

Inquiry Lesson Plan

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Context

Overview (Title, Grade/Class, Length, Topic)

This is an Inquiry Lesson Plan designed for a 60-minute regular seventh-grade US History Part II class. In an Inquiry Lesson, students deliberate an important historical question through hypothesis, evidence examination, and analysis. This specific lesson is a critical examination and analysis of the condition of African-Americans on the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the divergent responses of the African-American community. In this lesson, students will examine the divergent historical perspectives of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. duBois in order to deliberate the question: *How did African-Americans respond to discrimination after the Civil War?*. Students will work with multiple forms of text (speech excerpts, photographs, and video) in their deliberation process. From these different texts, students will formulate their own opinions in response to the inquiry question, and select one of the two opinions to defend in a writing assignment.

Background Information

This lesson is designed to be part of a unit on racial segregation following the Civil War and Reconstruction. Students will be in the midst of learning about the era of Jim Crow and legalized segregation. In this lesson, students will learn about the competing plans among African-American for combating discrimination and inequality. Students will specifically examine and analyze the opinions and impact of Washington and duBois, but the larger goal is for students to understand the impact of discrimination and the emergence of different responses from the African-American population.

Rationale

As I discussed with my cooperating teacher, many students, especially those in the younger grades, hold on to misconceptions regarding the time period following the Civil War and Reconstruction. Despite the ratification of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, which ended slavery and granted African-American men full citizenship and voting rights, systemic problems of discrimination and racism still coursed through the American legal and political system. In this lesson, students will learn about both these continuing problems that plagued the United States, and the differing responses from African-American leaders on how to approach a society entrenched in racial discrimination. This lesson will introduce two differing opinions that will teach students that African-Americans did not serve as simply one homogenous demographic, but a population of many differing opinions.

Standards

This lesson aligns with central learning objectives and state standards regarding racial segregation, Jim Crow laws, and other forms of discrimination faced by African-Americans following the Civil War and Reconstruction (VA Standard USII.4). Additionally, this lesson integrates several different NCSS Standards. Era 5 Standard 3B, for example, asserts that students should be able to analyze how African Americans attempt to improve their economic and social positions during Reconstruction. Standard 3C of the same era outlines that students should be able to assess the progress of the reform programs, and evaluate the legitimacy of democratic ideals during Reconstruction. Furthermore, the NCSS Historical Thinking Standards expect students to engage in historical analysis and interpretation through the

comparison and evaluation of differing ideas and perspectives, and eventually have the ability to formulate their own position on an issue, all goals of this lesson plan. It is important for students to understand both the content of this lesson and develop critical historical thinking skills.

Objectives

- Students will understand the respective positions and impacts of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. duBois in regards to racial inequality and discrimination (knowledge).
- Students will examine and analyze different texts related to the lesson (skills).
- Students will engage in analysis and historical interpretation in a class discussion (skills).
- Students will formulate their own opinion in response to the inquiry question using the arguments of Washington and duBois (skills).

Assessment

Students' knowledge will be assessed in the following two ways for this lesson:

- Students will be assessed by their performance in a discussion held during class time. In this discussion, students will be asked to side with one of the two differing opinions presented, and then work as a group to defend this position. Students will be expected to draw from the documents presented during the discussion.
- Students will then be assessed through a writing assignment given either as homework or at the end of lesson, depending on the time. For this assignment, students will be asked to whether they support Washington or duBois' approach to achieving racial equality. In a short paragraph, students will formulate their own opinion, using the primary documents given to support their responses. These paragraphs will then be graded according to the attached rubric.

Content and Instructional Strategies

I. Preparation

Before class, I will prepare copies of the primary documents prepared so that the worksheets are ready to hand out to students. When students enter the class, they will be expected to pick up the primary source packets from the front desk in the classroom.

The classroom is arranged in desk clusters of two or three, and I will instruct students to sit in their normal seating assignments. In regards to the other lesson resources, the whiteboard will be cleared and ready for use, the lesson videos queued up and ready to watch, and the digital screen projector on and ready for viewing.

II. Providing Essential Background Knowledge and Engaging Student Inquiry (10 minutes)

In order for this lesson to be effective, students must first have a solid working knowledge of the rampant inequality of the time era, especially in regards to the "legalized discrimination" of Jim Crow laws. Though the students will be learning about the history of the era prior to this lesson, students will engage in a brief review of this material. This lesson will have two inquiry phases – students will understand how the Jim Crow era affected African Americans in the first phase, and then hypothesize solutions to problems of discrimination and inequality in the second phase.

I will begin the class by having students hypothesize in their notebooks to the warm-up question, *How did the Civil War change aspects of life for African-Americans?* I will explain to the students that they have two minutes to write down as many things as possible. After two minutes, I will ask students to share their responses with the entire class, calling on students if there are no initial volunteers. As students share, I will write their responses on the whiteboard.

The goal of this warm-up activity is have students answer with the Reconstruction Amendments. If they have trouble reaching these concepts, then I will guide the class to these answers, quickly reviewing the purpose of each of these amendments.

III. Students Gather Data and Process and Discuss (8 minutes)

I will then instruct students to open the first page of their primary source packet, which contains a sample of Jim Crow laws, and a picture of a segregated bus station. I will then ask for volunteers to read the sample Jim Crow laws aloud as a class. After we have finished reading, I will ask students to look at the photograph. After a few seconds, I will ask students what they see in the photograph, and how this relates to the Jim Crow laws we just read.

I will then ask students how these documents (laws and the photograph) contradict the advances we just listed, and how this affected the lives of African Americans. As the students answer, I will write brief key words and phrases from their responses on the board that the class will refer back to later in the lesson.

IV. Eliciting Student Hypotheses (8 minutes)

After about five minutes of discussion, I will then pose the initial inquiry question: *How did African-Americans respond to discrimination?* I will explain to students that we will examine different primary sources in order to answer this question, and that they will work in their small groups.

I will ask students to work in their small group to hypothesize responses to this question. After a few minutes, I will go around the class and ask each group to share one their hypotheses. I will write each hypothesis (or an abbreviated version) on the board. Again, these we will refer back to these hypotheses later on in the lesson.

V. Students Gather Data and Process (6 minutes)

After this initial hypothesizing, I will explain to students that they will now learn about two prominent African-American leaders during this era, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. duBois, by watching short biographical videos and reading excerpted speeches in their packets. I will ask students to pay particular attention to how each of these men approached the original inquiry question, and to think about this question as they watch the video and read the packet.

I will then play the video on Booker T. Washington. Students will be instructed to write down information involving Washington's actions and opinions against discrimination and inequality in their notebooks as they watch. After watching the video, I will

As a class, we will watch a short biography video on Booker T. Washington. After watching this video, students will then receive the second primary source packet, which will consist of a photograph of Booker

T. Washington and a selected quote from his famous “Atlanta Compromise” speech. I will have a student volunteer read the “Atlanta Compromise” excerpt aloud to the class.

VI. Students Evaluate and Revise Hypotheses (8 minutes)

After reading, I will ask students to discuss as a whole class Washington’s main point in his speech, and his opinion toward the solution to inequality and discrimination. I then will ask if any students would like to revise their initial hypotheses based on the video, reading, and discussion, and note these changes on the board. As the teacher, I will encourage students to verbalize Washington’s main arguments, and confirm or clarify students’ assertions.

VII. Students Gather Data and Process (6 minutes)

Students will then repeat this same process for W.E.B. duBois. I will remind the students again to look for particular parts in both the video and the text that address duBois’ stance toward solving inequality and discrimination of African Americans. I will then play the short biography video on duBois. After watching this video, students will turn to the third page of the primary source packet, which contains a photograph of W.E.B. duBois, and a quote from his critique of the “Atlanta Compromise.” Again, I will ask for a student volunteer to read the quote aloud to the entire class.

VIII. Students Evaluate and Revise Hypotheses (8 minutes)

After reading, I will ask students to discuss as a whole class duBois’ opinions toward and solutions for inequality and discrimination, just as we did with Washington. Again, I will ask if any students would like to revise their initial hypotheses based on the video, reading, and discussion, and note these changes on the board. As the teacher, I will encourage students to verbalize duBois’ main arguments, and confirm or clarify students’ assertions.

IX. Conclusion (8 minutes)

I will then re-ask the initial inquiry question. I will instruct students to take one minute to respond to the inquiry question, based on what they learned about Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. duBois. I will instruct them to include specific points discussed in class or within the text in their writing. After about a minute, I will open up discussion for the entire class, asking students to answer and discuss the inquiry question as a class.

The goal is to engage the class in a meaningful discussion about the problems and potential solutions of discrimination and inequality during the Jim Crow era.

X. Individual Reflection and Response (8 minutes)

After this discussion, I will assign students their homework assignment, which asks students whose position they most support, Booker T. Washington’s or W.E.B. duBois’. I will explain to the students that they must defend their selected opinion by drawing from the text and referencing historical events. The remainder of the class will be devoted to this activity, and those students who do not finish in class will be asked to complete the assignment for homework.

Resources

- 25 copies of the primary source packets
- Whiteboard and marker
- Digital screen projector
- Laptop
- Videos (<http://www.biography.com/people/booker-t-washington-9524663/videos/booker-t-washington-mini-biography-11188803909> and <http://www.biography.com/people/web-du-bois-9279924/videos/web-du-bois-mini-biography-15383107870>)

Differentiation

This lesson utilizes a variety of sources. At first, I wanted students to read a short biography on Washington and duBois and read a larger portion of each text. Upon further reflection, however, I decided that it would be better to utilize different mediums to keep students engaged throughout the lesson. The videos offer a break from the analytical and discussion-based nature of the lesson, yet provide invaluable information that students must use later in the class as they revise their hypotheses and deliberate on the inquiry question. The inclusion of brief excerpts in the primary source packets, however, still focuses on the development of students' reading and comprehension abilities.

This lesson also combines two forms of learning, individual work and group activity. Individual activity allows students to process the text and develop ideas on their own. By having the students work in groups, however, students are able to discuss ideas with each other, and students of varying abilities will hopefully help each other reach conclusions.

This lesson is independent, but students come together toward the end of class to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the assignment. Hopefully, this will encourage students to take ownership of their individual opinions.

Adaptations

With a few adjustments, this lesson can be adapted for students with IEPs, 504 plans, or other exceptional needs. The lesson itself involves a relatively moderate amount of reading. This amount of reading could be adjusted according to students' reading and comprehension levels. If students have difficulty with reading comprehension, then I could utilize auditory aids instead of having students read individually. The original audio of Washington's Atlanta Compromise speech, for example, is available through the Library of Congress historical documents database. I could play this clip for students, and then have them participate in the same inquiry activity and discussion. Additionally, the chosen excerpts could be even further condensed to accommodate different learning abilities.

On the other hand, the primary source packets could always be expanded to include additional documents relevant to the lesson, for those students who are able to read through the sources with ease. Though this lesson plan was created for 7th graders, it could easily be adapted for high school students simply by adding additional documents, or the full text of the selected speeches, to the primary source packets. Furthermore, I could assign a paper instead of simply a paragraph to increase the difficulty of the lesson for higher-level learners.

Reflection

I am afraid this lesson might be too ambitious for seventh graders so early on in the year, when the unit on racial segregation and Jim Crow is taught. Though I believe this lesson is well within the capabilities of seventh grade students, I am worried that they might be overwhelmed by the analytical and discussion-based nature of the lesson if they have not been asked to do so before. However, I think this lesson could serve as a way to introduce students to discussion and analysis, with the goal of teaching these types of lesson more frequently throughout the year.

Similarly, I am afraid students will be reluctant to participate in the discussion portion of the lesson. In my observation classes, a handful of students actively participate, but many students choose to participate by quietly taking notes and listening. The goal of the lesson is to engage all students in discussion, but in order to achieve this I might need to explicitly call upon students for their opinion. However, the ultimate goal would be to create a classroom where all students want to take an active role in discussion and debate.

Additionally, I think time might also be an issue. This lesson has several different components, and two inquiry phases, and I'm worried that the short nature of a middle school class (60 minutes) will not provide enough time to adequately teach this lesson. If this is the case, I recommend either shortening the lesson (perhaps by either eliminating the writing portion or condensing the primary source packet), or by adapting the lesson for two class periods, if there is enough time in the schedule to do so.

Overall, I think this lesson allows students to examine differing opinions on the same subject, and develop their analytical skills in doing so. Asking students to identify the main argument of each author helps develop their comprehension and analysis, and having students formulate their own argument exemplifies an aim at deeper knowledge, higher order thinking, and substantive conversation as put forth by the PASS standards.

Primary Source #1

Jim Crow Laws

“Marriages are void when one party is a white person and the other is possessed of one-eighth or more negro, Japanese, or Chinese blood.”
—Nebraska, 1911

“All railroads carrying passengers in the state (other than street railroads) shall provide equal but separate accommodations for the white and colored races, by providing two or more passenger cars for each passenger train, or by dividing the cars by a partition, so as to secure separate accommodations.”
—Tennessee, 1891

“The Corporate Commission is hereby vested with power to require telephone companies in the State of Oklahoma to maintain separate booths for white and colored patrons when there is a demand for such separate booths.”
—Oklahoma, 1915

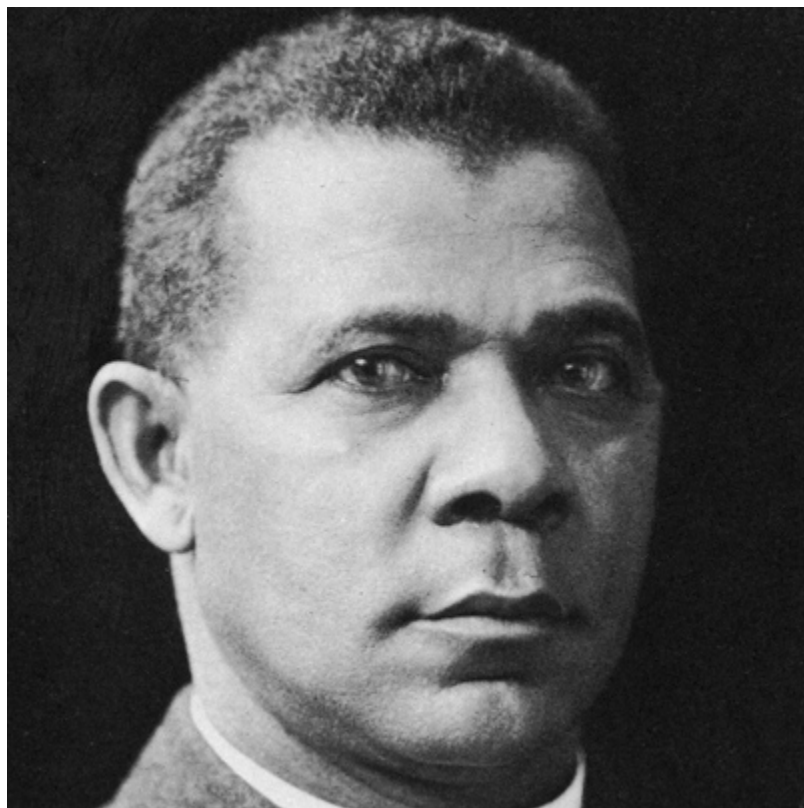
Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/history/1-segregated/jim-crow.html>.



Durham, NC, 1940 - Jack Delano, Library of Congress.

Primary Source #2

Booker T. Washington



Quote from Washington's 1895 Atlanta Compromise Speech

“To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land, or who underestimate the importance of preserving friendly relations with the southern white man who is their next door neighbor, I would say: “Cast down your bucket where you are.” Cast it down, making friends in every manly way of the people of all races...”

Source: Louis R. Harlan, ed., *The Booker T. Washington Papers*, Vol. 3, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 583–587. <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/39>.

Primary Source #3*W.E.B. duBois*

Excerpts from Essay, "The Souls of Black Folk"

“Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission... But so far as Mr. Washington apologizes for injustice, North or South, does not rightly value the privilege and duty of voting, belittles the emasculating effects of caste distinctions, and opposes the higher training and ambition of our brighter minds, — so far as he, the South, or the Nation, does this, — we must unceasingly and firmly oppose them. By every civilized and peaceful method we must strive for the rights which the world accords to men...”

Source: W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago, 1903). <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/40>.

Name: _____

Homework Assignment

Whose opinion do you most agree with, Booker T. Washington's or W.E.B. duBois's? Select one opinion to explain and defend. For this writing assignment, pretend you are either Booker T. Washington or W.E.B duBois. In a structured, well-written paragraph, state your approach for achieving racial equality, and explain why your approach is better. Be sure to reference our discussion in class, as well as historical events and ideas.

Rubric for Response Paragraph

	1	2	3
Explanation of Approach	Does not explain approach	Somewhat explains approach	Explains approach clearly
Defense of the Approach	Does not defend the approach	Somewhat defends the approach, making incomplete reference to class discussion and/or historical events	Defends the approach clearly, making complete reference to class discussion and/or historical events
Structure/length of response	1-2 sentences	3-4 sentences	5-6 sentences
Quality of writing, mechanics	Uses incomplete sentences, grammatical errors	Mostly complete sentences, some grammatical errors	Complete, well-formed sentences, no grammatical errors

Sources

American RadioWorks. "Remembering Jim Crow."

http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/remembering_index.html.

American Social History Project/Center for Media and Learning and the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History (Graduate Center, CUNY) and New Media (George Mason University). "History Matters: The U.S. Survey Course on the Web." <http://www.historymatters.gmu.edu>.

A&E Television Networks, LLC. "Bio: True Story." <http://www.biography.com/>.

Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Kenneth E. Behring Center. "Jim Crow Laws: Separate is Not Equal." <http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/history/1-segregated/jim-crow.html>.