



INTERNATIONAL
STORYTELLING CENTER

**Curriculum Guide for Freedom Stories Discussion
“Jim Crow Appalachia: Slavery by Another Name”**

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there may be instances where certain instructional approaches are no longer useful, or where certain resources are no longer applicable.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	Jim Crow Appalachia: Slavery by Another Name
Grade Band	10th Grade
Standard(s)	<p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards: SSP.02</u></p> <p>Critically examine a primary or secondary source in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extract and paraphrase significant ideas • Discern differences between evidence and assertion • Draw inferences and conclusions • Recognize author’s purpose, point of view, and potential bias • Assess the strengths and limitations of arguments <p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards: SSP.05</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop historical awareness by: • 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.21</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the economic and social impact of Jim Crow laws on African Americans <p><u>Tennessee Social Studies Standards: AAH.30</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify literary contributions made by African Americans during this era [the Harlem Renaissance] <p><u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
Lesson Objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe Jim Crow minstrelsy, how demeaning images and stereotypes of African American people perpetuated Jim Crow, how Jim Crow was enforced, and how Jim Crow affected African American lives. Identify that the institution and violence of Jim Crow occurred in the Appalachian region, and explore one Appalachian community’s lynching remembrance and healing ceremony. Draw connections between Reconstruction and Jim Crow histories to current events such as the Black Lives Matter movement and the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection. Reflect on the roles of narratives, stories, and poetry in constructing ideas about people and places, and the implications of those ideas.
Essential Understanding/ Essential Question	<p>Stereotypes about African Americans were at the root of racial violence and inequality during the Jim Crow era.</p> <p>What questions about United States citizenship went unanswered during Reconstruction and Jim Crow? How are Americans seeking to answer them now?</p>
Lesson Activities	<p><i>A Note on Content: This curriculum is based on the Freedom Story discussion, Jim Crow Appalachia: Slavery by Another Name. An understanding of Reconstruction (1865-1877) is recommended before engaging with the discussion and curriculum. Though this curriculum focuses on the Jim Crow era (1877-1965), the panelists discuss many moments during the Black Freedom Struggle including Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the Black Lives Matter movement.</i></p> <p><i>The Freedom Story discussion was conducted on January 9, 2021, three days after the January 6th Capitol insurrection. This moment informed much of the panelists’ discussion about citizenship, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow.</i></p> <p>Introductory activity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review Reconstruction <ol style="list-style-type: none"> This activity begins with remembering a few key moments during Reconstruction when the federal government sought to

protect African American citizenship after the Civil War ended and slavery was abolished. As a whole class, discuss the following questions and write the answers on a large poster or on the dry-erase board and take a picture for later reference. Students may use the internet or a reference book to answer the questions.

- i. What are the 14th and 15th Amendments?
 - ii. When did these amendments pass through Congress?
 - iii. What does citizen and citizenship mean?
- b. Then, prepare students to take their own notes about how African Americans seized freedoms during Reconstruction while watching the following 7 minute video about African American freedom expectations and political gains: [“Reconstruction: The 15th Amendment and African American Men in Congress”](#)
- c. Next, ask students to think and write on their own, using notes, how they would answer the following questions:
- i. What did citizenship mean to freed people?
 - ii. How did African Americans seize freedom? Provide examples.
- d. Then, partner the students in groups of two. Ask them to take turns sharing their answers about ways African American people seized freedom during Reconstruction. Ask each group to discuss how they would elaborate on the meanings of citizen and citizenship that are already written on the poster/board. Ask each group to send a person to the left side of the board to write in large letters these descriptors or actions of citizenship. Save space on the board for two more columns.

2. Overview of white backlash to African American freedom gains during Reconstruction

- a. Watch a brief video about white reaction to Reconstruction. Prepare students to write down 2-3 ways that white people resisted African American equality or freedom while watching the video, [“Reconstruction Brings White Resistance”](#)
- b. Create a second column after examples of African American citizenship for evidence of white resistance. Ask students to share examples from the video about how white people reacted against African American equality or freedom during Reconstruction. The teacher may write these answers on the board in this second column. Keep this on the board to return throughout the curriculum.

The next set of activities will focus on the rise of Jim Crow and African American experiences during the Jim Crow era, 1877-1965.

Activity #1: Introducing the practice of “blackface” minstrelsy.

1. Play the 2-minute video, [“Racist Images and Messages in Jim Crow Era”](#). This video provides an overview about racist narratives in the Jim Crow Era. *(Before starting the video, teachers should provide a content warning for this material. The following material shows racist depictions of African American people. The images can be very upsetting and uncomfortable.)*

2. Discuss with the students as a whole class:
 - a. How do you feel, in the present day, looking at these images?
 - b. What were the stereotypes of African American people in the antebellum period (before the Civil War, which ended slavery)?
 - c. What were the stereotypes of African American people after Emancipation and during Jim Crow?
 - d. What purpose did racist depictions of African American people serve?
3. *(The teacher should explain that the next material will focus on Jim Crow minstrels and the practice of “blackface.” Again, students should be warned about the demeaning depictions of African American people.)* Explain that blackface minstrelsy was a form of musical and theatre art that was popular in the mid-1800s through the early-1900s. Blackface minstrelsy consisted of white actors dressed in black painted faces, imitating and mocking African American people and culture.
4. Then, project slides 1-24 about blackface minstrelsy from the “Jim Crow Era” PowerPoint, downloadable from the [Jim Crow Appalachia Freedom Stories webpage](#). Pause at each slide and ask students to take two notes per slide: a takeaway and their own follow-up question.
5. Pair the students or ask them to partner with a nearby neighbor. Give them about ten minutes to take turns sharing with each other their takeaways and follow-up questions from the PowerPoint. Students may add to their own notes and discuss each other’s follow-up questions.
6. Next, watch the short movie about the history of blackface minstrelsy and Hollywood films, [“TCM Original Production: Blackface and Hollywood - African American Film History”](#) (approximately 13 minutes).
 - a. Before beginning the movie, pass out a worksheet with guiding questions for note-taking (advise bulleted or short notes):
 - i. How did blackface minstrelsy originate?
 - ii. What role did Hollywood play in blackface minstrelsy?
 - iii. What were the purposes of black minstrels for white audiences?
7. The teacher should provide an opportunity to discuss the above questions and any remaining questions students may have.
8. Then, using notes from both videos and the PowerPoint, students will be asked to compose in one sentence a full answer to the question, “Why were Jim Crow narratives/stereotypes about African American people so popular with white audiences?” Students will share on a voluntary basis with the larger class and the teacher will collect them for feedback.

Activity #2: Grappling with Jim Crow Racial Violence

Before beginning this section, it is recommended to warn students that the following material contains images and information depicting scenes of violence, including lynching, and may not be suitable for all viewers. Explain

that lynching is an unlawful murder by a mob of angry people which was used by white people as a form of social control from 1865 until 1960. Recognize that this is an extremely heinous yet extremely important part of our collective history.

1. Return to the “Jim Crow Era” PowerPoint and show slides 25 (“Losing the Peace: The Birth of the Ku Klux Klan”) through 35 (the last history slide). Students will take notes during the PowerPoint, with guidance for note-taking:
 - a. Write 3 historical facts about the Ku Klux Klan (when, where, what they did, etc.)
 - b. Who was Nathan Bedford Forrest?
 - c. Write down at least 3 of Appalachia’s most active lynching states from 1877-1950.
2. The title of this lesson plan is Jim Crow Appalachia to remind us that racialized violence and oppression did not only happen in the South. It is recommended to think about the history and memory of lynchings in Appalachia by watching the following 28-minute video about [“The Buncombe County Remembrance Project,”](#) which memorializes the lynching of Bob Brackett. Buncombe County is in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina and is home to the city of Asheville. The project demonstrates how to reckon with and begin a healing process from the historical trauma of lynchings.
3. Then, lead a classroom discussion with prompts such as:
 - a. Who was Bob Brackett?
 - b. What was he accused of and how did the white mob seek revenge for the unlikely crime?
 - c. How did lynchings not only inflict trauma on individuals but also inflict trauma on communities?
 - d. What types of ceremonies and methods of healing are offered during this memorial?
 - e. Why is it important to remember histories of lynching?

Activity #3: The Convict Leasing System

1. As the PowerPoint noted, the prison industry was a solution to white America’s “Negro Problem” after slavery ended. Play an excerpt of the PBS video [“Slavery by Another Name,”](#) time stamp 13:12-34:16, using these guiding questions for note-taking:
 - a. Name at least three laws that targeted African Americans.
 - b. What kinds of work were convict laborers forced to do?
Name three states that used convict labor.
 - c. How did the Supreme Court enforce Jim Crow?
2. After the video, the teacher will ask students to write for 5 minutes about how the convict leasing system resembled slavery and how it was different. Students will pair up and talk about their reflection. Then they will talk about their answers to the above questions. The teacher may ask students to add to the board the laws and Supreme Court ruling that targeted African Americans under the second column of white resistance/backlash.

Activity #4: Stories and Poetry: Expressions of citizenship and counter-narratives to Jim Crow oppression. In this section, the class will explore African American experiences with Jim Crow through poetry.

1. The students will get into groups of about four students to read and listen to poems by Paul Laurence Dunbar. Begin with students looking online or in a textbook to answer the questions below. Though the group members may split up the questions among them to answer, each student should take their own notes throughout this activity:
 - a. Who was Paul Laurence Dunbar?
 - b. When and where was he born?
 - c. What did he do?
 - d. How was his work received?
2. With students still in groups, the teacher will distribute copies of "[We Wear the Mask](#)" by Paul Laurence Dunbar, and ask students to read the poem on their own and write down what they think the poem is about. Then, after a few moments to read and write, the students will share and discuss in their group these guiding questions:
 - a. What is the poem about?
 - b. When was it written? (Students may use other resources to answer.)
 - c. Can you think of any connections with the previous activity about Jim Crow narratives and minstrels? How does this poem provide an alternative perspective?

This next portion involves listening to storyteller Mitchell Capel perform ten poems in the [Jim Crow Appalachia Freedom Stories](#) video. We will approach them in smaller chunks.

3. Distribute ten post-it notes and a marker to each student.
4. Play the [Jim Crow Appalachia Freedom Stories](#) video from timestamp 12:05 to 13:46, asking students to listen carefully to Capel's performance of the poem "We Wear the Mask." Discuss as a whole group the following question:
 - a. How does Capel's performance add to your experience of the poems?
5. Ask students to write one descriptor, idea, or fact about "We Wear the Mask" on the post-it note and stick it to the wall/board. When all the slips of paper are on the board/wall, the teacher will read each note aloud and ask if any relate or could be grouped together. With teacher facilitation, the class will arrange all the notes into groups and label each group with an overarching header/category.
6. Next, listen to Capel perform the following six poems, from timestamp 13:47-31:10. The teacher will pause after each poem and allow a brief moment for students to write an idea, descriptor, feeling, or fact about the poem on a post-it note. For this activity, the students will hold on to the post-it notes.
 - a. "Goin Back," Paul Laurence Dunbar
 - b. "[The Jim Crow Car](#)," Reverend Walter Brooks
 - c. "Freedom Train," Langston Hughes
 - d. "[Why Do They Hate Us? What Has the Negro Done?.](#)" Florence Seymour

- e. [“Brother Mine,”](#) Raymond Garfield Dandridge
 - f. [“Strong Men,”](#) Sterling Brown
7. The teacher will pause the video after “Strong Men.” The teacher and students will work together to add post-it notes to the existing categories, and create any new categories as needed. The teacher can review the headers of the categories and ask:
 - a. What struggles against Jim Crow are expressed in these poems?
 - b. How does poetry and storytelling help us understand today what Jim Crow was like?
 - c. How do these categories or themes relate to oppression and freedom? Meanings of citizenship?
 8. Next watch and listen to Capel’s performance of the following three poems (timestamp 31:11-41:05). Students will be asked to write one key descriptor or idea that encapsulates their understanding or feeling of each poem.
 - a. “The Election Slide,” by Mitchell Capel
 - b. “Divide,” by Mitchell Capel
 - c. [“Let America Be America Again,”](#) Langston Hughes
 9. After watching the performance, students can stick the post-its to the board, this time choosing an appropriate category on their own. The teacher can read each aloud and decipher if any new or different themes emerge. The teacher may ask the class to discuss the following:
 - a. How does Capel express the significance of President Obama’s election with his poem, “The Election Slide”? In “Divide” (2020), Capel’s tone changes. How so?
 - b. How has America not been America, as written by Langston Hughes?
 - c. Using understandings of the ten poems and categories of key descriptors, what responsibilities do citizens have? The government?
 - d. How does listening to stories of the working class and people of color change the way we think about America’s past and present?

Activity #5: Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and Today

1. In the next section, the students will continue watching the [Jim Crow Appalachia](#) video, which features a discussion about the material. Play from timestamp 41:08 to 1:09:54. Students will be asked to take notes, especially focusing on how the panelists talk about the present day in relation to Reconstruction and Jim Crow (for example, what has changed? What has stayed the same?) and how panelists connect Appalachians with America’s history.
2. After watching, students will pair up to discuss the above questions. Using the board, make a third column for the present day. Ask students to write on the board events that occurred in 2020-2021. What continuous lines run through Reconstruction and Jim Crow to the present day? How has citizenship changed over time?
3. Next watch 1:09:58 to the end of the video (about fifteen minutes). The teacher can ask the whole class:
 - a. How do the panelists find hope?

- b. How are Americans seeking to answer questions or problems about citizenship now?
4. Take a picture of the board.

Closing Activity

Using the discussion panelists' perspectives, their notes, and their own experiences, students will depict freedom by choosing between two options: draw two pictures: what freedom looks like today and your hopes for the future; OR write a 10-line poem about what freedom looks like today and hopes for the future. The teacher will ask students to share and collect these creations for feedback.

Extensions:

A think-pair-share activity consists of a compare and contrast exercise between Mitchell Capel's 2020 poem, "Divide," which he performs in Jim Crow Appalachia video, and Amanda Gorman's 2021 inaugural poem, "[The Hill We Climb](#)". Students can write a paragraph reflection about the poems, answering these questions:

1. How are the poems different?
2. Why do you suppose the poets have different perspectives?
3. Where do the authors express pain? Hope?
4. If the students were to write a poem about being an American citizen, what themes would they express?

The teacher can collect these reflections and provide feedback.

Further Readings

Related Freedom Stories content by the International Storytelling Center:

- [Emancipation Saturday: An Appalachian Tradition - International Storytelling Center](#) (African American men's gains in political power in Tennessee during Reconstruction)
- [Separate but Equal? Race-based Bias in Education - International Storytelling Center](#) (Traces the history of Black education in America)

Materials about Reconstruction and Jim Crow segregation:

- ["14th Amendment"](#)
- ["After Reconstruction" Lesson Plan](#) from the Library of Congress, and the accompanying timeline, especially: [1881 to 1900 | African American Timeline: 1850-1925 | Articles and Essays | African American Perspectives: Materials Selected from the Rare Book Collection | Digital Collections](#)
- [Jim Crow and Segregation | Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress](#)
- ["Blackface Minstrelsy in Modern America."](#) Digital Public Library of American, Primary Source Sets.

	<p>For more information about Paul Laurence Dunbar, including digital resources visit this guide from the Library of Congress.</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom Stories Project Discussion: Jim Crow Appalachia: Slavery by Another Name • “Jim Crow Era” PowerPoint (ppt) downloadable from the Jim Crow Appalachia: Slavery by Another Name webpage • Computer and projector with internet and sound • Paper and pencils for students to take notes and write reflections • Poster board and markers • Worksheets or projection of guiding questions for note-taking • Slips of paper for poetry exercise
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 allow time for writing notes • Provide hard copies of poems, PowerPoint, or transcript