



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

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

Racial Inequities in Public School Today: Reflecting on Failures of Brown V Board

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Introduction

White parents had concerns about black students attending their predominantly white elementary school. They feared they would not be able to walk their students to school anymore. The streets would become too dangerous. Property values would go down, and their houses would sell for less.¹² Racial prejudices such as these parallel something from sixty years ago, but shockingly, these 'fears' from white parents were from 2019 when the superintendent of Richmond City Schools, Jason Kamras, proposed a plan to integrate two elementary schools in Richmond Virginia.

Students in my classroom will have the background knowledge of Plessy V Ferguson and the Brown V Board case before diving into this curriculum unit, as it will come right after. However, we will review the Supreme Court cases and build upon the inequality in education. If given the time going over the five cases that comprised Brown V Board would be very enlightening for students. It shows the lack of equality in schools across the country and the need to fight for it. The states involved were Delaware, Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Since I do not have enough time due to content constraints, I will do an overview with the main focus on Brown V Board. From there, we'll look at what has happened since Brown using images, vocabulary, scholarly sources, and graphs to see if Brown did what it set out to do. We'll ask questions, such as, was it successful? What could we do to make it more successful? This cross-curricular unit applies to social studies/ history and math as well as language arts. With the final project being a trifold, it could also involve art.

"The difference between de jure and de facto segregation is the difference between open, forthright bigotry and the shamefaced kind that works through unwritten agreements between real estate dealers, school officials, and local politicians." This quote by schoolteacher turned politician then author Shirley Chisholm highlighted what was wrong and continues to be with our education system. Like many teachers, she wanted to improve her surroundings and the future of the children. The story of Chisholm often resonated with students as they are in a classroom working with a teacher who is working towards the same goals several decades later. Highlighting a teacher who can make a difference makes students realize that teachers can instigate change and fight for equality on all sides. Chisholm was a teacher's aide in Harlem while getting her master's in education in 1952. Chisholm later went on to become the first black woman to be elected to

Congress. Shortly before the Brown decision, she was in public school trenches and remained in the public eye until 1991, even returning to teaching after retiring from Congress.¹

Had Chisholm been alive today, she would see that the social studies curriculum has recently come under the scrutiny of educators, parents, and society as a whole. Sections are biased, as whites are projected as the hero or savior coming in and saving everyone who isn't white from themselves. Would Chisholm be surprised? Was her fight for equality almost seven decades ago for nothing? One textbook my students analyze was used throughout the south was used as recently as 2018 refers to Africans brought over during slave trading as 'workers.'² My students are often shocked and saddened by this blatant lie in a textbook distributed throughout a state.

The Southern Poverty Law Center conducted a study in 2017 using 12 U.S. history books and 1,700 social studies teachers; they found that 60% of teachers felt the curriculum did not cover slavery sufficiently.³ This brings up the question: If we cannot accurately cover slavery, what else is left out or behind? This data points out that Virginia Studies starts in 1607 and doesn't highlight Native Americans' lives before the English landed. Instead, the textbook talks about the trading between Native Americans and the English and what was learned from them. These books also don't mention Africans' lives before being stolen from their homes, traded and sold, and sent to Virginia. To combat the issue, Nikole Hannah-Jones created the 1619 project to fix this, but further inequities should have driven change. Stories weren't written down the way we write them down today, but they were spoken. Educating our students is so important. They need to know about what life was like for people in Africa before being ripped from their families and friends, stuffed on a ship, not understanding anything and being traded, and sold, brought to a strange, new land and forced to work day in and day out for nothing in return. This further drives the wedge of inequality as certain groups are left out of textbooks or are not appropriately covered. However, the students likely don't know what stories they are missing, what narratives perhaps are deliberately excluded.

Growing up, did you think about the school you attended? Did you think about the privilege or lack thereof that you or the classmates who attended school with you had? If you attended a public school, someone or a group of people drew the map for your attendance zone for your school in your district, and the school board approved it. Thinking about how we got to where we are today, we have to often reflect on where we started. Brown V Board of Education was a culmination of 5 cases that made it to the Supreme Court, pushing the idea that separate but equal was not just. This landmark decision was made in a courtroom, believing that it would progress to all states and schools across the country. The question is, has it successfully translated to the classroom? Have states, districts, and ultimately schools desegregated their classrooms according to the ruling from Brown? The National Center for Education Statistics data found the year with the highest integration rate was 1989. This was 35 years after the verdict. This might seem like progress took a long time, but it generally does. In 2011 23% of black students attended schools where at least 50% of the student body was white. The last time the number was that low was around 1968.⁴ There are, of course, ways to fix the lack of integration. The most glaringly obvious solution involves school districts redrawing district lines to reduce or eliminate segregation. This has not happened. Instead, these district lines have been redrawn, perpetuating segregation in the classroom through segregation in the residential neighborhood. To keep the home value up, communities stay white while other areas remain predominantly black.

Rationale and History

I teach at Bellevue Elementary, a Title I school in Richmond, Virginia- that was the capital of the Confederacy during the Civil War. The little block that Bellevue is nestled in is filled with history. To help place it on a map, it is across the street from Saint John's Church where Patrick Henry gave his "Give me Liberty or Give me Death" speech in 1775. 87% of the student population is black, 6% Hispanic, 3% white, 2% Asian or Pacific Islander and 2% two or more races, and 1% Native American. 99% of the student body comes from low-income homes. 55% of the students are male, and 45% are female. Test scores are well below the state average, with reading at 53%- the state average is 74%, math at 63%, the state average is 82%, and science at 67%, the state average is 78%. Statistics and numbers are essential, but we need to go beyond that. Established only six years after the Confederacy admitted defeat to the Union, Bellevue Elementary was established in 1871 as a historically white school. Later on, when divided into two campuses in 1914 (2301 East Grace Street, where the school is currently) and a previous unlisted address, the vocational/ mentally handicapped school, and the 'regular' school, both were designated for white pupils only.⁵ Fast-forward more than a century later, and the demographics are nearly the opposite of whom the original school was intended for. To commemorate all that once was sits a museum on the first floor of the school. Plastered on one wall is a black and white photo mural showing the all-white students of Bellevue from 1914, highlighting privilege, status, and ease of access to education. It is a dark reminder glaring in students' faces of all that had to be fought for to gain an education that appears, yet again, to be segregated. Students who attend Bellevue are aware of the history of the school. If they aren't, they become aware through the floor-to-ceiling mural they pass by in the museum. There are very few artifacts that are accessible and relatable to the students who attend Bellevue today.

History

Plessy V Ferguson

As this is the first time students are learning about this content, I go back and review several times throughout to ensure that information is being retained and absorbed to explain it to one another. Before starting the curriculum unit, my students will have had background knowledge of the Plessy V. Ferguson decision where separate but equal was acceptable. However, I will review with students that the ruling stated that people could have separate facilities as long as they were the same. Plessy argued that this went against the 13th and 14th amendments. The argument was that the 13th amendment outlawed slavery, and the 14th allowed equal protection, claiming that separate facilities are not equal. The courts ultimately sided with Ferguson stating they found no constitutional violation.⁶ I have my students look at this court case and analyze both sides after learning about it. If students struggle to have a discussion, I prompt them with questions.

- Is separate but equal a form of slavery?
- After the ruling on Plessy V Ferguson, were facilities equal? How do you know?
- Why do you think it takes so long for another case to reach the Supreme Court questioning equality in facilities?

As a side note, I refrain from acting out of any court cases, especially Plessy V Ferguson and Brown V Board, as this causes tension and power struggles in my classroom. It is imperative to raise all student voices and not alienate or make anyone uncomfortable. It is essential to recognize that history itself can be painful, and as a class, we realize that before delving in. We allow ourselves to feel the discomfort, name it and push on.

Jim Crow

I will review the Jim Crow Laws between Plessy V Ferguson and Brown V Board (1877-1954). These laws were created to disenfranchise black people from any political and economic gains that they may have made. These laws were primarily passed in southern states and included the one-drop rule, requiring people to marry within their race, stating that the men who were to vote must be able to speak English fluently, as well as restrictive housing for minorities. The laws also mandated differences in transportation, and libraries were segregated, separate schools had different textbooks, leading to deeper-rooted inequalities.⁷ The housing law delegated blacks to certain areas, not allowing them to live in white neighborhoods. There are remnants of this law still present today. While Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Fair Housing Act in 1968, outlawing housing discrimination, it has been found that many people skirt around that law.

This section leading up to the unit takes some time for my students to process. Recently there has been a lot of hate directed towards people who look different from others. As a result, students connect the dots- relating current racial tensions during Jim Crow laws. I allow students to lead the discussion as I am not them, nor do I have the experiences they have had. I simply moderate. When students aren't sure where to start, I lead by using the opportunity to have students look at pictures and grade-appropriate cartoons from that time. I also show brands that harken back to a time of slavery, many times surprising students who thought nothing of it. Students are usually surprised to hear of the history of these brands and how the backlash has only been recent.

- Cream of Wheat shows a black chef on the front of the box. Originally it was a Rastus (now a racial slur) of a white man in black face who was a former slave. Despite changing the image to that of a black chef, silencing the overt racism, it was still present to many through the subtle image.
- Aunt Jemima has an image of a black woman on a bottle of mock maple syrup. Her appearance on the bottle sat there for 130 years. In 2020, after protests, its parent company, Quaker Oats, redesigned the name and image. Old Aunt Jemima was a song field slaves used to sing.
- Uncle Ben's is quite similar to Aunt Jemima. Historically the honorary title of Mr. or Ms. was saved for white people, and Aunt and Uncle were used for black people. The rice box had the image of a black man in a bowtie, suggesting he was a servant.
- Butterworth's syrup has been called out as depicting a mammy due to the shape of the bottle- a black woman who is subservient to a white woman.

Brown V Board

We have reached the pivotal point of the curriculum with students. My students' prior knowledge is imperative as it casts a long shadow of the history of inequality in education based on race. The next time inequality comes under the microscope is when the culmination of 5 cases that comprised Brown V Board went to the Supreme Court in 1954, declaring that states would be required to desegregate schools. Brown V Board was the first Supreme Court case involving racial injustices since Plessy V Ferguson nearly 58 years earlier. Would Brown V Board have gone to the Supreme Court without five instances? Would one case have made it? When teaching Brown V Board, students have great discussions about the progress made by the culmination of these 5 cases making it to the Supreme Court. I don't encourage or discourage them. I push my students'

critical thinking and look at disparate sources right after the ruling. What were people thinking from both sides?

Massive Resistance

In retaliation to the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown V Board* in Virginia, the Massive Resistance movement started led by Harry F. Byrd Sr. The senator wanted to close, privatize and reopen schools as white only and support white flight. Massive Resistance failed in 1960 after the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals overturned it. I always tell my students that it is imperative to remember that even though the laws failed, it has left deep, long-lasting scars on the inequalities in Virginia's education system. Massive Resistance did not end the fight by those in power in Virginia to continue segregation in schools. Freedom of Choice allowed students to attend a historically black or historically white school after the *Brown* decision. In New Kent, Virginia, several black families chose to integrate into the white school while nobody from the white school moved to the black school. Calvin and Mary Green had recently moved to the district and noticed that despite the *Brown* ruling, integration had not occurred. New Kent was the designated white school, and George W. Watkins was the black school. Only 15% of the black students attended New Kent with the Freedom of Choice decision. Green was not happy and believed they should do more to integrate schools. He started a petition, went to the school board, and got turned away. As a result, he sued. His case- *Green V County School Board of New Kent County* went to the Supreme Court, and he won, 14 years after the historic *Brown* ruling. The Supreme Court decided that Freedom of Choice was placing the unfair blame and ultimately task on blacks to move themselves to a different school.⁸

Harry F. Byrd Sr.

Historical figures can be very complicated for both students and adults. From a young age, students are often taught right from wrong, good from the bad. This pertains to their actions, the actions of others, and placing into categories historical people. As a child, attempting to discern someone as having both positive and negative traits is quite challenging. Up until recently, many idolized Thomas Jefferson as someone who could have done no wrong. Harry Flood Byrd Sr. is one of those figures. His statue was one of the ones signed by the governor to be removed from the capitol's grounds in Richmond, Virginia.

I introduce him to my students as the governor of Virginia, who modernized the government and created the pay-as-you-go system for road improvement, thus preventing Virginia from going into debt. After this discussion, my students have categorized Byrd into the excellent person category. I then talk about Massive Resistance in general terms before bringing it back to Byrd's creator and proponent. He fought for segregation despite the *Brown* ruling. He wanted to keep schools separate and wanted to prevent black people from having the right to vote. Once this new information comes to light, we discuss, as students want to categorize him as evil. We have to decide- can it be both good and evil?

Barbara Johns

Barbara Johns is an inspiration many times left out of history books. So often, students are told that adults are the ones who make significant changes and make the world a better place. When teaching, I make sure to highlight the heroism of this one teenager who wasn't afraid to stand up for what she knew was right, even if she felt everyone was standing against her. Barbara Johns was a petite 16 years old in Davis County, Virginia, in 1951. She attended Robert Russa Moton High School, which was inferior to the school white students attended. There were 450 students in a space built to contain 180. I ask my students what that might look like and how that might feel. The answers vary, but students often say they would have to share a desk, not be

able to eat lunch with friends, and never get called on in class because only the teacher would be able to talk. Students also attribute the extreme congestion to being unable to learn and resulting in anger and frustration.

The overcrowding of students was enough to anger Barbara, but funding was also an issue. If it rained, students needed umbrellas due to severe leaks in the ceiling. She, along with her classmates, was told to be patient; things would eventually get better. Barbara did not like that answer, so she decided to change things for herself. The entire student body- all 450 students walked out of the high school and refused to return until a better school was built. The walkout was one of the 5 cases used in the historic Brown V Board Supreme Court case. The school later fell victim to Harry Byrd's plan of Massive Resistance. However, Barbara Johns was a pivotal change-maker during the push for equality in schools, even when adults told her to wait. I've often found her story inspires students.

Today

Where do we go from here? Students have taken in a lot of information throughout this unit, yet we have more to do. Analyzing where we are at today, schools have remained segregated. In an NPR interview with Rebecca Sibilia, founder of the nonprofit EdBuild, she states that her team found the disheartening news that meaningful desegregation can't be achieved once districts are at 75-85% white or nonwhite.¹⁰ The percentage data point tends to be very shocking for my students. They tend to ask questions about what we can do and where we should go from here. Instead of easing worries, I show them more data found by Sibilia. White school districts get around \$23 million more per year than nonwhite districts.¹⁰ Anne Lindberg, Branch Library Manager of the Scottsville library, part of Jefferson-Madison Regional Library in Charlottesville, responded well. We seem too focused on "encased in law segregation. Maybe we're asking the wrong question. Maybe we should put \$46 million into the schools that have experienced systematic racism."¹⁴

As educators, we know students learn in different ways, and to accommodate that, I use imagery and physical items for them to hold. These images or diagrams help my students grasp the gravity of the situation and allow them to discuss what is happening. What might they be seeing? I've also given one student a chunk of fake money and then another student twice as much. If I ask the two students to purchase the same things from the store, will they be able to? The answer is no. I ask if what I did was fair, and students discuss. The students agree that each student should receive the same amount of money to succeed with the task at the same level.

Brown V Board of Education begs the question; can a court ruling make a change? When a court makes a ruling, in the Brown V Board or Green case, they didn't say how desegregation would take place, simply that it would. That still leaves it up to us, the people, the one's who live and breathe the injustices and experience it to make the change. Lack of structure or an outline creates a lull in progress from the decision to the implementation¹¹

What are the next steps when it appears to be an uphill battle? I have my students look at textbooks used in public schools from 1954 to the present to decide if Brown V Board was successful in integrating schools. How are people represented in the textbook? Is everyone portrayed fairly? Is there a bias towards a specific group or groups of people? Are we following a particular narrative? Students tend to find the white narrative is the one that is highlighted most often in history textbooks, even to this day. This generally angers my students due to the lack of transparency of the whole story.

What leads one to want to make a change; most likely if they are the one who is experiencing the injustice or

know someone who is. There are several questions we can ask to move forward:

- Where do we go from here?
- How do we change the story of education and equality?
- How do we ensure every child has an equal chance at success?

As Abraham Lincoln said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Does segregation still exist in schools across the country today? Are we a nation divided? We often like to turn a blind eye, ignore what we are seeing and not disrupt the course of public education. However, tightly purposeful drawn district lines are what many end up seeing. We call this redlining. And while people think of it as a thing of the past, it is still very prevalent today. How it is done today relates to mortgages. While illegal mortgage companies still do this and have lawsuits filed against them for discrimination.

I show my students maps of redlined districts. Students reflect on where they live and what their preconceived ideas of labels are of each area. Within these borders are the separation of rich and poor, needy communities, and high-income mortgages. The areas in green show areas that are the most desirable to live in. The areas in blue are good, yellow is a declining area, and red is considered hazardous. Mortgage companies use this to refuse mortgage loans based on the likelihood of payback. As a result, students attend a school based on their location. The continued loss is a population of students receiving the newest equipment, the most up-to-date technology, and having access to more funds to pay their teachers more, potentially allowing them to be more selective with who they hire. There isn't as much funding in the neighboring district that allows selectiveness when employing top-tier technology or access to supplies in classrooms. Due to the lack of funding, a widening gap with test scores, equity, dropout, and teacher retention rates result. I've often found this challenging for my students to comprehend in 4th grade, but by showing images depicting the data, they have an easier understanding.

Most students jump to the redistribution of wealth to help each district succeed; however, this is not what has happened. Instead, there is a deeper divide between the wealthier neighborhoods and those with the highest need. An advantaged district is one that around 3 million students in the U.S. attend. The Center for American Progress found that across each state, per-pupil spending varies between \$5,700-\$17,000.¹³ This is a massive gap in funding. It's important to note that the impoverished district's student body makeup is 65% nonwhite. Not every community is like this, but we have the means to remedy it, so the real question is, why aren't we? I pose this question to my students, and the answers created are often mixed. Some students believe we aren't helping others because we are selfish and refuse to look out for others as a country. Other students think that wealth distribution wouldn't work in America, as it wasn't the values on which America was founded. Students cite the 'pull yourself up from your bootstraps' mentality- if you are in a bad neighborhood, work your way out. Still, others add to the discussion that their families have lived in the same four blocks for generations and wouldn't think of moving. They don't know anything else. Does that mean they deserve less? Less funding? Rundown schools?

The harsh reality is that my students often know they are disadvantaged. I've had students who've moved to the school and pointed out how the school they came from was 'more excellent. I asked one student what she meant, and she said the building was newer and well maintained; they went on field trips a lot, there was a lot of parent involvement, but she was the only black student in her class. She was an anomaly at the school, and she said she had often felt alone. At the end of the year, I asked for a year-to-year comparison with what she called the 'fancy' school. She said she enjoyed her time more with her peers that looked like her. 97% of her classmates were black. This begs the question; is there a way to have diversity in the classroom before feeling

alienated? What is the tipping point? Where can the scale land, so everyone feels included and welcomed?

There is a revived movement trending towards segregation again. A study from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA⁴, N.C.E.S., found that the percentage of black students at schools with a majority of white students is drastically declining in all quadrants of the United States. From 1991 to 2018, the decline in the south was 22%, 7% in the Northeast, Midwest was 6%, and in the West, it was 17%. The most significant deficit was in the south.⁴ We have to remember these students haven't disappeared. A seismic shift has occurred. Black students are now attending schools where most of the student body is also black. So many factors play into this, but we also need to look at schooling options that further push towards segregation. While some neighborhoods push for magnet and charter schools, others push for opportunities to allow their children to transfer to a better school.

Segregation in schools continues today, permeating our society in all quadrants. It ebbs and flows in patterns. A study done by the National Center for Biotechnology showed that between 1970 and 1990, school segregation in metropolitan areas showed a sharp decrease and then rebounded in the 1990s.¹¹ While this trend may appear surprising, it takes us to 2019 in Richmond, when white parents were okay with diversity as long as they still felt safe walking their students to school and their home property values didn't decrease.¹² Is this the root of the problem?

Appendix on Implementing District Standards

Throughout the Social Studies curriculum, students understand the history of Virginia from 1607 to the present. Within this history, skills become developed to analyze essential contributions made by all people, cultures, and political institutions that weave together the story of Virginia. A strand within this curriculum focuses on the aftermath of Brown V Board and Massive Resistance (VS.9c). Students analyze primary and secondary sources during the curriculum unit to determine if Brown V Board successfully desegregated schools throughout the United States and is still thriving today. They will acquire new vocabulary, have a data-driven conversation about segregation in schools, and sort question sources and the potential biases of the source. Students will write a persuasive, fact-based research paper on present-day segregation in schools. Students will also present an end-of-unit project in the form of a living museum where parents, guardians, school and district officials can view the trifold projects and ask questions in the gym.

Conclusion

Students will build a solid foundation of knowledge within the first few days of the unit, allowing them to control the inquiry-based learning, with the most significant portion coming from the vocabulary and discussion day. The students will interact with credible sources, ask questions and design a research paper and trifold presentation for a living museum as a final product. I am available to assist, clarify, and support students in their learning and data collection throughout the process. With the teacher's support and multiple sources, students can ask themselves the impact that Brown V Board had on public education and if it

continues to make a positive change towards equalizing education for everyone. The design of the curriculum unit involves components that pull from three of the four core classes- language arts with research and essay writing, math with data analysis, and social studies/ history as the basis of the unit. Allowing students the autonomy to research, write and present their findings on racial equality or lack thereof in public schools gives ownership of their work. The teacher acts as a guide, assisting when needed to ask questions and spark debate. The final trifold projects come together can pull in art as well.

Classroom Activities

- *A Roundtable discussion* is a perfect opportunity to open dialogue and ask students about their feelings on equality in schools. Here, the teacher can guide but let the conversation flow naturally, and students can carry it. If you are unsure of questions to ask, here are some to get started:
 - *Do you know someone at a different school, maybe in another district, getting a better or worse education than you? Why? How do you know?*
 - *How would you improve your education?*
 - *Have you seen racism at school? How did it look?*
 - *What should we do as a school/ classroom community to combat discrimination?*
 - *Do you believe schools have been integrated since Brown V Board? Explain.*
- *Divergent Thinking* has students break into groups to think about potential solutions to fix integration in schools. At the end of class, have students share what they found/ created. Students enjoy this activity as it involves breaking apart, discussing without an adult, and then coming back together and learning from peers.
- *Visuals* allow students to hear information and bring it to life by seeing it in front of them. Vox provides many visuals for all ages to see what has happened since Brown V Board and its success. Links for Vox articles are listed in the Appendix. I show students data visuals, as well as images of segregated schools and the classic images of Ruby Bridges. Many students are surprised to learn she went to school in 1960 (six years after the Brown decision).
- *Presentations* in the form of a trifold, poster, or other kinesthetic models can be made by students for the end of the curriculum unit to share with classmates in a whole-class format or small groups. Having one presentation form can be more accessible when doing a living museum. Trifolds are great and still allow a lot of freedom for students to decorate them and include pictures, wording, etc., however, they want.
- *Stories* bring this curriculum to life. We all know not that long ago, schools were segregated. What has happened since? What is the difference between segregation and integration? We need to educate ourselves on what history books taught us and where our history books should take us. How can we improve and do better? Reading is a great way to do that! I read to my students every day, and it helps solidify historical facts.
- *The Living Museum* is the culminating project that students will present in the gym. Aside from parents and guardians, I will be inviting school board members, the superintendent, and members from the central office. We must have this museum as it communicates to the community the changes since the school was built and the original museum was installed.
- *Writing* helps students get their thoughts down on paper and gives them ownership of the information they found. Writing a 1-2 page essay answering one of the following four guiding questions will assist

the student in their research. Many times students can answer any of the four questions without any research, but we have to back our words up with research.

Questions to Answer for Research Essay

- To what extent was Brown V Board successful?
- What steps can we take to make schools more equal?
- How can we do a better job of integrating schools?
- What would an integrated school look like to you?

You know your classroom better than anyone and how to present information in a way that will reach them. These are suggestions that include all five teaching strategies, and you will see examples that I have in the classroom activities, as I will be using them with my students.

- Inquiry-based learning is one of my favorite modalities of instruction. The example you see will involve a roundtable discussion. This strategy is my favorite because it amplifies student's voices and allows the teacher to observe and evaluate how much progress has occurred.
- Visuals are another favorite of the students, and mine is likely because 65% of the population is visual learners. They allow students to see the numbers described to them in a diagram, graph, or image. Visuals also help bridge the gap in learning by up to 42%. By pairing visuals with other modalities of education, students should retain most of the unit taught.⁹
- Kinesthetic learning happens when students complete their project-based final project. Students would present their projects to the class along with their research papers.
- Reading/Writing is an optional teaching strategy depending on your grade level where students write a research essay.

Vocabulary, People, and Events

To assist students in vocabulary saturation, I display curriculum unit vocabulary words and their definitions on the wall and use them in everyday speech when teaching. I do this with all units, so students are not surprised when new vocabulary words appear on the bulletin board. I also encourage students to use these words when communicating and incorporating them into their inquiry-based culminating project.

- *Segregation* is the separation of people, usually based on race or religion. This word will come up repeatedly when looking at Supreme Court cases Plessy V Ferguson and Brown V Board, and education equality, and looking at problems and solutions.
- *Desegregation* is the legal end of racial segregation. The keyword in this definition is the legal end. We must remember and teach our students that implementing a legal ruling can look different across state and county/district lines.
- *Integration* means the full equality of people of all races in the use of public facilities and services. We have to remember that desegregation is not the same as integration. The critical difference between desegregation and integration is that the law determines desegregation. As a society, we define integration by our actions. I often have to come back to these two words and discuss the critical differences- I've found drawing a Venn diagram helps.
- *Discrimination* is the act of mistreating people due to their differences in the way they look or act. For

this definition, I like to draw a spherical octahedron consisting of 3 parts- discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice. As a class, we discuss the differences. Stereotypes are making an assumption- i.e., people with purple hair are gross. Prejudice is when that stereotype becomes a belief- they don't like people with purple hair. Discrimination is the action or behavior and deciding that since people with purple hair are gross, you won't let them sit with you at lunch or play with you at recess.

- *Privilege* is when you might have a unique advantage that not everyone else has.
- *Politics* is defined as the way people living in groups make decisions. This is an expansive definition. It can be expanded or built upon by asking students what they think politics mean to them. Are politics accessible to them? Do they feel they are relatable?
- *Bias* is defined as feeling or even showing being in favor or against something or someone/ a group of people. I ask my students if/when it is okay to show bias or favoritism towards certain people. The answers usually surprise me- students think teachers should favor students with severe learning deficits, and the gym teacher should give extra chances to those students with physical differences.
- *Social Justice* is discussed a lot in the news in the last year and has varying definitions depending on the students' level of education. If students are in elementary or middle school, it is defined as equal distribution of opportunities across wealth and social privilege. This is a term I ask students for a definition before I show it to them. Students are constantly being bombarded with the term in the news, protests, and papers. I want to know what it means to them. Students in high school can dig deeper by looking at all four interrelated aspects: equity, access, participation, and rights.
- *Barbara Johns* was a 16-year-old high school junior in Farmville, Virginia, who led a student strike against segregation in 1951. The case that resulted, *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward*, became one of the five cases reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court when it declared segregation unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education*.
- *Harry F. Byrd Sr.* was Governor of Virginia and then a United States Senator who opposed desegregation and headed the *Massive Resistance* Movement, the Southern Manifesto. It received 100 signatures from representatives and members of Congress.
- *Brown v. Board of Education* was the 1954 Supreme Court case that "separate but equal" public schools were unconstitutional. All public schools, including those in Virginia, were ordered to desegregate. How states and counties interpreted that was up to them. I like to ask my students what the result of this ruling was. Did schools desegregate? What would that look like? Was everyone happy?
- *Massive Resistance* led by Senator Harry F. Byrd Sr. fought desegregation leading to some public schools being closed to avoid integration. The schools reopened as private schools open to whites only. This policy failed and ultimately integrated schools in Virginia.

Notes

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- ¹² "Decades After Brown Decision, Virginia Is Still Grappling With School Segregation." 2019. *Virginia Mercury*. <https://www.virginiamercury.com/2019/08/26/decades-after-brown-decision-virginia-is-still-grappling-with-school-segregation/>.
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Student Resources

- An Excerpt from Virginia: "History, Government, Geography" - I have chosen this piece due to its relevance. This government issues textbook was required reading between 1957-1980 for 4th grade, 8th grade, and high school, further driving a wedge between blacks and whites—the complete textbook

written by Francis B. Simkins, Spotswood H. Jones, and Sidman P. Poole. A full copy of the text is no longer available. Due to the nature of the vocabulary used, this would be best as a guided reading in a teacher-led station.

<http://cwmemory.com/2008/06/23/an-excerpt-from-virginia-history-government-geography/>

- Pictures at the Protest (The Virginia Mysteries) by Steven K. Smith is a chapter book set in 1959 Prince Edward County over five years when public schools were closed due to refusing to desegregate. If you or your students read the Magic Tree House Books, his books are very similar, and they land with perfect timing. It was released in 2020. This book is ideal for a whole class to read during the curriculum unit or read in small reading groups. I prefer to teach it as an entire group as it allows for full group discussion and different opinions and brings in various background knowledge.
- Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges is a memoir about what Bridges experienced desegregating a white school in the south. Students can become introspective and ask and answer questions about what was happening. Circling back, was it desegregation? Was it integration?
- Grandmama's Pride by Becky Birtha is a picture book about a young girl visiting her grandmother in the south and reading signs that depict segregation in ways she hadn't seen before. She is surprised and isn't sure what to make of it. This book is perfect for a whole class reading and reflector for stations.
- The Dream by Diane Z Shore is a beautifully illustrated picture book about the Civil Rights Movement about change. This book is ideal for a whole class read-aloud or a teacher-led station for students to reflect on the change and if it is enough or far from equality.
- VOX Articles
 - How Segregated is your district? Interactive map-
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/7/25/20703660/school-segregation-district-borders-map-data>
 - School Segregation today-
<https://www.vox.com/2018/1/8/16822374/school-segregation-gerrymander-map>
 - Discussing redlining in housing and mortgage loans-
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/27/16004084/school-segregation-evolution>

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