



INTERNATIONAL
STORYTELLING CENTER

**Curriculum Guide for Freedom Stories Discussion
“Separate but Equal? Race-Based Bias in Education”**

Notes about this guide:

First, it is just that—a guide. It is meant to offer suggestions for how you might approach these important yet sensitive topics in your classroom, as well as ideas for how you might augment existing curriculum in your classroom. Please adapt it as necessary to fit your classroom’s needs.

Second, while it is aimed for 10th grade, many of the activities can easily be adapted both for lower and higher grades, and we encourage you to do so.

Third, since the International Storytelling Center is based in Tennessee, we have used the Tennessee state academic standards for Social Studies as our guide, but have also included Common Core standards where appropriate in an attempt to provide some reciprocity between and among state curriculums. Please feel free to use your own state standards in place of Tennessee’s or Common Core’s.

Fourth, our collective understanding of the subject matter covered in this and the other Freedom Stories Curriculum Guides is ever-evolving as we unearth forgotten narratives and seek out more complete truths. As such, there may be instances where certain instructional approaches are no longer useful, or where certain resources are no longer applicable. We encourage you to keep this in mind as you use this guide and adapt activities with new information as it becomes available.

Last, we welcome your feedback about this guide and its role in your classroom. Please reach out to us at FreedomStories@StorytellingCenter.net with comments, questions, and suggestions.

Lesson Title	Separate but Equal? Race-Based Bias in Education
Grade Band	10th Grade
Standard(s)	<p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards SSP.04:</u></p> <p>Construct and communicate arguments citing supporting evidence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate and defend an understanding of ideas • Compare and contrast viewpoints • Illustrate cause and effect • Predict likely outcomes • Devise new outcomes or solutions <p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards SSP.05:</u></p> <p>Develop historical awareness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing how and why historical accounts change over time • Perceiving and presenting past events and issues as they might have been experienced by the people of the time, with historical empathy rather than present-mindedness • Evaluating how unique circumstances of time and place create context and contribute to action and reaction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying patterns of continuity and change over time, making connections to the present <p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards AAH.25:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the progress of African American institutions, such as religion, education, and benevolent organizations, during this era [1890s-1920s]. <p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards AAH.27:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the achievements of African American inventors and entrepreneurs of the period (e.g., George Washington Carver, Garrett Morgan, Madam C.J. Walker) [1890s-1920s].
Lesson Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a timeline to gain a big-picture understanding of the history of the American educational system Examine the history of racism in the American educational system, especially in public schooling and higher education Explore the contributions of influential African American leaders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Describe the significance of George Washington Carver, especially his struggles with racism, educational and professional accomplishments, and humanitarian impulses Compose a hypothetical dialogue between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois to exemplify different approaches to education and racial equality Explore education’s historical relationship to democracy
Essential Understanding/ Essential Question	Race-based bias in education has deep roots in racism, slavery, segregation, and desegregation.
Lesson Activities	<p>Introductory Activity</p> <p>This activity begins with a listening exercise to songs at the start of the Freedom Stories discussion video, Separate but Equal? Race-based Bias in Education - International Storytelling Center.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Begin by writing the song names, dates, and musicians on the board to provide context. Here is the song list: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> “The Preamble” written by Lynn Ahrens, performed by <i>School House Rock</i> (1975) “Better Git Yer Learnin’” written by Rhiannon Giddens, performed by Our Native Daughters (2019) “Higher Ground” written and performed by Stevie Wonder (1973) Then, play the video and ask students to simply listen to the songs. Stop the video toward the end of the third song, around the 8:00 timestamp. Pose these questions to the class for discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the songs about? What do they express about the value of education? African American experiences and access?

Activity 1: Historical Overview of the American Educational System, with emphasis on African American access to education

1. Restart the [Separate but Equal? Race-based Bias in Education - International Storytelling Center](#) video from the beginning, this time with a focus on the PowerPoint material. Students will take notes at each PowerPoint slide. Pause the video at timestamp 8:20 for group work.
2. The teacher will divide the class into groups of four and distribute hard copies of the PowerPoint slides (1-2 slides per person). They will divide up the slides among the group members and use a textbook or online resource to contextualize them (answer the questions: who, what, where, when, and why significant, as appropriate).
3. Then, the teacher will draw a timeline on the board, labeled “American Educational System, 1787-2021.” Each group will take turns explaining what slide they had, where it goes on the timeline, and how the moment is significant.
4. As a large group, discuss:
 - a. What are some of the most important moments in the timeline for Black education?
 - b. How has American education changed over time, especially in terms of who can access it, and how?
 - c. What does education have to do with democracy?

Activity 2: Performance about George Washington Carver

1. Return to the video for students to listen to the storyteller's performance about George Washington Carver's educational and career path. Students will take notes during the performance. Pause the video after the performance (timestamp 36:26) for an activity.
2. On a slip of paper, the students will write a key idea or descriptor about George Washington Carver.
3. Next, students will crumple the paper and have a “snowball fight.” Students will pick up a paper that is not their own and take turns sharing with the larger group. The class will collaboratively brainstorm larger themes of Carver's life, character, and influence.
4. Then, ask students what obstacles Carver confronted as an African American man in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What different forms of knowledge educated Carver? How and what did he, in turn, teach others?

Activity 3: Freedom Stories discussion about segregation and race-biased education

1. Watch the rest of the video, timestamp 36:27 through 1:30:55, which is a discussion about segregation and race-biased education. Students should take notes during the discussion and be prepared to use them for the following activities. Ask students to pay close attention to the “5 W's,” the who, what, when, where, and why of details mentioned in the video.

Activity 4: Think-Pair-Share

1. The teacher will write the following quote on the board about school desegregation: "We got what we wanted, but we lost what we had," a phrase quoted by speaker Adam Dickson in the Freedom Stories video. (For more background information about Dickson, see [this short biography](#).) On their own, students will think and write notes about what he meant using evidence from the Freedom Stories discussion, the PowerPoint, or the timeline on the board.
2. After a few moments, students will turn to a nearby neighbor and take turns talking about how they interpret the quote. The teacher may ask students to share with the larger class.
3. Then, return to your partners to discuss the speakers' experiences with education and racial inequalities.
 - a. How did the speakers become aware of race-based bias in education?
 - b. How did they or people around them seek to address inequalities?
 - c. Were the goals of integration fully met (in terms of education or otherwise)?
 - d. How do they connect Appalachian identity or Appalachian histories with their work today?
4. Have students share with the larger group.

Activity 5: Tweet as a historical figure

In the Freedom Stories discussion, the speakers refer to the historical conflict between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, and which leader they would choose if pressed to choose sides. The following activity will ask students to represent the views of DuBois or Washington through Twitter social media. Rather than actually use Twitter, this activity will simply use the dry-erase board (but the teacher may adapt it to their preferences).

1. First, [watch a short video](#) about Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois from PBS Learning Media. Students should take notes. (For more preparation, explore the resources included in the "Further Readings" section of this lesson plan.)
2. Then, students will use "Twitter" as a way to role-play a hypothetical debate between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington in the early 1900s, in terms of what they considered was best for education and the advancement of African American rights (Black liberal arts education or industrial training).
3. The classroom will be divided into two groups: one representing DuBois and the other as Washington. They will create Twitter handles and take a moment to review notes and materials about their historical figure. The teacher will introduce a topic or headline to which they can respond, such as:
 - a. 1895: Booker T. Washington gives "Atlanta Compromise" Speech
 - b. 1896: African American women form the National Association of Colored Women

- c. 1896: *Plessy v. Ferguson* rules that “separate but equal” laws are constitutional, providing legal justification for Jim Crow laws in southern states
 - d. 1903: DuBois writes that Washington has linked industrial training with submission and silence to civil and political rights
 - e. 1909: The NAACP forms, with DuBois as a founder
 - f. 1909: Northern corporate funders discontinue financial aid to Washington and Tuskegee Institute
 - g. 1912: Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald begin partnership to build new schools through the South
 - h. An event of the students’ choosing
4. The teacher can give the groups about one minute to compose a tweet. The groups can take turns writing and broadcasting short tweets (or telegrams) to each other. Students may need additional time to look in their notes or use a smartphone or computer for research about the headline or topic. The teacher can limit the time for each turn and decide when to move on to the next topic. Students can write the tweet on one side of the dry-erase board or use a computer program for the dialogue.

Activity 6: The role of history and symbols of freedom

1. In the Freedom Stories discussion, speakers were asked a question about connections between integration and athletes kneeling during the National Anthem (see [this article](#) from Facing History for more context.) Speaker Adam Dickson recommended a “balanced view of history.” He said that for some people, the American flag, National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance are symbols of freedom and liberty. Black athletes have knelt for justice and equality because people of color have not been able to feel the full extent of freedom and liberty. Historically many groups of Americans were not privy to these symbols of freedom and realization of liberties, so how does that relate to the present, and how do those groups have access to or are restricted from these things today? Discuss as a group.
2. Using classroom resources such as dictionaries or computers, students will look up definitions for *freedom*, *liberty*, *justice*, and *equality*, and think about what these words mean to them.
3. Then, students will draw a representation of the words using a Venn diagram, and how they see these concepts in their lives.
 - a. Are there relationships between these concepts?
 - b. Where would these concepts intersect or overlap? Or would the circles be separate from one another?
4. Students will share and discuss with the larger class and provide examples from the material.

Concluding Activity

1. Students will take a moment to reflect and write a paragraph about the history of racism in American education.
 - a. What are your three main historical takeaways from the material?

- b. How has access to education changed over time?
 - c. What does education have to do with democracy?
 - d. If students wish, they may also include some personal reflection about times they have struggled, felt believed in, etc.
2. Next, partner up and discuss their responses for a few minutes (the teacher may want to request that any personal experiences shared by fellow students are respectfully not talked about outside of the classroom).
3. Then, return to your own reflection and add one sentence about how your fellow student has experienced the educational system that is different than your own, and why that matters. The teacher collects the reflections at the end of class.

Extensions

- Students may [read an article](#) or [listen to an interview](#) (both from NPR) about journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones' decision to accept a position with Howard University rather than UNC after controversies about tenure. What race-based bias does Hannah-Jones describe? How does it differ from the other situations that we have learned about and explored in class?
- Students can research and prepare an outline about the Langston Centre's history using the PowerPoint and discussion material, as well as [interviews](#) with former Langston High students.
- Students can research and prepare an outline about the Green McAdoo Cultural Center, which has more information about the twelve African American students who integrated Clinton High School. The "Clinton 12" are also noted in the Freedom Stories project about the Civil Rights Movement. See [The Civil Rights Movement: It Still Remains - International Storytelling Center](#)) and the [Freedom Stories Story Map](#) material.

Further reading

- More resources on segregation, desegregation, and education from the International Storytelling Center Freedom Story discussions:
 - [Jim Crow Appalachia: Slavery by Another Name - International Storytelling Center](#)
 - [The Civil Rights Movement: It Still Remains - International Storytelling Center](#)
- A [lesson plan about George Washington Carver](#), from PBS Learning Media
- "[The Debate Between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington](#)" from PBS
- Booker T. Washington's "[Atlanta Compromise](#)" Speech from the Library of Congress
- "[Prologue - The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom](#)" from the Library of Congress
- [An article](#) about the contemporary connection about race and education:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “5 Things Educators Can Do to Address Bias in Their School” from National Education Association Ed Justice • BROWN V. BOARD: Timeline of School Integration in the U.S. from <i>Learning for Justice</i>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom Stories Discussion: Separate but Equal? Race-Based Bias in Education, a video that includes a PowerPoint presentation, storyteller performance, and discussion. • Download the PowerPoint on the Separate but Equal? Race-based Bias in Education - International Storytelling Center webpage and print slides 7-41. • Computer and projector with internet and sound • Online access through classroom computers or smartphones, or African American history textbooks, for group activities • Paper and pencils for students to take notes and write reflections • Dry-erase board
Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may download the PowerPoint or watch the discussion on their own or at home if they have internet and computer • Press “pause” during the video to write notes • Provide hard copies of song lyrics, the PowerPoint, or transcript of the Freedom Stories discussion