



Linda Brown: Youth In Action

Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Know how segregation was carried out in the U.S.
2. Understand the contributions and impact of young people during the Civil Rights Movement.
3. Evaluate how Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas lawsuit impacted education.

Materials Prior to Lesson:

1. A story or an example of the best gift you received.
 - The story should include details how you received the gift.
 - The story may also describe how you won something.
2. Ticket price ranges for a home game of the sport of your choosing.
3. Watch 4-minute video on the Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1siiQelPHbQ>

Vocabulary

- Black Codes
- Jim Crow Laws
- School Segregation
- Civil Rights Movement
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP
- Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas
- Separate but Equal Doctrine
- Thurgood Marshall

Bloom Taxonomy	Affective Domain	Gardner's Multiple Intelligences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Understanding • Application • Analyzing/ Evaluating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving • Responding • Valuing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic • Interpersonal

Background of Segregation

- Segregation first originated in the form of Black Codes in 1865. These Black Codes controlled where African Americans could work and live. Thus, it allowed African Americans to earn very little and work only certain types of jobs.
- Once segregation became official policy, legislators separated African American and white from all public spaces like public parks, theaters, pool areas, cemeteries, and jails. Public transportation such as buses, trains and taxis were segregated. These prohibitions were called Jim Crow Laws approved by the separated but equal doctrine.
- School Segregation required that African Americans and white people be prohibited from attending the same schools. Although public spaces and schools were separated, they were often not equal.
- Linda Brown and her parents were one of the 13 families the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, asked to be involved in the landmark Civil Rights Movement case, Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas in 1954 which ended school segregation.

Background of Linda Brown

- Linda Brown was born in Topeka, Kansas in 1942 to Leola and Oliver Brown.
- Linda and her family lived four blocks away from a grade school in her neighborhood, but she and her sisters could not attend because it was segregated.
- Linda and her sisters were forced to walk across railroad tracks and take a bus to attend a school for black children.
- In 1950 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, asked a group of African American parents, including Linda's parents, to enroll their children in the all-white grade school.
- Linda's dad tried to enroll her into a third-grade class at Sumner Elementary. He and Linda were not able to enroll in Sumner Elementary.
- The NAACP used Linda's obstruction to Sumner Elementary school, as well as 13 other families, to file a lawsuit.

- This lawsuit was called Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. The leading attorney for this landmark case was Thurgood Marshall.
- The case made its way up to the Supreme Court. The basis was to overturn the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson case that authorized the, “separated but equal” doctrine.
- During the, “separate but equal” doctrine the facilities designated for African Americans were of lesser quality and denied African American children of equal educational opportunities.

Introduction/Motivation

- Ask students to think about the best gift they have ever received.
- Have a few students volunteer to share their story.
- Share your story of the best gift you have ever received or share a movie example.
- For inspiration, show them the video of children’s reaction to the best gift they have ever received: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Erm-E-s8Qsg>
- Discuss the video. The gifts included a pet, concert tickets and games. Ask the students, “Do you think the parents, or the gift giver put a little effort or a lot of effort into giving the gifts?”
- Ask students, “To buy concert tickets, what do you think the parents had to do? To buy a pet, what do you think the parent had to do?”
- Say to students, “Because of the parent’s effort, the children were happy!”
- Say to students, “We talked about good gifts, now let us talk about bad gifts. Image getting a bad gift.”
- Ask students, “How would you respond if you received a bad gift?” Share examples.
- Share with students that today we are going to learn how **Linda Brown** and her parents gave thousands of students a gift! **The gift was to attend any school in their community regardless of the color of their skin.**
- Share Linda Brown’s story.

For older students:

- Ask students if they have ever been to a major sports game?
- Have students to share their experiences.
- Talk to students about the price of seats. For example, “Tickets for a home basketball game can be found as low as \$14. These seats will be in the 200- level section of the Wells Fargo Center to watch the Philadelphia Sixers. Most Sixers tickets average \$108 per seat but can range up to \$220.” (Ticketmaster)
- Have students recognize that the best view of the game will cost more.

- Have students' imagine that their school is structured the same way as a major sports game where the BEST school materials were given to people who paid the most money to receive them.
- Discuss it with students.
- Have students recognize how that **school structure** would create groups of students that would be consistently behind and/or not on the same level of the other students.
- Have students think about the result(s) of that school structure over a period of 5 years, 10 years, or 20 years.
- Share with students that **today we are going to learn about a young girl name Linda Brown. Linda's parents challenged the segregated school structure so that Linda and other students of color could have the same education opportunities as the white students.**

Body

- Share Background on school segregation, Linda Brown, and her parents. Emphasize how Linda and her sister had to cross train tracks and take a bus to the segregated school.
- Share how Linda's parents tried to admit Linda into the all-white school.
- Share with students that Linda's parents, 13 other parents,' and the persistence of attorney **Thurgood Marshall** resulted in creating the landmark Civil Rights Movement case called, "**Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas**" which ended school segregation.

Activity 1# Together We Can Do Anything Project!

- Remind students that Linda Brown, her parents, 13 other families, and the persistence of attorney **Thurgood Marshall** overturned the, "**separate but equal doctrine**" which declared segregation as unconstitutional. Emphasize that **TOGETHER** they did it!
- Use video if more context is needed.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aX9Dmo24_cc
- Have students think about how they can help, support, or fix something in their community, in their home, their church, recreational center or in their school.
- Use worksheet provided if needed.
- Use the activity as a homework assignment and have students complete it.
- Students should present the results.

Activity 2# Impacting Our School

- Show video and ask students to take notes.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1siiQelPHbQ>

- Review the elements of the video emphasizing that attorney **Thurgood Marshall** argued the, “separate but equal” doctrine was separate but not equal.
- Also, highlight that *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* helped to break down the systemic racial barriers in education which granted millions of students of color the same education opportunities as the white students.
- Have work in pairs or individually to describe:
 - How has *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* impacted **our school**? Students may also comment on the community as well.
- Students should 1st describe the *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* case.
- Next, students should answer, “**How has *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* impacted our school?**” in a creative way such as:
 - PowerPoint/Prezi
 - Video
 - Photo Album where students gather pictures online and thoroughly write about them
 - Drama piece
 - Literary work such as a long poem or a book
 - Music expression
- Each creative piece should be at least **10 minutes long** in total.
- 2 minutes should be reserved for questions.

Together We Can Do Anything Project

Directions:

Think about how you and your family can help, support, or fix something in your community, in your home, your church, recreational center or in your school. Write the details below.

Links:

- <https://www.biography.com/activist/linda-brown>
- <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/brown-v-board-of-education-of-topeka>
- <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2004/spring/brown-v-board-1.html>
- <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2004/spring/brown-v-board-2.html>
- <https://rediscovering-black-history.blogs.archives.gov/2018/03/27/a-school-girl-makes-history-tribute-to-linda-brown/>