

School Integration

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Content Area: U.S. History

Grade Level Options: 11

Summary of Lesson: In this lesson students will examine the integration of schools in Delaware through a case study of the Milford desegregation crisis of 1954. Through videos and primary sources, students will analyze the background of the Supreme Court's decision of *Brown v. Board* and what happened when the Milford School District attempted to integrate its high school four months after this landmark case.

Resources Needed:

- [Resource 1: School Insurance Evaluation Report, 1941](#)
- [Resource 2: Redding Telegram](#)
- [Resource 3: Segregation Letter](#)
- [Resource 4: Burton Letter](#)

Desired Results

What students will know, do, and understand

Delaware Content Standards:

History One 9-12a: Students will analyze historical materials to trace the development of an idea or trend across space or over a prolonged period of time in order to explain patterns of historical continuity and change. **Essential for Grade 11**

Civics 9-12b: Students will understand that the functioning of the government is a dynamic process which combines the formal balances of power incorporated in the Constitution with traditions, precedents, and interpretations which have evolved over the past 200 years.
Essential for Grades 9 and 11

Lesson Essential Question

- How can we use historical materials to evaluate changing interpretations of the 14th Amendment? To what extent did civil rights in education for African-Americans change over time?

Learning Plan

Instructional Strategies Strategy One: Gathering Information Google Doc (see format below)

Timeline of School Integration in Delaware

Document	Date	Summary	
Plessy vs. Ferguson	1896		
Public School Insurance Evaluation	1941		
Brown v Board of Education	1954		
Redding Telegram	1954		

Segregation Letter			
Burton Letter			

Introduce students to the 1896 Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which established the doctrine of *separate but equal*. Students watch the video:

The History Channel: Sound Smart: Plessy v Ferguson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sj54KP16llw>

For more information on *Plessy v. Ferguson* and the 14th Amendment:
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_plessy.html

Have students fill in the section for Plessy v. Ferguson on the [School Integration Google Doc](#) (above)

Strategy Two: Extending and Refining Google Doc Graphic Organizer

Distribute the Resource 2: [Redding Telegram](#) to students. Read the document in pairs. Ask students to fill-in sections for the Resource 2: [Redding Telegram](#) on the graphic organizer.

Have students read in pairs about the Supreme Court Ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education*. Emphasize that two Delaware court cases, *Belton v Gebhart and Bulah v Gebhart* were consolidated and were part of the Brown decision. The plaintiffs in these cases were represented by Jack Greenberg and Louis Redding. Redding was the first African-American attorney in the history of Delaware.

Students watch the following videos about Brown v Board of Education and the Civil Rights Movement

May 17, 1954 - Brown v. Board of Education

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkuiMr2tLJE>

The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow

https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_brown.html

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1)

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/347us483>

Instruct students to complete the *Brown v. Board of Education* section on the Google doc Graphic Organizer

For the text of the Brown v. Board of Education opinion:

http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0347_0483_ZO.html

Ask students to compare this document to the separate but equal principle established in the 14th Amendment. Have them answer: To what extent were schools for African-American children equal to those for whites?

Strategy Three: Application Distribute the final two documents – the Resource 3: [Segregation Letter](#) and Resource 4: [Burton Letter](#). Instruct students to complete these sections on the Google Doc Graphic Organizer. Reading Strategy: These two letters present two contrasting views of school integration. Ask students to identify words in each letter that reveal the author’s opinion of integration. Students can use a web to organize these words from the texts.

Example: [Segregation Letter](#)

- unconstitutional
- school integration
- communistic enslavement

What do these documents tell us about the educational experience for African-Americans after school segregation was legally ended by *Brown v. Board of Education*?

Assessment Evidence

Evidence that will be collected to determine whether or not the desired results are achieved

Closure/Exit Ticket

- To what extent did civil rights in education for African-Americans change over time? Use specific examples from three of the documents to support your answer.