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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2021 Volume III: Democracy and Inequality: Challenges and Possible Solutions

Still Separate and Unequal? A Look at School Equality in the American Democracy

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One persistent myth about *Brown v Board of Education* is that it ended school segregation and inequality. In fact, many schools today are resegregated and still unequal compared to others. Another myth conflates democracy with equality. In fact, many democracies not only experience inequality but cause and perpetuate it. Students experiencing this unit will look at inequality by researching their own school and making comparisons to other schools around the state and country. Student engagement will rise because they are investigating their own society. In addition, they will be partnered with other students across the country to share and analyze information. Students will then talk about ways to equalize schools and look at the challenges involved in using the courts or voting to try and make improvements. After considering what changes have been attempted elsewhere and how they fared, students will propose changes within their own school and district, come up with a plan for implementation, and then present to relevant school officials. Written for High School Sophomores and Juniors in History classes, this unit involves data gathering, research, analysis, collaboration, and presentation, and could be taught at other grade levels or in other subject areas as well.

(Developed for U. S. History, grade 11, and World History, grade 10; recommended for Social Studies, grades 7-8; U. S. Government, grade 12; U. S. History, grade 11; and World History, grade 10)

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