

# Desegregation: Stories from Children's Literature

**GRADE LEVEL:** Grades 6-8

**SUBJECT:** U.S. History; English Language Arts; Sociology

**TIME REQUIRED:** 90 minutes

Students will explore children's literature as a way to draw insights about young people's experiences with civil rights and desegregation.

## **RATIONALE**

Reading comprehension is an important skill in school learning. Here we introduce children's literature that might help students of upper elementary and middle grades think about kids' experiences with desegregation in the 1950s and 1960s in the United States.

**NOTE:** While this lesson is paced for 90 minutes and intended for grades 6-8, adjustments could be made (such as cutting some activities) to accommodate shorter timeframes or to support grades 4-5.

This lesson plan and materials needed to teach it can be found at the Thurgood Marshall Institute: <https://tminstituteldf.org/>

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. How did segregation affect the lives of young people in the United States?
2. Who can fight for rights?

## **OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES**

After the lesson, students will...

1. Describe a text persuasively to a peer audience.
2. Communicate synthesized themes from the reading.
3. Collaborate to develop a rich media plan or digital artifact to communicate ideas from reading (comprehension).

## **PREPARING TO TEACH**

- Check with the school library or local public library to secure the books on the list in the materials section.
- Review the assessment strategy and sample movie trailers to assure appropriateness for your students before the lesson.

## **SCAFFOLDS AND ACCOMMODATIONS TO SUPPORT LEARNERS**

*Reading support...*

- While the texts might not be challenging for many students in grades 6-8, there should be attention to sense-making supports in any reading activity. Some examples are below:

- A graphic idea organizer or table, like the example below, can help students sort and keep ideas categorized so they can build their book trailer.
- Provide students with mentor texts or examples to support the development of their book trailer so they know what they are reading for. Setting a clear purpose is a primary reading support for learners.
- Using a note-taking strategy or group read-along strategies can help students make sense of what they are reading.

Who is in the book? And What are they doing?	When is the book taking place and What is happening in the book?	What insights about characters' lives during these events are important for gaining <u>interest</u> from the audience and recognizing <u>important themes</u> ?

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES SEQUENCE**

**1. (20 min.) Movie and Book Trailer Review**

Review movie trailers from the past and present, and ask students to discuss the differences. The key outcome of this conversation is to describe what makes a good trailer. Some examples can be found at:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4Njg8PN700>
- Or by doing a quick movie trailer search for movies they might be familiar with from the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and today. Comparing four examples could help students really home in on what makes a good trailer. Possible guiding questions include:
  - How is the trailer organized? (the parts)
  - What shows up first, second, ... last? (the order)
  - What media is included? (video, image, music?)
  - What elements made it effective or ineffective as a trailer?

**2. (25 min.) Book Club (see materials list for possible book selections)**

Students will be grouped with a partner or group of three. In these groups, they will read the book they choose or are assigned together then work on their book trailer. Individually, each

student will prepare a one-page outline that summarizes the book and their perspectives/learning outcomes.

**3. (30 min.) Book Trailer Design and Creation (more time may be needed depending on format and resources)**

Students will work together on a piece of poster paper or computer(s) to develop a frame-by-frame (minimum of six frames) for a book trailer idea. Frame one and the last frame should be title and credits, respectively. The middle four frames should attend to the main goals of garnering interest and sharing themes they recognized.

**4. (15 min.) Gallery Walk or Share and Tell with other groups**

A whole group share/presentation is a great idea, but will require more time.

**ASSESSMENT**

- Formative assessment could include observations during student discussions or key checkpoints when developing their book trailer.
- Book trailer: Authentic assessment option is that students during their book clubs will develop a book trailer and individually a one-page outline of their summary and insights from reading and discussing their book with their group. Book trailers are like movie trailers but for a book instead. It's a way to share some summary but also highlight key moments and outcomes. The goal should be:
  - to build interest in the book among audience members and
  - think about and communicate important themes.
- These book trailers could be made on poster paper with six or more frames (something used for production of video) or made with Movie Maker or iMovie software and videorecorded moments or images of the book or relevant historical images sourced and found in search databases.

**MATERIALS NEEDED AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ENRICHMENT**

**Children's Book list:**

[This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality](#)

By Jo Ann Allen Boyce, Debbie Levy

[When the Schools Shut Down: A Young Girl's Story of Virginia's Lost Generation and the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Decision](#)

By Tamara Pizzoli, Yolanda Gladden, and Keisha Morris (Illustrator)

[Step by Step! How the Lincoln School Marchers Blazed a Trail to Justice](#)

By Debbie Rigaud, Carlotta Penn

Read: ["Marching Mothers" Sue to Desegregate Schools](#)

*Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation*

By Duncan Tonatiuh

*Grandmama's Pride*

Written by [Becky Birtha](#) & illustrated by [Colin Bootman](#)

*The Quickest Kid in Clarksville*

Written by [Pat Zietlow Miller](#) & illustrated by [Frank Morrison](#)

*Finding Lincoln*

Written by [Ann Malaspina](#) & illustrated by [Colin Bootman](#)

*Through My Eyes*

Written and illustrated by [Ruby Bridges](#) and [Margo Lundell](#)

*Freedom Summer*

By Deborah Wiles