



TEACHER PAGE

JIM CROW LAWS

AND THE AMERICAN SOUTH

GRADE LEVEL: 5–8 **SUBJECT:** Social Sciences **DURATION:** One 40-minute class period
NATIONAL STANDARDS: Social Science, US History, ERA 5: Civil War and Reconstruction, ERA 9: Post-war United States
MATERIALS: Reference materials about the Civil Rights movement, writing journals
Use this lesson to have students read and take notes about the Civil Rights movement using mapping as a reading-to-learn strategy.

DESCRIPTION

In *Holes*, the people of Green Lake are uncomfortable and even hostile toward the affections shared between Miss Katherine and Sam, the Onion Man. In Green Lake, it is against the law for a black man to kiss a white woman.

Such attitudes and laws were not uncommon in the late 1800s and even into the mid-1900s. Although the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution freed blacks from slavery in 1865, blacks and whites remained largely segregated. In the southern states especially, legislation known as Jim Crow laws were passed to legalize segregation. These laws created separate areas for blacks and whites in public waiting rooms, restaurants, schools, and hospitals. The name Jim Crow comes from a popular minstrel song, *Jump, Jim Crow*. The word “minstrel” refers to performers, typically white men, who put black paint on their faces to mimic blacks. These performers sang, danced, and acted happy and simple in an effort to make fun of black people. Jim Crow laws were in effect until the 1960s when segregation became illegal in the United States.

OBJECTIVES

- To gain a basic understanding of the Civil Rights movement, historical antecedents, key figures, events, and issues
- To use reference materials to find relevant information
- To explore mapping as a reading-to-learn strategy

ADAPTATIONS

For younger students, the goal should be awareness and exposure to the Civil Rights movement. A read-aloud book or short play that covers this topic would be most appropriate. Two suggested picture books:

Goin' Someplace Special, by Pat McKissack, illustrated by Jerry Pickney, Atheneum, 2002.

Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Bryan Collier, Jump at the Sun Publishers, 2001.

ASSESSMENT

Design a five-point rubric to assess students on effort and successful completion of the web. For evaluation of retained information, a blank web can be used as a culmination to assess what was learned.

EXTENSIONS

Discuss the term “Jim Crow.” What is particularly demeaning and hurtful about the term? How does the term stereotype black Americans? Ask students to write a paragraph about why they think the source of the term, in the song *Jump, Jim Crow*, is insulting to blacks.

USEFUL RESOURCES

The PBS series, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* provides a history of Jim Crow laws and the early Civil Rights movement: www.jimcrowhistory.org

The National Civil Rights Museum highlights main actors from slave resistance onward: www.civilrightsmuseum.org

The Library of Congress' *American Memory* web site offers multiple primary resources: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohhtml/aaohome.htm>



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PROCEDURES

1. Begin by reading excerpts from *Holes* that relate to race and segregation as a springboard for learning about the Civil Rights movement. Try starting with chapters 25 (p. 109) and 26 (p. 114).
2. Review the meaning of the phrase "Civil Rights movement." The phrase commonly refers to a period in the 1950s and 1960s when a number of organizations and individuals, black and white, successfully challenged legal segregation of the races.
3. Direct students to relevant reference materials about the Civil Rights movement.
4. Having students work independently, instruct students to use mapping as a reading and note-taking strategy.
5. Draw the below sample map on the board or overhead projector for students to copy and complete as they read about the Civil Rights movement.

LAWS

PEOPLE

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graph TD; LAWS --> CIRM((CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT)); PEOPLE --> CIRM; EVENTS --> CIRM; PLACES --> CIRM;
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CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

EVENTS (e.g., protests, marches, sit-ins)

PLACES
