

What was Georgia's Response to School Desegregation?



[Ford Farm School photograph], Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, Ga.) photographs, previous MS 1360
Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Georgia.

Supporting Questions

1. What factors led to legal, racial segregation in Georgia?
2. What were the conditions of segregated schools in Georgia?
3. How did the state of Georgia resist school integration?

What was Georgia's response to school desegregation?			
Inquiry Standard	SS8H11 Evaluate the role of Georgia in the modern civil rights movement. a. Explain Georgia's response to Brown v. Board of Education including the 1956 flag and the Sibley Commission.		
Staging the Compelling Question	Read the 14 th Amendment, section one. Students should underline segments of the amendment that describe its purpose. Discuss its role in protecting the rights of citizenship for all citizens in the wake of the end of the Civil War and the end to slavery (13 th Amendment) in the United States. 14th Amendment, section 1, United States Senate		
Supporting Question 1		Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
What factors led to legal, racial segregation in Georgia?		What were the conditions of segregated schools in Georgia?	How did the state of Georgia resist school integration?
Formative Performance Task		Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Explain the significance of the Plessy vs Ferguson decision by describing how Jim Crow Laws impacted everyday life for Americans.		Explain how the Fourteenth Amendment was applied in the Brown v. Board of Education decision.	Explain the process of school integration in Georgia.
Featured Sources		Featured Sources	Featured Sources
Source A: Separate but Equal		Source A: Segregated Schools in Georgia	Source A: Brown II and Massive Resistance
Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT Construct an argument detailing how Georgia responded to school desegregation. Address the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical sources while acknowledging competing views.		
	EXTENSION To further explore the struggle for desegregation in Georgia explore the GHS Primary Source Set: Georgia's Role in the Civil Rights Movement . It offers additional primary and secondary sources related to the topic. There are several excellent online sources related to Georgia's Civil Rights Movement linked on this teaching guide as well.		
Taking Informed Action	UNDERSTAND Read about the purpose of adding amendments to the United States Constitution as well as the Georgia State Constitution. ASSESS Compare and contrast the amendments of the United States Constitution and the Georgia State Constitution. ACTION Research an amendment from the United States Constitution and explore how it has impacted American society.		

Overview

Inquiry Description

This 8th grade annotated inquiry asks students to evaluate Georgia's response to the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Students will examine the Fourteenth Amendment, *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, the decisions made in both *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Brown II*, and the results of the Sibley Commission to build an evidence-based argument.

Structure

The inquiry is structured to connect the Fourteenth Amendment to the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case and Georgia's deliberate and extreme response to school desegregation. The inquiry begins with students analyzing the Fourteenth Amendment. Next students will review the significance of the "separate but equal" precedent set by the decision in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court case that established legal segregation. For the second task students will compare photographs to evaluate the policy of "separate but equal" and to understand why segregation in schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Finally, students will examine the *Brown II* decision and how it was directly linked to the policy of Massive Resistance in Georgia.

Staging the Compelling Question	
Compelling Question	What was Georgia's response to school desegregation?
Featured Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Source A: Fourteenth Amendment

Staging the compelling question

The decisions made in Civil Rights cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education* were made on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Fourteenth Amendment was passed in 1868 during Reconstruction. It established African Americans as citizens of the United States and required that they were given the same rights as all U.S. citizens.

Compelling Question

Featured Source A

Fourteenth Amendment

Excerpt

[14th Amendment, section 1, United States Senate](#)

Source:

Constitution Of the United States

https://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution_item/co..

Supporting Question 1

Supporting Question	What factors led to legal, racial segregation in Georgia?
Formative Performance Task	Explain the significance of the Plessy vs Ferguson decision by describing how Jim Crow Laws impacted everyday life for Americans.
Featured Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Source A: Separate but Equal

During the post-Reconstruction era, laws called Jim Crow Laws took away most of the citizenship rights African Americans had gained during the period following the Civil War. Under these laws most African Americans could not vote or serve on juries and were denied many of the other rights of US citizens. After the Supreme Court decision in the Plessy v. Ferguson case of "separate but equal," almost every aspect of life was segregated. This included separate schools, sections of public transportation, water fountains, bathrooms, and even separate cemeteries and Bibles used to swear oaths in courts. This question helps present the basis of legal segregation to students.

Formative Performance Task

Students should analyze each source for evidence of legal segregation and the conditions under which segregation led to unequal treatment in society.

The landmark court case, Plessy v. Ferguson, had a far-reaching impact on Georgia. On June 7, 1892, Homer Plessy was arrested in Louisiana for sitting in the "Whites Only" section of a railcar. In this planned protest, Plessy, who was 1/8th black and "could pass for white" identified himself as a black man. This orchestrated event was planned by the "Committee of Citizens," a group of well- educated African Americans who wanted to test Louisiana's segregation laws. The case went all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court, where the court ruled in favor of Louisiana, based on the "separate but equal" doctrine. The court determined that under the Constitution (14th and 15th Amendments) blacks had political rights, but social rights were not required. According to the court, as long as facilities were equal for both races they could be separate.

Upon this ruling most southern states, including Georgia, separated all aspects of life. This included separate theaters and movie houses, rail and street cars, separate bathrooms, schools, restaurants, and waiting rooms. Though separate, these facilities were most certainly not equal, particularly in regard to resources allocated to support segregated public services and facilities.

Supporting Question 1

Featured Source A

Separate but Equal

Excerpt

"[The Separate Car Bill](#)," Alexandria Gazette (Alexandria, D.C.), July 3, 1900, Image 3, Col. 3. (sections 1 and 2 of the legislation are most important)

[Union Station, Savannah, GA – Segregated Waiting room](#)

[Segregated water cooler, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, LOC](#)

Source:

Alexandria gazette. (Alexandria, D.C.), 03 July 1900. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85025007.>>

Burke, Carroll. "Union Station, Savannah." Photograph. Savannah: 1950. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1361-PH-29-05-5904, Georgia Historical Society collection of photographs.
<https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=02b0f4ac-7ecf-4d45-ae01-cb6420c71a48>

Lee, R., photographer. (1939) Negro drinking at "Colored" water cooler in streetcar terminal, Oklahoma City, United States, 1939. July. [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017740552/>.

Supporting Question 2

Supporting Question	What were the conditions of segregated schools in Georgia?
Formative Performance Task	Explain how the Fourteenth Amendment was applied in the Brown v. Board of Education decision.
Featured Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Source A: Segregated Schools in Georgia

In order to understand why school segregation was found to be unconstitutional students must understand how and why segregated schools were unequal. For example, according to the New Georgia Encyclopedia, the average white school in the Georgia spent about \$43 dollars per student in 1930, in comparison to \$10 per student in all black schools.

The decision in Brown v. Board was not based solely on tangible inequalities such as school buildings or text books, but also on the basis that to segregate school children based on race led to an inherently unequal impact on students, including feelings of inferiority as related to their status in the community.

Formative Performance Task

Students should compare at least two photos of segregated schools in Georgia. They should note the differences they see. Students should consider why these differences exists based on Jim Crow laws and legal segregation.

After noting the inequalities in the photos, have students read the key excerpts from the Brown v. Board of Education decision. This will help students to understand how the Fourteenth Amendment was used to overturn legal segregation in American schools.

Supporting Question 2

Featured Source A

Segregated Schools in Georgia

Excerpt

Key Excerpts from Brown v. Board of Education Unanimous Opinion

Set 1:

Ford Farm School, Richmond Hill, GA

Bellville School, Claxton, GA

Set 2:

Waters Avenue School, Savannah, GA

Haven Home School, Savannah, GA

Set 3:

Richmond Hill Community House, Kitchen

George Washington Carver School, Richmond Hill, GA

Source:

Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, GA). "Ford Farm School, Richmond Hill, GA." Photograph. Savannah: 1931. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1360-PH-16-25-12, Cordray-Foltz Photography Studio photographs. <https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=44b787cc-fee1-41bf-ba9d-fc9e6454a1bf>

Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, GA). "Bellville School, Claxton, GA." Photograph. Savannah: 1935. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1360-PH-16-10-03, Cordray-Foltz Photography Studio photographs. <https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=40c0ac75-f1d4-423d-a4c2-9dee9e025b25>

Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, GA). "Waters Avenue School." Photograph. Savannah: 1946. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1360-PH-03-20-07, Cordray-Foltz Photography Studio photographs. <https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=fc671cdd-153e-477a-a5ed-2279d4d069aa>

Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, GA). "Haven Home School First Grade." Photograph. Savannah: 1946. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1360-PH-03-12-09, Cordray-Foltz Photography Studio photographs. <https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=925a1a28-48b2-42f8-ae49-05c8b711470c>

Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, GA). "Richmond Hill Community House, Kitchen, Richmond Hill, GA." Photograph. Savannah: 1942. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1360-PH-16-20-11, Cordray-Foltz Photography Studio photographs. <https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=f0114d37-a1ab-46c5-894a-611c3a2e2318>

Foltz Photography Studio (Savannah, GA). "George Washington Carver School, Richmond Hill, GA." Photograph. Savannah: 1942. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 1360-PH-16-23-05, Cordray-Foltz Photography Studio photographs.
<https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=21736276-d1a5-4cc6-987d-dfb94ebfd725>

Landmark Cases of the U.S. Supreme Court

<https://landmarkcases.org/cases/brown-v-board-of-education/>

Supporting Question 3

Supporting Question	How did the state of Georgia resist school integration?
Formative Performance Task	Explain the process of school integration in Georgia.
Featured Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Source A: Brown II and Massive Resistance

Segregationist politicians had worked tirelessly to continue and strengthen the years-old Jim Crow laws in the state, and, upon hearing the Court's 9 - 0 decision that racial segregation violated the 14th Amendment, determined that Georgia schools would not integrate. The Georgia General Assembly supported "massive resistance" (white opposition to court-ordered desegregation) and maintained a strong opposition to the forced integration of public schools. By 1960, however, federal mandates were strongly encouraging Georgia to desegregate, and Governor Ernest Vandiver asked the citizens of the state to render their input regarding the controversy via the Sibley Commission.

John Sibley, a segregationist lawyer who also believed resistance to federal mandates was useless, led ten hearings across the state to determine if the people felt that they should continue to resist the federal government or change laws to integrate schools (Sibley wanted laws that would allow integration on a very small scale). After the sessions, 60% of Georgians claimed that they would rather close the public schools than to integrate.

Despite the findings, Sibley pushed for schools in Georgia to desegregate on a limited basis.

Formative Performance Task

During the year after the decision in the Brown v. Board of Education case the court continued to hear arguments about implementation and guidelines for school integration. The unanimous decision known as Brown II was given in 1955 with specific language aimed at states who were "resisting" integration. The official judgement in this case instructs states to integrate "with all deliberate speed." Analyze the sources to understand how Georgia both resisted integration and its eventual and gradual implementation.

Supporting Question 3

Featured Source A

Brown II and Massive Resistance

Excerpt

[NAACP Newsletter, 1960s, Page 2](#)

[Felix Frankfurter's draft decree to enforce the Brown v. Board of Education Decision, 8 April 1955](#)

[This Day in History: Grady High School Hosts Hears.](#)

[Oh, fiddle-de-dee, I'll put that off 'till tomorrow! Political Cartoon](#)

Source:

Hyer, Ethel. NAACP Newsletter, 1960s. From Georgia Historical Society: GHS 2117-01-05-01, Ethel Hyer family papers. <https://7063.sydneyplus.com/archive/final/Portal/Default.aspx?component=AABC&record=d9d837d6-5961-41b1-9b5f-c306406dd5a1>

Felix Frankfurter's draft decree to enforce the Brown v. Board of Education decision, [8 April 1955]. Library of Congress Public Domain Archive. <https://loc.getarchive.net/media/felix-frankfurters-draft-decree-to-enforce-the-brown-v-board-of-education-decision-6bd8cb>

This Day in History: Grady High School Hosts Hearings on School Desegregation; Steve Goss - <https://www.wabe.org/day-history-grady-high-school..>

Oh, fiddle-de-dee, I'll put that off 'till tomorrow! / Baldy, [1954 May 18], editorial cartoon by Clifford H. Baldowski, Clifford H. Baldowski Editorial Cartoon Collection, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, presented in the Digital Library of Georgia. https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_bald_ph-57?canvas=0&x=551&y=166&w=2330

Summative Performance Task

Compelling Question	What was Georgia's response to school desegregation?
Argument	Construct an argument detailing how Georgia responded to school desegregation. Address the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical sources while acknowledging competing views.
Extension	To further explore the struggle for desegregation in Georgia explore the GHS Primary Source Set: Georgia's Role in the Mo... . The set includes five analyzed sources related to Georgia's modern Civil Rights Movement. It also offers additional primary and secondary sources related to the topic. There are several excellent online sources related to Georgia's Civil Rights Movement linked on this teaching guide as well.

Argument

Students' arguments should be based on evidence that illustrates Georgia's resistance to integration based on white opposition to court-ordered desegregation. Students should include information about the Sibley Commission and its suggestion that desegregation should be done on a limited basis and that local communities should decide what is best for themselves. Students may also include information about the threat to close public schools in Georgia and details about what it was like for students in the first integrated schools.

Extension

The Fourteenth Amendment was the basis for Civil Rights legislation of the 1950s and 1960s. The Civil Rights Movement protested segregation in many different areas of society. Use the primary source set to further explore integration in the South based on the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Taking Informed Action

Understand	Read about the purpose of adding amendments to the United States Constitution as well as the Georgia State Constitution.
Assess	Compare and contrast the amendments of the United States Constitution and the Georgia State Constitution.
Action	Research an amendment from the United States Constitution and explore how it has impacted American society.

In over 200 years of Constitutional history the U. S. Constitution has only been amended twenty-seven times. Amendments are changes to the Constitution. Students should further explore different amendments and the purpose(s) for which they were added.