’t have good aim, though, and it landed on the street before it even made it to the bus. I stared at my rock and was partly relieved. I didn’t really want to smash a bus window. I only wanted the others to see me throwing it. . . . I was only eight, but I was part of it all, part of something bigger than anything I’d ever imagined, part of something that was on the national news every night. Every day I felt the pride of rebellion.97

Michael MacDonald, white student from South Boston: Ma said at this point what’s the use of going to school. It certainly wasn’t worth the risk of getting killed.98
Michael MacDonald, white student from South Boston: We all wanted to stop the busing, but sometimes it was confusing. One day you’d be clapping and cheering the inspirational words of Louise Day Hicks and Senator Billy Bulger, and the next day you’d see the blood on the news, black and white people’s blood. . . . Ma said she didn’t know where to turn, what to belong to, and neither did I. We all wanted to belong to something big, and the feeling of being part of the antibusing movement along with the rest of Southie had been the best feeling in the world. But it wasn’t feeling so good anymore.
Quotations Related to June 2007 Supreme Court Decision

Justice Breyer (excerpt from dissenting opinion): For much of this nation’s history, the races remained divided. It was not long ago that people of different races drank from separate fountains, rode on separate buses, and studied in separate schools. In this Court’s finest hour, Brown v. Board of Education challenged this history and helped to change it. For Brown held out a promise of true racial equality—not as a matter of fine words on paper, but as a matter of everyday life in the Nation’s cities and schools. It was about the nature of a democracy that must work for all Americans. . . . To invalidate the plans under review is to threaten the promise of Brown. . . . This is a decision that the Court and the Nation will come to regret.100

Chief Justice John Roberts (quotation from majority opinion): The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.101

The following quotations are from Letters to the Editor, New York Times (June 30, 2007):

Harris L. Present: The decision of the United States Supreme Court to declare unconstitutional the use of race in integrating public schools is in order at this time. African Americans on their own have now progressed in the social and economic life of our nation and need no special benefits today to be admitted to the finest public schools. It is about time that in our nation, equal rights can be achieved without setting up artificial qualifications.

Jeffrey P. Sinesky: As the sponsor of Dr. Kenneth Clark’s social science research demonstrating the benefits of integrated education, relied upon by the Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education, the American Jewish Committee was dismayed by the decision on Thursday striking down the Seattle and Louisville school integration programs. The court left woefully little wiggle room going forward for school systems to counteract the segregated housing patterns that create school systems virtually devoid of racial diversity. It is undeniable that integrated schools offer children the best possible learning environment in which they can develop the tolerance, respect, and understanding necessary to flourish in our democratic and pluralistic society. Unfortunately, the court’s ruling will serve only to undermine decades of work to achieve racial equality and diversity in our public educational system and our nation as a whole.

Mark Anderson: Thank heaven we have people of all colors who can tell it like it is: The “diversity” emperor has long paraded with no clothes. We need to devote real resources to each individual child to help that child attain the best education and the best opportunities for success possible. We don’t do that when we shuttle kids around based on race. Decades of social studies have demonstrated that public school systems have systematically denied poor kids an equal opportunity, and have left many kids even further behind, despite many well-intentioned but misguided efforts. Bravo for those courageous souls who can now go forth freed of the race-based policy chains of the past.
The desegregation of Boston Public Schools in the 1970s has typically been characterized as affecting black and white students and their families. While the black and white communities, for demographic reasons, were most affected by forced busing, other minority groups in the city were also impacted by the events of school desegregation. In 1970, Latinos were the largest non–African American minority group, making up less than 3 percent of Boston’s urban population. The relatively small number of Latinos in Boston meant that their experiences and issues were often overshadowed by the concerns of their black and white neighbors. Yet, Boston’s Latino communities continue to live with the legacy of desegregation. Latino students were bused, like white and African American students. One mother, Maria Perez-Gray, notes how her children were being bused across the city, to a predominately white neighborhood, and how her “girl was scared to go because of racial problems.”

Miren Uriarte, executive director of The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy, argues that in a racially polarized city like Boston, Latino communities have had a complicated relationship with white and black communities, often experiencing exclusion, alienation, and isolation. A handout distributed by La Alianza in 1975 noted that Latinos in Boston daily confront “confusion, a sense of frustration, conflicting value systems, inability to communicate, racial or ethnic discrimination, and societal rejection.” Uriarte argues that because Latino communities were “left on the sidelines,” they began to develop their own separate grassroots organizations, such as La Alianza Hispana or Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción, designed to address Latino-specific concerns.

Boston’s Latino communities experienced a complex and conflicted relationship with mandatory busing, specifically, and school desegregation in general. To begin with, in terms of education, the Latino population of Boston focused primarily on enhancing specific supports for Latino children in schools, such as ESL classes and bilingual programs. The emphasis on desegregation often resulted in less recognition or support for such programs. Additionally, here was a population whose name, Latino, categorized individuals by a common language, not race. It is noted that the term “encompasses an aggregation of people from many countries in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean and from Central and South America.” Uriarte argues that Latinos remained mainly ambivalent toward the issue of busing or antibusing “principally because of the implications of racial polarization in their own families.” A mother, Jovita Fontanez, sums this up by explaining:

We had to show them that we are Puerto Rican and that in our families we can have whites and we can have blacks. How can you classify one child in the family as black and another as white and bus them in different directions?

Thus, the Latino population of Boston was affected by busing in two distinct ways: first, desegregation took away some of the emphasis Latino families hoped to place on the need for special support for Spanish-speaking students, and second, desegregation efforts forced racial categories onto Latino families. Exploring the experiences of Latino students and their families reveals the complications that can result when race-based policy decisions do not also take account of the many other factors, such as language and class, that also shape students’ identities and school experiences.
1. “The METCO Program is a grant program funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is a voluntary program intended to expand educational opportunities and reduce racial imbalance, by permitting students in certain cities to attend public schools in other communities that have agreed to participate. . . . Currently, there are about 3,300 students participating in 34 school districts in metropolitan Boston and at 4 school districts outside Springfield,” according to the Massachusetts Department of Education website, www.doe.mass.edu/metco (accessed October 12, 2007). For more information about the METCO program, visit the website www.metcoinc.org.


3. The Massachusetts Historical Society’s website, “Long Road to Justice,” contains more information about the history of African Americans in the Massachusetts judicial system. The Honorable Julian T. Houston, Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court, helped spearhead this project, explaining, “I felt it was something that needed to be done. It’s important history, and yet few people know about it.”


5. “The Civic Mission of Schools,” a report sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation and the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) was created by 56 leading scholars in the field of civic education. For more information, refer to their website, www.civicmissionofschools.org.


12. Williams, “A Noble Ruling in its Day.”


16. For example, in 1820, Thomas Jefferson stated, “I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education.”


18. “When the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began its assault on segregation in earnest during the 1930s, it focused in significant measure on schools, in part because of the perceived importance of education to the quest for racial equality.” Davison Douglas, Jim Crow Moves North (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 2.


23. Lemuel Shaw, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, ruled in the Roberts case that “separate but equal” schools were constitutional. This became the
precedent for the famous ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that opened the door to Jim Crow segregation for over 50 years. Lemuel Shaw is famous for saying that prejudice “is not created by law, and probably cannot be changed by law.”


32. Report by Lewis Mumford Center, University of Albany, “Ethnic Diversity Grows, Neighborhood Integration Lags Behind,” April 2001,

33. Mytown (Multicultural Youth Tour of What’s Now) is a nonprofit organization established to “use the process of sharing local history to empower young people and build appreciation of urban neighborhoods.” Clicking on the names of the neighborhoods in the map reveals background information about the area, including references to who lives there today and in the past. The map can be accessed at www.mytowninc.org/index.php?doc_id=54.


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Facing History and Ourselves/Boston Public Schools Civil Rights Curriculum Collaborative
Documents for this curriculum can be found at www.facinghistory.org/bps/civilrights


38. Ibid.


40. “Indeed, the federal government did most to abet suburban residential apartheid. The government provided massive aid to the housing industry, to localities, to banks, and to individuals in the form of mortgage insurance and loans, and subsidized the suburbs further through highway programs.” Ronald P. Formisano, Boston Against Busing: Race, Class and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991) p. 12.

41. “‘There are persistent reports of ‘panic selling’ tactics by real estate agents,’ according to minutes of the Mattapan Organization’s steering committee. The agents reportedly capitalize on fears of neighborhood change and deterioration and urge people to sell their property at low prices. The Real Estate Committee noted that this practice is one of the neighborhood’s main enemies, and determined to try to put a stop to it. . . .’ We have had widespread reports of real estate salesmen’s activity designed to scare persons into moving,’ Mark S. Israel wrote in the summer of 1967.” Excerpt from Gerald Gamm, Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), www.nytimes.com/books/first/g/gamm-exodus.html? r=1&oref=slogin (accessed October 19, 2007).

42. “From 1950 to 1960 the number of blacks in Boston would almost double from forty thousand to about seventy-five thousand at a time when the city’s overall population had declined 12 percent.” Hillel Levine and Lawrence Harmon, The Death of an American Jewish Community (New York: The Free Press, 1993), p. 75.

43. Ibid.

44. According to a report written by the Massachusetts State Advisory to the United States Civil Rights Commission (1965): “Of the 25 public housing projects operated by the Boston Housing Authority, seventeen have less than 5% Negro families, and in six projects. . . .there are no Negro families. Four projects. . . .are more than 90% Negro and are rapidly approaching the 100% mark. . . .In the Boston Housing Authority’s state-aided projects, as in its federal-aided projects, there appears to be a deliberate racial assignment policy, since 98.6% of the families in one project, Camden Street, are Negroes and the percentage of Negro families in the remaining nine projects ranges from 0.1 to 5.8%.” www.lib.neu.edu/archives/freedom_house/full_text/racial_cover.htm (accessed October 19, 2007).
45. The story of the difficulties of a black family to find a home in the suburbs of Boston is told in chapter 7 of *Common Ground* by J. Anthony Lukas (New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1986).

46. The Racial Imbalance Act defined schools the student body of which included more than 50 percent of nonwhite students as racially imbalanced. For more information on the Racial Imbalance Act and the history surrounding school segregation in Boston, see Elliot Weinbaum, “Looking for leadership: battles over busing in Boston,” *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*, vol. 3, no. 1, (Fall 2004) www.urbanedjournal.org/commentaries/c0009.pdf (accessed October 19, 2007).


49. Formisano, p. 46.

50. Tom Atkins was elected to the Boston City Council in 1967, the first African American to do so in the twentieth century. Mr. Atkins also served as Executive Secretary of the Boston branch of the NAACP. A Harvard-trained lawyer, he helped argue the case *Morgan v. Hennigan* on behalf of the plaintiffs.


53. “The METCO Program is a grant program funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is a voluntary program intended to expand educational opportunities and reduce racial imbalance, by permitting students in certain cities to attend public schools in other communities that have agreed to participate. . . . Currently, there are about 3,300 students participating in 34 school districts in metropolitan Boston and at 4 school districts outside Springfield,” according to the Massachusetts Department of Education website, www.doe.mass.edu/metco (accessed October 12, 2007). For more information about the METCO program, visit the website www.metcoinc.org.


58. Lukas, p. 239.

59. In state-level hearings about the Board of Education’s plan, Harvard Law School Professor Louis Jaffe warned, “[South Boston’s] people are intensely hostile to blacks. . . . I conclude, therefore, that this part of the plan should be restudied.” Quoted in Lukas, p. 240.

60. Weinbaum, p. 3.

61. Kantrowitz, p. 50.

62. Lukas, p. 251.


64. J. Anthony Lukas quoted in Formisano, p. 176.

65. Formisano, p. 177.


68. Michael Patrick MacDonald. p. 76.


72. Formisano, p. 226.

74. Weinbaum, p. 13.

75. Formisano, p. 237.

76. Ibid.


80. Ibid.


82. Ibid, p. 333.


86. Hampton, “The Keys to the Kingdom Transcript.”

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Cottle, pp. 94–96.

90. Ibid., pp. 121, 125.

91. Ibid., p. 123.

92. Ibid. p. 59

93. Ibid., p. 76

95. Cottle, p. xi.

96. Ibid., p. x.

97. MacDonald, p. 85.

98. MacDonald, p. 96.


104. Ibid.


106. Ibid.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.