



Photographer: Esther Bubley

Sign at Bus Station, Rome, Georgia, September 1943

Source: Library of Congress, LC-USW3- 037939-E

JIM CROW & THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN NORTHWEST GEORGIA

Standard: SS5H8 Describe the importance of key people, events, and developments between 1950-1975

- a. Analyze the effects of Jim Crow laws and practices
- b. Explain the key events and people of the Civil Rights Movement: Brown v. Board of Education (1954), Montgomery Bus Boycott, the March on Washington, Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act, and civil rights activities of Thurgood Marshall, Lyndon B. Johnson, Cesar Chavez, Rosa Parks, and Martin Luther King, Jr.
- c. Describe the impact on American society of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr.
- d. Discuss the significance of the technologies of television and space exploration.

This educational resource addresses ONLY sections a and b of standard SS5H8.

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OBJECTIVES

- Identify Jim Crow laws that segregated people by race
- Analyze the effects of Jim Crow laws on society
- Draw conclusions from primary documents
- Recognize the outcomes of key Civil Rights' court decisions and laws
- Organize key Civil Rights events chronologically



RESOURCES

- Mini-lesson on Jim Crow laws and key aspects of the Civil Rights Movement
- Opener
- Four student activities
- Answer key
- Link to further information



VOCABULARY

Jim Crow, segregation, Reconstruction, sanitarium, poll tax, literacy test, white primary, Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education, Montgomery Bus Boycott, non-violent resistance, Rome Council on Human Relations, March on Washington, Civil Rights Act, Voting Right Acts

JIM CROW & THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN NORTHWEST GEORGIA

Jim Crow is a term that refers to laws and social practices that separated white and black Americans. Southern states passed the first Jim Crow laws after the Civil War during a period known as **Reconstruction**. Reconstruction came to an end in 1877 with the withdrawal of the last Union troops from the South. The passage of segregation laws, however, continued into the 20th century.

Segregation laws differed from state to state and community to community, but typically these laws required blacks and whites to attend different schools, sit in different sections on trains and buses, use different water fountains and restrooms, eat at different restaurants, sleep in different hotels, be treated at different hospitals, and swim in separate public pools.

In 1870, for example, Georgia passed a law establishing a public school system. The law allowed elected school trustees in each sub-district of the state to establish and manage a school system and employ teachers. It also stipulated that the African American and white children could not be taught together. Similarly, Georgia established in 1910 a training school for white nurses employed by the state **sanitarium** (a hospital that provided long-term medical treatment), but provided no training for black nurses.

Southern legislatures also passed laws that attempted to keep African Americans from voting. These laws included **poll taxes** that required citizens to pay a yearly fee in order to vote, **literacy tests** that made potential voters prove they could read and understand their state constitutions, and **white primaries** that barred blacks from participating in the elections that chose a political party's nominees.

Although some African Americans challenged these laws, the United States' Supreme Court ruled in **Plessy v. Ferguson** (1896), a court case about racial segregation on railroads, that Jim Crow laws were constitutional as long as separate but equal facilities were provided for both races. Despite the separate but equal requirement, most segregated institutions provided inferior quality facilities to African Americans.

During the 1940s and 1950s, African American lawyers like **Thurgood Marshall** tried to overturn segregation laws through the court system. Marshall successfully convinced the Supreme Court to invalidate the white primary and integrate law and medical schools funded by states that did not provide similar institutions for African Americans. Marshall's most notable case, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), challenged segregation in public elementary and secondary education.

The ***Brown v. Board of Education*** case involved Linda Brown, a young African American student in Topeka, Kansas, who was required to attend the all-black school over a mile away from her home despite the fact that she lived just a few blocks away from a school for whites. Marshall argued that racial segregation in education was unequal, even when schools for blacks and whites received the same funding, because it led to feelings of inferiority in some students that negatively impacted their educations. The Supreme Court unanimously agreed with Marshall's position and declared segregation in education unconstitutional.

The Brown decision only ended segregation in education. Jim Crow laws regarding transportation and public accommodations continued to be enforced. Some African Americans, therefore, began use a variety of methods to challenge other segregation laws. The **Montgomery Bus Boycott**, an organized protest by blacks to quit using the segregated bus system in Montgomery, Alabama, was one such method. The protest began on December 1, 1955, when Rosa Parks, an African American seamstress, was arrested in Montgomery for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man.

Martin Luther King, Jr., the African American minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, led the black community of Montgomery in a boycott of the bus system. Tired of discrimination and racial oppression, King urged African Americans to protest racial injustices in a non-violent manner. **Non-violent resistance** meant challenging evil and unjust laws not by the use of force but through peaceful calls for change. The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted for over a year. It came to an end in 1956 after the Supreme Court ruled that racially segregated transportation systems were unconstitutional.

King led other non-violent protests against segregation laws throughout the South inspiring local challenges to racial discrimination. African Americans in Rome, Georgia used a number of different tactics to non-violently challenge segregation in their community. Some worked alongside white residents on the **Rome Council on Human Relations**, a biracial organization devoted to promoting good will and understanding and working against discrimination, to press for integration of the library and other public facilities. Others met with the Rome Chamber of Commerce to present a list of grievances detailing the ways Jim Crow had effected blacks' access to good jobs, safe housing, and fair treatment in the city. In 1963, a group of students from Main High School, the school for African Americans in Rome, staged a series of sit-ins on Broad Street that resulted in the arrest of sixty-two students.

Highly publicized African American demonstrations against racial segregation and the sometimes violent responses to these protests by white community members and law enforcement officials led President **John F. Kennedy** to propose Civil Rights legislation in June 1963. This legislation focused on ending segregation in public facilities, making racial discrimination in hiring illegal, and giving the national government more power to enforce the Supreme Court's decisions ending racial segregation in public schools.

In an effort to gain public support for the passage of President Kennedy's Civil Rights legislation, Martin Luther King, Jr. organized the **March on Washington**. This event, which took place on August 28, 1963, gathered around 250,000 black and white supporters of the Civil Rights Movement in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. The crowd listened to musical performances by Marian Anderson, Joan Baez, and Bob Dylan and speeches by leaders of the movement, including one by future Georgia Congressman, John Lewis.

Martin Luther King, Jr. gave the last speech of the day. In his remarks, popularly known as the "I Have a Dream" speech, King repeatedly referred to his dream of a future where men and women would be judged by their characters and actions, not by the color of the skin. His rousing address continues to be viewed as a masterpiece of rhetoric and one of the greatest speeches in United States' history.

Despite this demonstration of support for Kennedy's Civil Rights legislation, segregationists in the U.S. Congress stalled throughout the fall hoping to prevent a vote on the bill. The **assassination of President John F. Kennedy**, on November 22, 1963 by Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas, Texas, however, renewed the effort to get Kennedy's Civil Rights act passed. The new United States' president, **Lyndon B. Johnson**, a Texas Democrat, used his considerably legislative ability to push members of the House of Representatives and the Senate to honor President Kennedy's memory by passing his Civil Rights bill.

President Johnson signed the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** into law on July 2, 1964. Some of the major components of the act included a prohibition against discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin in hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, and other public accommodations; the desegregation of state and city public facilities, like parks and schools; and the outlawing of discrimination in hiring for most jobs.

President Lyndon Johnson signed the **Voting Rights Act** into law in 1965. This act attempted to address some of the ways that election officials denied the ballot to potential African American voters. It banned the use of literacy tests; provided for federal protection for voter registration in communities where less than 50% of the non-white population was registered to vote; and empowered the U.S. Attorney General to investigate the use of poll taxes as a state requirement for access to the ballot. The passage of the Voting Rights Act increased the number of blacks registered to vote. In Georgia, the percentage of African American registered voters rose from 27% in 1956 to 47.2% in 1966.

Mexican American labor organizer, **Cesar Chavez**, played a role similar to that of Martin Luther King, Jr. in his efforts to address the plight of Hispanic farm workers in the 1960s. In 1962, he established the National Farm Workers Association, which later merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, to become the United Farm Workers union. He embraced the use of nonviolent methods like boycotts, marches, and hunger strikes in his attempt to obtain raises and improve working and living conditions for farm workers in Florida, Texas, Arizona and California.

OPENER

A possible opener for this lesson would be to ask students about the different ways in which people in a society are divided or placed in groups. Potential responses could be written on the board. These might include answers like age, sex, citizenship, height, athletic or academic ability, political party, and race.

The class can then be divided in two or more groups based on student birthdays (For example: January-June in the first group and July-December in the second group). Ask the students to discuss in their groups what might happen if they could only eat lunch, have recesses, and participate in after-school activities with the people in their group. Responses may include becoming good friends with the people in their group, being less understanding or knowledgeable of the people in the other group, and not working as well together as a class.

The students should then be asked to imagine that the group they are not part of receives extra privileges, like a longer recess, candy on Fridays, special field trips, and less homework. How does this make them feel about the more privileged group? How does this make them feel about their group? Student comments might include feelings of resentment toward the more privileged group, belief that the more privileged group is the better group, feeling that their own group isn't as good as the privileged group, and a desire to be in the privileged group or work to get the same privileges for their group.

The instructor could transition from this opener to a brief explanation of the definition and origins of Jim Crow laws. Making links between how the thoughts and feelings caused by separating people by birthdays provides some insight into the long lasting effects of racial segregation.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The following are complete activities that can stand alone or be modified to better fit the content of a specific course or the ability levels of a particular group of students. Instructors are encouraged to revise or expand upon these materials with additional resources that best promote student learning and engagement.

1ACTIVITY ONE Jim Crow Laws

This activity asks students to read an account of some Georgia state and city laws passed during the late 19th and early 20th century and identify what types of laws typically segregated people by race. Students may work alone or with a partner to complete this activity.

3ACTIVITY THREE Achieving Equality

This activity asks students to determine if a racial inequality or discriminatory behavior was overturned by the Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, or the Voting Rights Acts of 1965. The worksheet for this activity can be completed by individual students, by students working in small groups, or by the class as a group with each inequality or discriminatory behavior projected or written on the board.

2ACTIVITY TWO Grievance Journal

This activity will help students analyze the effects of Jim Crow laws by reading a list of grievances African Americans in Rome, Georgia presented to the Rome Chamber of Commerce in the early 1960s. Students will then write an active journal entry about how difficult it would be not have access to one the services discussed. Journals can be traded between two to three times to allow for open ended responses.

Note: Students should not write from the perspective of an African American in the 1960s, but rather from how they would feel today to not have the ability to use one of these services.

4ACTIVITY FOUR Civil Rights Timeline

This activity requires students to define key Civil Rights events and then organize them chronologically on a timeline. The completed definitions and timeline could be used as a study guide for an assessment on this lesson.

ACTIVITY ONE: JIM CROW LAWS

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the following laws and identify those areas of society and public life affected by the specific Jim Crow or segregation law. For example, some areas of life affected by these laws include education, marriage, transportation, law enforcement, etc.



Segregated Public Bus Sign, ca 1940s-1950s.
Source: L1979-37_030, Stetson Kennedy Papers, Southern Labor Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University, Atlanta.

An Act to Establish a System of Public Instruction, 1870

The Georgia legislature established a State Board of Education and divided the state in several different districts. Each district could elect three school officials who would manage the local school system and hire teachers. The law stated that white and black students could not be taught together. It also required that the school houses, the length of the school year, and requirements for teachers should be the same in schools for whites and blacks.

Area Affected: _____.

Equal Accommodations and Separate Cars, 1890-1891

The Georgia legislature made all railroads in state provide equal accommodations in separate cars for white and African American passengers. Street car companies also had to separate white and black riders to the fullest possible extent.

Area Affected: _____.

Georgia State Reformatory Established, 1905

The Georgia legislature established a youth detention center for all people sixteen and younger, who had been convicted of a crime that did not require life imprisonment or death. The detention center was required to keep male and female residents separated and that black and white residents separated in their work and study.

Area Affected: _____.

Georgia State Sanitarium, Training School for Nurses, 1910

The General Assembly of Georgia established a training school for white nurses employed by the Georgia State Sanitarium (a hospital that provided long-term medical treatment). The training school had the power to write the rules for nursing education, provide a series of lectures by doctors, and give diplomas to all nursing graduates.

Area Affected: _____.

Mauk, Georgia Cemeteries, 1913

The mayor and city council of Mauk, Georgia had the power to establish cemeteries to bury the dead and spend the necessary money to maintain the cemeteries. This law forbid African Americans and whites from being buried in the same cemetery.

Area Affected: _____.

ACTIVITY ONE - CONTINUED

Rome, Georgia Voting Qualifications, 1918

Only those who are qualified to vote in Georgia, who have registered their names, occupations, ages, and residences with the secretary of the Rome City Commission, and have paid all taxes, fines, and other debts are allowed to vote in local elections in Rome.

Area Affected: _____.

Rules for Billiard Rooms, 1925

The Georgia legislature would grant a license to operate a Billiard Rooms (a place where people could play pool) only to U.S. citizens over the age of 21, who had never been convicted of a felony, and who agreed to only serve customers of their own race.

Area Affected: _____.

Persons of Color and Marriage, 1927

The Georgia legislature defined the term "white person" to include only those who had no trace of African, West Indian, Asiatic Indian, Mongolian, Japanese, or Chinese blood. It was a felony punishable by at least a year in prison for a white person to marry someone who was not white.

Area Affected: _____.

Motor Transportation for Hire, 1929

The Georgia legislature passed a law that put in place rules for those involved in the business of transporting people and property by cars on state highways. Transportation businesses were not allowed to charge different rates or fares to different people. Transportation companies had the choice to serve only white passengers, only black passengers, or both black and white passengers as long as they could be seated in separate parts of the vehicle.

Area Affected: _____.

Police Officers Retirement System, 1956

The Georgia legislature established a system to pay **benefits to** retired and disabled police officers or the families of officers who died while in service, unless the officer had refused or failed to enforce state laws requiring racial segregation.

Area Affected: _____.

ACTIVITY TWO: GRIEVANCE JOURNAL

INSTRUCTIONS

The document below discusses how some city services could not be used by certain people because of Jim Crow laws. This meant that these people,

- Couldn't find a job
- Couldn't find a house
- Couldn't use the bus
- Couldn't attend certain schools
- Couldn't ask the police for help
- Couldn't play in city parks
- Couldn't eat in restaurants

African American community leaders presented a list of grievances - a statement or complaint about something believed to be wrong or unfair - to a group of white citizens in Rome in the early 1960s. After reading the document, pick one of these services and write a journal entry about how you would feel if this service was denied you and your family. Write the entry from your point of view, not the view of an African American in the 1960s.

From Jule Levin's Oral History, ca 1960-1962

We had a black and white grievance meeting. I was one of five people appointed to represent the white community, and five black people came. One was a barber, one a minister, and one a painter. I'll never forget what he said. One of them said that he wants to live to see the time when "whites only" signs are removed. This is the list of grievances they brought.

"We, the Negro citizens of Rome and Floyd County, want to see the following changes.

Jobs. Qualified Negro boys and girls, men and women, are not given good jobs in department stores, grocery stores, or government offices. Giving out jobs should be based on ability, not on race. Because of this, every year a large number of young people graduate from high school, and not one good job has ever been given to them. Black doctors don't want to come into the community to give much-needed care.

Housing. The city does not have an area where Negroes can buy good homes for a fair price. Black neighborhoods don't have street lights. When Negroes try to buy a home, the seller raises the price. Despite high taxes, the streets are not in good condition.

Public facilities. The "blacks only" signs are offensive. They're over entrances, drinking fountains, and tables at the courthouse. Schools should be open to any student, no matter their skin. Negroes should know about the trade school and community colleges in the county. And all the buses should be desegregated.

Government services and police. There should be no separate sheet for recording Negroes' taxes. In black school zones and black neighborhoods, there are no signs warning drivers to go slow. There are no police to enforce these rules either. When whites commit crimes against Negroes, the police don't care. All law enforcement officers should treat black and white people the same. Black police officers should be able to arrest white citizens.

Recreation. Not enough parks are open to Negroes. Those that are open to Negroes don't have much playground equipment. All theaters should be open to Negroes so they can enjoy culture too. And finally, all lunch counters and restaurants should be open to serve everyone.

Black people are human beings. Their basic needs are the same as the white man's."

ACTIVITY THREE: ACHIEVING EQUALITY (Page 1)

INSTRUCTIONS

Racial equality and the end of discriminatory practices was achieved because of the actions of the Civil Rights supporters and through a combination of Supreme Court decisions and the passage of new laws. For each of the developments listed below circle whether the development was the result of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, or the Voting Rights Act. Be prepared to explain why you chose the answer you did.



Lonnie King, Marilyn Pryce, and Martin Luther King, Jr., being arrested during lunch-counter segregation protest, Atlanta, Georgia, October 6, 1960.
Source: AJCP444-003a, Atlanta Journal Constitution Photographic Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University, Atlanta.

The Integration of the University of Georgia in 1961

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

The *Rome News Tribune* Stops Publishing Help Wanted Ads Looking for "White Teachers" or "Black Dishwashers"

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

The Cafeteria in the Georgia State Capital Building Starts to Serve Both Blacks and Whites

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

States Stop Requiring Citizens to Pass a Literacy Test Before Registering to Vote

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

Separate Seating Areas for Blacks and Whites in Movie Theaters Are Removed

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

Atlanta Begins to Integrate Its Public Schools

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

ACTIVITY THREE: ACHIEVING EQUALITY (page 2)

African Americans Begin to Register and Stay as Guests at the Forrest Hotel on Broad Street in Rome, Georgia

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

The City-Operated Public Pools in Rome, Georgia are Integrated

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

Rome, Georgia Removes the Requirement that Citizens Must Have Paid All Taxes and Fines Before Being Allow to Vote

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

African Americans Begin to Be Served at Lunch Counters on Broad Street

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act

Coosa Valley Technical College (Now Known As Northwest Georgia Technical College) Announces Plans to Desegregate

- A. Brown v. Board of Education
- B. The Civil Rights Act
- C. The Voting Rights Act



ACTIVITY FOUR: CIVIL RIGHTS TIMELINE

INSTRUCTIONS

Write the definition of the Civil Rights term in the box. When you have completed all the definitions, cut out the boxes and place them in the correct position on the timeline.

Reconstruction

Plessy v. Ferguson

Brown v. Board of Education

Voting Rights Act

Civil Rights Act

Montgomery Bus Boycott

National Farm Workers Association

John F. Kennedy Assassinated

March on Washington

ACTIVITY FOUR - CONTINUED

Place your boxes in the correct position on the timeline.



ANSWER KEY

Activity One: Jim Crow Laws

Possible responses include:

- An Act to Establish a System of Public Instruction - Education
- Equal Accommodations and Separate Cars -Transportation
- Georgia State Reformatory Established - Education, Law Enforcement, or Prisons
- Georgia State Sanitarium - Education or Healthcare
- Mauk, Georgia Cemeteries - Death or Burial
- Rome, Georgia Voting Qualifications - Voting
- Rules for Billiard Rooms - Entertainment or Leisure
- Persons of Color in Marriage - Marriage
- Motor Transportation for Hire - Transportation
- Police Officers Retirement System - Retirement or Law Enforcement

Activity Two: African American Grievances

The responses for this activity will vary depending on the students personal views and perspectives. Make sure that students do not simulate what it would be like as an African American in the 1960s, but rather how they would feel today to not have the ability to use one of these services. Thoughtful responses will likely include references to unfairness, distress, and feelings of anger, betrayal, and sadness.



Activity Three: Achieving Equality

Answers:

- Integration of UGA - *Brown v. Board of Education*
- Rome Newspaper Help Ads - Civil Rights Act
- Cafeteria in State Capital - Civil Rights Act
- Stop Requiring Literacy Tests - Voting Rights Act
- Removal of Segregated Seating - Civil Rights Act
- Integration of Atlanta Schools -*Brown v. Board of Education*
- African Americans Stay at Forrest Hotel - Civil Rights Act
- Integration of Public Pools in Rome - Civil Rights Act
- Rome Stop Required Paid Taxes/Fees to Vote - Voting Rights Act
- African Americans Served at Lunch Counters - Civil Rights Act
- Coosa Valley Technical College Integrated - *Brown v. Board of Education*

Activity Four: Civil Rights Timeline

Reconstruction - 1865-1877
Plessy v. Ferguson - 1896
Brown v. Board of Education - 1954
Montgomery Bus Boycott - 1955
National Farm Workers Association - 1962
March on Washington - 28 August 1963
Assassination of John F. Kennedy - 22 November 1963
Civil Rights Act - 1964
Voting Rights Act - 1965

Two Atlanta University students picketing at the Georgia Capitol building in Atlanta, Georgia, 1962.
Source: AJCP178-025a, Atlanta Journal Constitution Photographic Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University, Atlanta.

Further Information on the Civil Rights Movement in Rome, Georgia is available at:
<https://sites.berry.edu/civilrights/>

