Notable Trade Book Lesson Plan

*Remember: The Journey to School Integration*

Written by Toni Morrison

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The *Remember: The Journey to School Integration* lesson introduces students to the ideas of segregation and school integration. The lesson is designed to be a combination of teacher-led instruction and student-centered learning. Students build and develop their background knowledge on the topics of segregation and the integration of public schools. Once a knowledge base has been established, students look at the pictures from Toni Morrison’s book, think critically about the message being conveyed in them, and then create their own comprehensive response to the material presented in the entire lesson.

About the Authors

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Citation for this Article


Book Title


Recommended ages: Upper elementary grades, but can be modified for middle and secondary grades.

This lesson is designed to last three class periods.
Remember: The Journey to School Integration is a collection of photographs from the Civil Rights Movement and the era of public school integration accompanied by poignant and thought-provoking narration written by Toni Morrison. She takes on fictional personae of the adults and children depicted in the photographs, which makes reading this book even more touching and convicting. The book documents key events in civil rights and school integration history from the passing of Brown vs. Board of Education to the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The collection of photographs in this book not only shows key events during a momentous time in history, but also illustrates how the future of the United States was changed forever.

NCSS Standards

II. Time, Continuity, and Change
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

Materials

- Remember: The Journey to School Integration
- Photo Analysis Worksheet (Appendix A)
- Rubric for Authentic Assessment (Appendix B)
- Internet access
- Chart paper
- U.S. Map

Objectives

- Students will discuss the topics of segregation and school integration.
- Students will participate in a book walk for Remember: The Journey to School Integration.
- Students will analyze photographs from Civil Rights Movement and the integration of public schools.
- Students will construct an original response.

Procedures

Note: Segregation is a difficult topic for many teachers to explain to elementary school children, especially if they are learning about it for the first time. We recommend using the book, Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story*, during the Exploration/Introduction section of this lesson if you are teaching young children. Ruby Bridges does a wonderful job of explaining segregation in a way children can understand:

“A long time ago, some people thought that black people and white people should not be friends. In some places, black people were not allowed to live in the same neighborhoods as white people. In some places, black people were not allowed to eat in the same restaurants as white people. And in some places, black children and white children could not go to the same schools. This is segregation” (Bridges, 2003).
In order to introduce students to the topic of segregation, conduct a teacher-led discussion on the general definition of segregation and explain why segregation was, at one time, lawful in the United States (for information on *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, refer to the “Digital Resources” section.

2. Also use *Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story* to develop students’ background knowledge of segregation in public schools. The goal for this part of the lesson is to provide information students will need in order to understand the photographs in *Remember: The Journey to School Integration*. For additional information on *Brown vs. Board of Education* and the subsequent events, see the “Digital Resource” section.

3. After the students have gained an understanding of the concept of segregation, they should sit in a semi-circle across from the teacher while *Remember: The Journey to School Integration* is read aloud. Do not pose questions or answer students’ questions during the initial reading of the book so the students are able to have an untainted experience of segregation and school integration through photographs. End the read aloud by asking the students to return to their seats and complete a Quick Write/Ticket-out-the-Door Activity in response to the question, “What does segregation mean?”

Having several copies of the book would make this activity easier to do.

4. Provide students with the Photo Analysis Worksheet and have them choose one of the photographs found on pages 22, 29, 39, 40, 42, 43, 47, 52, 61, 66, or 70 of *Remember: The Journey to School Integration* to compete their analysis. Provide an example of a photo analysis completed on one of the pictures of their choosing (preferably not one of the students’ choices). Explain that a photograph is a visual depiction of a single moment in time, so the students should think about the events leading up to and following the moment after the picture was taken.

The book documents key events in civil rights and school integration history from the passing of *Brown vs. Board of Education* to the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
5. In order to help students develop a better understanding of the impact children had on the Civil Rights Movement and school integration, divide students equally into groups of four for a cooperative learning (jigsaw) activity (these are the “mother” groups). Then number each student one through four in the individual groups. Give each mother group one of the following events to research using the provided websites and suggested book readings: Little Rock Nine, Ruby Bridges, Birmingham Children’s Crusade, and 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing. Once each member of the mother groups has an understanding of their event, they should break away and form the four other individual groups. These individual groups will be made up of all of the ones, or of the twos, or threes, or fours from each mother group. The students will be responsible for teaching each other about the event learned about in their mother group. By the end of the activity, every student should have some know the role children played in the civil rights movements and era of school integration.

Information for the websites is in the “Digital Resource” section and information for the suggested book readings is in the “Additional References” section.

Assessment

6. In order to engage students in demonstrating what they have learned in this lesson, have them look at Remember: The Journey to School Integration one more time, review their Photo Analysis Worksheets, and review what they learned during the cooperative learning activity. Then ask students to respond in writing to the following question: Do you believe a child can change the world? See the rubric in Appendix B for the requirements for the writing assignment. Students may receive a grade for the whole lesson based on the score from the rubric.

Suggested Extension Activities

Create a free Delicious webpage (http://www.delicious.com/) bookmarked with information and appropriate websites on the Civil Rights Movement for the students and parents to use. For more information refer to the “Digital Resource” section.

If possible, take students on a field trip to a historical Civil Rights museum or landmark. For more information, check out the National Park Service website found in the “Digital Resource” section.

Additional References


**Additional References continued**


**Digital Resources**

Publisher’s accompanying website for the Morrison’s book

Information on segregation and *Plessy v. Ferguson*
Retrieved from [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_plessy.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_plessy.html)

Information for *Brown v. Board of Education* is found under the Educational Resources tab on the “Timeline” feature.
Retrieved from [http://www.visionaryproject.org](http://www.visionaryproject.org)

Little Rock Nine

Ruby Bridges—New Orleans
Retrieved from [http://rubybridges.com/home.htm](http://rubybridges.com/home.htm)

Children’s Crusade—Birmingham, AL

16th Street Baptist Church bombing—Birmingham, AL
Retrieved from [http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/poets/m_r/randall/birmingham.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/poets/m_r/randall/birmingham.htm)
Digital Resources continued

- Digital primary resource archives for the Civil Rights Movement
  Retrieved from http://www.amistadresource.org/civil_rights_era/

- Lessons and articles for K-12 educators on the Civil Rights Movement
  Retrieved from http://www.civilrightsteaching.org/

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Appendix A

Photo Analysis Worksheet for Upper Elementary Grades

Step 1: Observation

Look at the photograph for two minutes. Study each person’s face, body language, and what she or he is doing, and then complete the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who are the people in the photograph?</td>
<td>What are the people in the photograph doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where do you think these people came from?</td>
<td>Why do you think they are doing that?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2: Critical Thinking

1. Why do you think this photo was taken?

2. What is the message of this photo?

Step 3: Questions

List two questions that you have after looking at this picture:

1. 

2. 
Photo Analysis Worksheet for secondary grades

**Step 1: Observation**

Look at the photograph for two minutes. Study each person’s face, body language, and what she or he is doing, and then complete the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who are the people in the photograph?</td>
<td>What are the people in the photograph doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where do you think these people came from?</td>
<td>Why do you think they are doing that?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2: Critical Thinking**

1. Why do you think this photo was taken?

2. What is the message of this photo?

**Step 3: Questions**

1. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

2. Where would you find the answers to them?
## Appendix B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4 Above Standards</th>
<th>3 Meets Standards</th>
<th>2 Approaching Standards</th>
<th>1 Below Standards</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus or Thesis Statement</td>
<td>The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.</td>
<td>The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.</td>
<td>The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.</td>
<td>The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not introduce what will be discussed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and Examples</td>
<td>All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.</td>
<td>Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.</td>
<td>At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.</td>
<td>Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Spelling</td>
<td>Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes one to two errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes three to four errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes more than four errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalization &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>Author makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the essay is exceptionally easy to read.</td>
<td>Author makes one to two errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the essay is still easy to read.</td>
<td>Author makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.</td>
<td>Author makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>