

Essential Lens: Analyzing Photographs Across the Curriculum Change and Resistance: Civil Rights Movements Across the Nation

Activity 2 Lesson Plan

This modified lesson plan was created by middle school teacher Donald Rose who is featured in the Essential Lens video, *Witness*.

Objectives:

- Students will understand various movements for racial equality in public education
- Students will interpret photographs to better understand the actions taken by those who were seeking desegregation and equity in schools

CCSS:

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.6-8.7

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

Supplies:

Paper, pencils, projector, one set of Activity 2 photos for projection, table sets of Activity 2 photos with the photo caption/citation printed or taped to the back of each one.

Introduction:

Begin by discussing segregation. Ask students to define segregation. Discuss and fill in areas that kids may have missed. Include Plessy v. Ferguson and Brown v. Board. Then, ask students to think-pair-share this question. "In what region did the Civil Rights Movement take place?" Give students 30 seconds to think, then pair with a neighbor and share their answer. Next, bring it back to the large group.

Project the first three photos on the big screen. Ask students to observe, take 30-45 seconds per photo. What do they notice? What do they wonder? What do they think? After showing all three photos, ask students to use one word that would describe all three photos. Have students share around the room.

Teaching to the Objective:

Explain to students that segregation not only manifested as signs on drinking fountains, movie theaters, cabs, etc., but also at public schools. Note that what that means is that students of color and white students could not attend the same school. After Brown v. Board, schools began to desegregate but it was a tough and often violent process.

Next, tell students that you'll be taking a look at three different cities and the approaches taken for communities of color to gain access to education equality. Have students break into small groups.

Explain that they will be looking at three different school districts desegregation actions through photographs: Little Rock, Boston, and Los Angeles. Hand out the recording sheet. Tell students that we will be looking at photos from each city individually for about 5-7 minutes. They should record what they see happening in these photos as well as reading the captions on the back of each photograph. Model this on the overhead. Start with Little Rock, then Boston, and finally Los Angeles.

Next, have the small groups look for similarities in these movements and differences. Tell them to write the similarities down and to write the differences down. Give about ten minutes for this activity. Then, come to a large group and go through each city and ask for comments. Tell students that their ideas must be substantiated by evidence found in the photos or captions. Support and fill in ideas or questions as needed.

Closing:

Finally, tell students that you would like them to write a quick answer (1-2 paragraphs) on this question: “Why did the push for desegregation of schools create so much conflict?” Tell them to use the ideas from our discussion and specific details related to the photos.