



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2021 Volume III: Democracy and Inequality: Challenges and Possible Solutions

The New Brown v. Board of Education in Today's School Segregation

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In a Langston Hughes' poem titled *Democracy*, the speaker asks readers to do more than just understand, but more importantly, to DO their part to realize equal rights belong to ALL of us. In 2021, the struggle for equality and digital equity remains troublesome, especially for our Black and Brown students. The purpose of this ELA, Math and Social Studies interdisciplinary unit is to empower 4th to 8th grade students to think like problem-solvers, and act like civic leaders. This 3-part (3 lessons per part) unit is designed for students to: 1) acquire building blocks associated with the principles of democracy by studying primary sources such as quotes, the *Declaration of Independence*, photos, political cartoons, and landmark segregation cases; 2) analyze today's issues of school segregation with maps, ratings, and game theories; 3) plan possible solutions and action steps that might include op-ed letters, public testimonies, and community outreach. The unit is designed to be taught intermittently throughout the school year, but teachers can choose to teach only Part 1 or Part 2 before Part 3. The ultimate goal is for students to actively execute a service-learning project that will benefit inside and outside of their school community.

Key Words:

United States History, school segregation, *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Alvarez v. the Lemon Grove School District (1931)*, affirmative action, *University of California v. Bakke (1978)*, *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard (2019)*, game theories, Divide-the-Dollar, Schelling's Model of Segregation, democracy, Preamble of the *Declaration of Independence*, Elizabeth Freeman.

(Developed for ELA, Math, and Social Studies, grade 4; recommended for ELA, Math, and Social Studies, grades 4-8)

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