

Teacher Tool 142: Living Under Jim Crow

Laws Study Guide

Study Guide for Civil Rights 8: History in the First Person: Living Under Jim Crow Laws

Program Description and Objectives	Page 2
Program Format	Page 2
Standards	Page 4
Program-Related Activity Suggestions	Page 5
Supplemental Resources	Page 6



History in the First Person: Living Under Jim Crow Laws

Original Air Date: February 26, 2014

Grade Levels: 7-12

Program Description:

What was it like to grow up in a segregated America? What was it like to have separate places to go to high school, separate places to sit at the movie theater, separate water fountains and bathrooms? What did it feel like to be rejected on a job application or denied service at a restaurant or hotel simply because of the color of your skin? What did it mean when words like “equality” and “justice” seemed to have a different meaning for different people in American society? How were all people affected when treatment under the law could be so different? And what did it mean to participate in a movement that sought to change those conditions? Learn the answers to these questions and more as you hear from individuals who lived under Jim Crow Laws. Learn of their struggles, hopes and dreams and see what connections you can find between your life today and their life so many years ago.

Our focus in this program is not on exploring the details of America’s struggle for Civil Rights throughout its history, but it is to provide students the rare and important opportunity to speak directly with individuals whose life exemplifies the struggles and triumphs of the movement. Denise Ward-Brown, director of the award-winning documentary, *From Jim Crow to Barack Obama*, will also join us. More information on her documentary can be found at <http://www.jimcrowtobarackobama.com/index.html>.

Program Objectives:

1. The participant will gain a greater understanding of what it meant to live during and participate in the struggle for Civil Rights for black Americans.
2. The participant will interact with individuals providing primary source accounts of recent world events.
3. The participant will meet people and hear stories from diverse perspectives.

Program Format:

Time Codes are provided in blue to help you access specific segments of the program.

I. Welcome and Introduction—Student groups and experts will be introduced and welcomed to the program. Historic context will be provided for the program’s discussion. Images related to subpoint B will also be included. (00:00 to 04:02)

- A. Introduction of Guests
- B. Background on Jim Crow Laws

Student Questions Included in this Segment:

Why are Jim Crow Laws called Jim Crow Laws?

II. Hearing from Ms. Turner and Mr. McAllister—Our focus in this section of the program will be hearing directly from Ms. Turner and Mr. McAllister on the topics listed below. In addition to the discussion, we'll also include images and video related to the topics, including some provided by the guests themselves and some excerpts from the documentary, *From Jim Crow to Barack Obama*.

A. Growing Up Under Jim Crow Laws (04:03 to 19:55)

1. Early life experiences such as going to school, interacting with friends, living in the neighborhood, riding the bus, going to church, etc.
2. High School experiences
3. Remembrances from family life, interactions in public, what they learned from adults, etc.

Student Questions Included in this Segment:

Do you remember ever coming face to face with discrimination as a child? Was it surprising to you? How did it affect you?

Mr. McAllister, when you first started at the YMCAs as a youth, were they segregated at the time? If so, how were the “white YMCA” and the “black YMCA” different?

B. Entering Adulthood and the Work World (19:56 to 32:40)

1. Housing options, job options, college options, military options
2. Interactions in public, bus accommodations, hotel accommodations, service in restaurants, hospital and medical care, etc.

Student Questions Included in this Segment:

We have learned a bit about discrimination soldiers dealt with after serving the US in WWII. Did you deal with any direct discrimination after serving in the war? How did this make you feel after putting your life on the line for the country?

Did you know people who passed for white? Who tried to pass for white?

Did your parents or other family members instruct you about how to act around white people if your paths crossed?

C. Reactions to Justice System of the Time (32:41 to 37:55)

Student Questions:

Where did the Ku Klux Klan come from?

Why didn't all the black citizens leave the South after the Civil War?

Did you worry about having to interact with police? Did you think you'd be treated differently?

D. Reactions to the Growing Civil Rights Movement (37:56 to 47:39)

1. Individual involvement
2. What it meant to them
3. Effect on their life

Student Questions:

Ms. Turner, can you tell us a little bit about your work to help get The Voting Rights Act of 1960 passed. What was section 5 and why was it removed?

III. Where Do We Go Now? Looking Back Through the Lens of Time—In this segment documentarian Denise Ward-Brown will join our guests, and we’ll focus on the topics below. Images and videos related to the topics will also be included. (47:40 to 56:45)

- A. Purpose and Process for the Documentary
- B. Comparing Life Now to Then--Changes, Improvements, Advances
- C. Challenges That Still Exist
- D. Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement

Student Questions:

What were your emotions while you were filming the interviews?

How did you get the idea to have a younger generation ask questions of the older generation?

Did making this movie influence your feelings about society and white people?

IV. Closing Segment—Closing thoughts from the program guests (56:46 to 59:59)

**Featured National Standards (History):
Grades 5-12 Historical Thinking Standards**

2. Historical Comprehension

B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.

C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.

F. Appreciate historical perspectives--(a) describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded--the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding “present-mindedness,” judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

4. Historical Research Capabilities

A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.

5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making

A. Identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.

Program-Related Activity Suggestions:

1. Utilizing websites included in **Student Tool 37: Living Under Jim Crow Laws Featured Web Resources** and other resources of your own, have your students familiarize themselves with life for black Americans in the first half of the twentieth century. Topics for their research could include the following: Plessy v. Ferguson, Jim Crow Laws, segregation, Ku Klux Klan, housing covenants, lynching. You can find the document by clicking on the Student Tools button on the Video Play page of this archived program on the Educate.Today website.
2. Another excellent resource to provide students background information on living under Jim Crow Laws can be found in our HEC-TV program, *Liquid Light: Jim Crow to Barack Obama*. The program includes an interview with documentarian Denise Ward-Brown who joins us for the program as well as her complete documentary, "From Jim Crow to Barack Obama" which shares the stories and memories of many individuals who lived under Jim Crow Laws, including some from our two guests Lois Jean Turner and William McAllister. The program can be viewed at <http://www.hectv.org/video/12859/jim-crow-to-barack-obama/>. More excerpts from the documentary and additional related resources can also be found at <http://www.jimcrowtobarackobama.com/>.
3. Additional Information on our guests Lois Jean Turner and William McAllister can be found in **Student Tool 38: Living Under Jim Crow Laws Guest Biographies** on the Educate.Today website. Just click on the Student Tools button on the Video Play page of this archived program.
4. Have students compare their previous understanding of what they thought it would mean to be a black American in the 1940s, 50s and 60s with their view of that situation after participating in the program. What surprised them the most? What reinforced what they already believed? What new insights have they gained about how the struggle for Civil Rights has affected their life? How do they view the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement? How do they feel they can best carry on the goals and ideals of the movement? Have students share their thoughts in class discussion, journal entries, or written reports.
5. To extend their study of the Civil Rights movement even further have students explore any of the other Civil Rights videos they'll find on our Educate.Today website.
6. Have students write a letter to one of our guests detailing an insight the student gained from hearing his story, an appreciation for her participation, and/or another focus area of their choice. E-mail the letter to us at live@hectv.org or mail the letter to us at Live@HEC-TV 3221 McKelvey Rd #106, Bridgeton, MO 63044.
7. Have students research the struggle for Civil Rights in their own area and see if they can locate a guest speaker to come to your class and share their story. Think in terms of individuals who participated in the struggle for black American rights as well as those who joined in other civil rights struggles for women and/or other minorities.

Supplemental Resources:

<http://www.civilrights.org/resources/civilrights101/desegregation.html>

Learn a great deal about the development of Civil Rights in American history from its origins until today. The site includes a chronology, glossary, explanations of important events in Civil Rights history including the movement for Black American civil rights as well as additional movements for other minority groups and women.

<http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/> Website of the National Civil Rights Museum. Teacher and student educational resources are included.

More information on the award-winning documentary, *From Jim Crow to Barack Obama* can be found at: <http://www.jimcrowtobarackobama.com/index.html>.