KentuckyHistoricalSociety

Desegregating Schools in Kentucky: Enforcing Equality in Sturgis, 1956

Lesson plan author: Ryan New, Boyle County High School
Intended grade level: 8th
Number of students: varies
Major content: U.S. History
Unit: Civil Rights
Lesson length: 50 minutes (1 class period)

Context

Goal: Listen to oral history and corroborate their account through other documents surrounding the theme or from the time period. In this case, students will listen to James Howard, one of eight students who integrated in Union County, then corroborate his story with primary documents.

Use—Teachers can use this lesson for discussing how the military helped enforce laws, particularly in instances of supremacy of the national government over the states.

Prior Knowledge—Students will need to have a background on race relations in the United States. Students should be familiar with segregation in the South and how this de facto segregation was institutionalized into state laws. These state laws were upheld in the landmark case *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). Students should know what "separate but equal" meant in society.

Relevancy—Even today schools are challenged by bussing, private schools, and issues surrounding race, religion, gender and sexual orientation rights.

Learning Objectives

Skills

1. Students will work collaboratively to deconstruct visual textual sources using prior knowledge.
2. Students will identify and evaluate the author's purpose in producing the document.
3. Students will evaluate the sources' credibility and trustworthiness by considering genre, audience and the author's purpose.
4. Students will discuss and relate how images must be understood in a larger context.

Knowledge

1. Students will infer historical context from the document.
2. Students will explain how the document might resonate within the African American community based on prior knowledge

Standards

SS-08-5.1.1
Students will use a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources) to describe and explain historical events and conditions and to analyze the perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group) in U.S. history.
SS-08-5.1.2
Students will explain how history is a series of connected events shaped by multiple cause-and-effect relationships

and give examples of those relationships.

SS-08-5.2.4

Students will describe the political, social, economic and cultural differences (e.g., slavery, tariffs, industrialism vs. agrarianism, federal vs. states' rights) among sections of the U.S.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.10

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Instructions

Background material for Teacher

- **Kentucky Historical Society**
  Desegregation of Sturgis High School (http://history.ky.gov/desegregation-of-sturgis-high-school/)
- **National Guard History eMuseum**
  Sturgis and Clay: Showdown for Desegregation in Kentucky Education (PDF) (http://kynghistory.ky.gov/nr/rdonlyres/4af62952-3762-472d-a52a-d18f8122c5c5/0/sturgisandclayky1956.pdf)
- **Kentucky Women in the Civil Rights Era**
  Happy Chandler's reaction to Sturgis and Clay
  http://www.kywcrh.org/archives/2195

Strategies

- "Thinking Like a Historian"—Critical Thinking (Individual and Partner)
- *Kagan*—Think, Pair, Share (Partners, Groups, Class)
- Socratic Method (Class)

Directions

- Pre-assign students to collaborative partners/groups. (Partners will be faster and more rigorous)
- ***Print documents and laminate to have a classroom set.
- (Class) Introduce **James Howard** (Oral History) (10-15 minutes)
  - ◊ Choose as many interviews as time will allow, need at least two to three (range: Decision for integration, protests against integration, dangers faced by students, relationship between whites and blacks)
- Explain the "Thinking Like a Historian" guide (which will act as the formative assessment. Teacher will model different contexts with videos chosen for James Howard (4-5 min.)
- (Individual or partners) will evaluate the documents and fill out the "Thinking like a Historian" guide based on their interpretation with the documents (15 min.). Teachers may elect to go one document at a time. (2-3 min. per document)

- (Class) Students as a class will discuss student and group findings to add clarification, perspective, and depth. Teacher will ask the students questions based on "Thinking Like a Historian" and as students answer the question, the teacher will ask other individuals or groups to agree and disagree with evidence taken from prior knowledge or contextual evidence. All questions surrounding documents should be based on evidence form the documents and should be geared toward corroborating James Howard's story. (15 minutes)
- Document A—"Day Law" 1904 (discusses segregation in schools)
  - ◊ Select Vocabulary: Jim Crow, "separate but equal," *Plessy v. Ferguson*, segregation
- Document B—*Brown v. Board of Education I*, 1954 (excerpts of majority opinion Chief Justice Earl Warren)
  - ◊ Select Vocabulary: US Supreme Court, "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal"
- Document C—"Kentucky Guard Escort Student in Sturgis," 1956
  - ◊ Select Vocabulary: National Guard, Executive Branch (duties), Civil Rights
- Document D— Executive Order Governor A.B. "Happy" Chandler, 1956
  - ◊ Select Vocabulary: Executive Order, Federalism, Civil Rights
- Document E—"M47 Tank Stands Guard in Front of Sturgis High School" 1956
- Document F—"Southland—USA" Political Cartoon published locally and nationally, 1956
  - ◊ Select Vocabulary: Political Cartoon, Satire

Accommodations

Accommodations for scribes and time should be taken into account. One recommendation is to pre-assign groups according to levels of learners. The collaborative process (and levels) should assist all students.

Assessments

Learning Objective	Type of Assessment	Description of Assessment	Adaptations/ Accommodations
Skill	Formative	1. "Thinking Like a Historian" (Pair, Share) 2. Student Self-Assessment 3. Socratic Method (teacher questions for clarity	Extra time if allowed Lower level learners with high level learners
Knowledge	Formative	Exit Slip (based on teacher emphasis)	Redo for accuracy

Thinking Like a Historian: Corroborating Evidence

Primary Document (List name)	**Challenging Source** (Who, when, purpose?)	**Contextualize** (Events, themes, people of this era)	**Perspective** (Whose point of view included/excluded)	**Corroboration** (Helps back up story or offers different version)
Document A				
Document B				
Document C				
Document D				
Document E				
Document F				

Comparing Documents (Completed after all documents have been evaluated)

Similarities between Documents	**Differences between Documents**

Document A

An Act [The Day Law] to prohibit white and colored persons from attending the same school

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

1. That it shall be unlawful for any person, corporation or association of persons to maintain or operate any college, school or institution where persons of the white and negro races are both received as pupils for instruction: and person or corporation who shall operate or maintain any such college, school or institution shall be fined one thousand dollars [~$25,000 in 2014 dollars], and any person or corporation who may be convicted of violating the provisions of this act, shall be fined one hundred dollars [~$250 in 2014 dollars] for each day they may operate said school, college, or institution, after such conviction.

3. It shall be unlawful for any white person to attend any school or institution where negroes are received as pupils or receive instruction, and it shall be unlawful for any negro or colored person to attend any school or institution where white persons are received as pupils or receive instruction. Any person so offending shall be fined fifty dollars for each day he attended such institution or schools . . .

5. This act shall not take effect, or be in operation, before the fifteenth day of July, one thousand nine hundred and four.

Approved March 22, 1904

Document B

. . . Our decision, therefore, cannot turn on merely a comparison of these tangible factors in the Negro and white schools involved in each of these cases. We must look instead to the effect of segregation itself on public education. . . .

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. . . Today it [education] is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. 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. . . .

To separate them [children in grade and high schools] from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely to ever be undone. . . . Whatever may have been the extent of psychological knowledge at the time of Plessy v. Ferguson, this finding is amply supported by modern authority. . . .

We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and other similarly situated . . . are . . . deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

Brown v. Board of Education I Majority Opinion Chief Justice Earl Warren, 1954

Document C

Document D

EXECUTIVE ORDER

KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD

WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court has by mandate prohibited the racial segregation of pupils in the nation's public schools, and

WHEREAS, Civil disturbances have arisen in certain areas of the Commonwealth of Kentucky when local authorities sought to comply with the mandate of the Supreme Court by integrating public schools, and

WHEREAS, local authorities in these areas have been unable to deal with these civil disturbances in a manner which will maintain law and order, remove the peril to life and property, and guarantee the right of all pupils to attend the public schools unmolested,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, A. B. CHANDLER, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, do hereby direct the Adjutant General of Kentucky, Major General J. J. B. Williams, to order to active state duty any number of units or individuals of the Kentucky National Guard that he deems necessary to restore and maintain law and order, remove the peril to life and property, and guarantee the right of all pupils to attend the public schools.

s/ A. B. Chandler
A. B. Chandler, Governor

s/Thelma L. Stovall
Secretary of State

Document E

Document F

Southland—U. S. A.