
BREAKING BIAS
LESSONS FROM THE AMISTAD
NEW JERSEY STATE BAR FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

There is an inherent worth in learning history and being able to connect it to the values of our modern society. This guide looks at our history through an anti-bias lens and focuses on the impact of the African American story on our culture today.

In 2002 the Amistad Bill was signed into a law that required all boards of education in New Jersey to incorporate African American contributions and history into curricula in a cohesive manner; African American history *is* American history. The legislation also established New Jersey's Amistad Commission, which created a valuable online curriculum and resources. You can find these materials on the Commission's website at www.njamistadcurriculum.net.

This guide is intended to be complementary to the Commission's curriculum. Where the Amistad curriculum is focused on the history of African Americans from the times of ancient Africa to the present, this guide serves as a tool tying the law to the lessons of the Amistad. By taking a deeper look at the overt and covert impact of racism and empathy, equity and equality, class and justice, educators and students will come to understand the systemic themes which arise from African American history in this country.

Being trained in the use of the Amistad Commission's Curriculum, as well as the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's Guide will aid educators in fulfilling their responsibilities to integrate African American contributions and history into everyday curriculum. We hope that you will find all of these resources to be enlightening and enriching to your students.

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Creating Brave Spaces

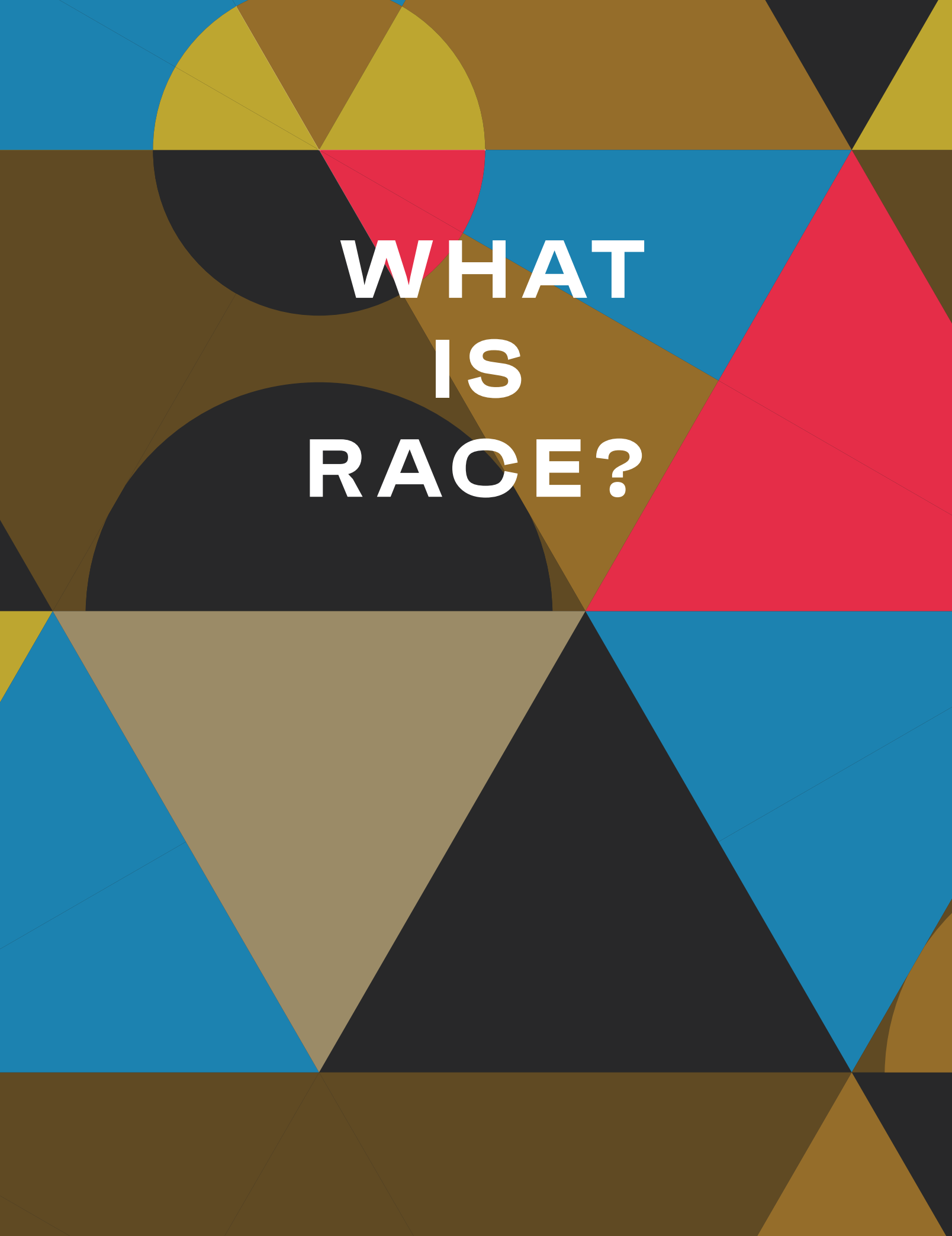
Talking about race and other facets of identity can engender strong feelings. It is important to create environments in which students can participate in these conversations constructively, and express opinions and questions without fear of judgement. This requires that educators create time to teach and practice social and emotional skills, including developing an awareness of one's own biases, building empathy, managing conflict and appreciating the perspectives of others.

"Safe spaces" is often used to describe settings that are conducive to positive dialogue. However, social justice educators have more recently reconceptualized these settings as "brave spaces." "Safe space" suggests that participants will not need to experience discomfort when discussing sensitive topics, but talking about issues such as race often involves difficulty and risk. Since members of marginalized groups often experience such struggles in their everyday lives, the expectation of "safety" for majority group members can be seen as an exercise of privilege. "Brave spaces" conveys the idea that all participants will embrace the discomfort of hard conversations with courage and openness.[1]

The following group expectations are offered as a set of understandings that can be introduced to students as you work to build brave spaces. They can be adapted to suit the age and experience level of students.

1 Arao, Brian and Clemens, Kristi. "From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice." *In The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections From Social Justice Educators*, edited by Lisa M. Landreman, 135–150. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2013.

GROUP NORM	EXPLANATION
Recognize your own bias	We all have prejudices. They have been learned and can be unlearned over time. Change is a process.
Respect others	Value the perspectives of others. Listen openly and communicate nonjudgmentally.
“Try on” new ways of thinking	Let your guard down in response to ideas that are different; consider points of view that are new.
Speak from your own experience	Use “I-statements” that express your personal feelings; avoid “you should statements” that pass judgement on others.
Assume good will	Look for the good intentions of others before taking offense. At the same time, challenge biases in others directly and constructively.
Own your intentions and impact	Avoid being defensive when your words or actions hurt others. Reflect on your meaning and how you have affected others.
Ask questions	Be curious and open-minded. Don’t avoid questions for fear that they won’t come out right. Try your best to frame questions respectfully.
Find comfort in discomfort	Some discussions will make us feel uneasy. Remember that these feelings are a necessary part of learning and growing.
Conflicts may arise	Disagreements and hurt feelings will happen. Use conflict resolution skills and manage disagreements with civility.
Confidentiality	Don’t reveal the identities of actual people when sharing instances of bias. Everything said in the room stays in the room.
Take space, make space	Participate and add your voice to the conversation. If you are taking too much space, step back and make room for others.


WHAT
IS
RACE?

UNIT 1

WHAT IS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT?

Where in the world did humanity originate and why does it matter?

The famed British explorer Henry Morton Stanley popularized the notion of Africa as a "dark continent" through his publications *Through the Dark Continent* (1878) and *In Darkest Africa* (1890). Though understood by many as a romantic description of a mysterious and unexplored land, the term "dark continent" both reflected and contributed to the dangerous characterization of Africa and its people as savage, wild and uncivilized. Such "othering" and dehumanization paved the way for centuries of racist and exploitative practices, including colonization and slavery.

In 1924, anthropologist Raymond Dart was involved in the discovery of the Taung child in South Africa, the first fossil ever found of *Australopithecus africanus*, an early ancestor of modern humans. Dart's claim that the fossil was proof of the evolution of humans in Africa was derided by his colleagues, who believed that humans likely evolved in Europe and Asia. The notion of Africa as a "dark continent" and pseudoscientific theories of racial separateness blinded the scientific community to the idea that "anything as important as the evolution of humans could have happened in Africa."[1]

Decades later, paleontologists made key discoveries advancing our understanding of human origin. In 1974, "Lucy" was discovered in Ethiopia, and her 3.2 million-year-old skeleton was found to be the oldest potential ancestor for all hominid species. Two years later, in Tanzania, Mary Leakey and her team uncovered foot tracks of early hominids from about 3.7 million years ago. These discoveries led to many breakthroughs, including the knowledge that hominids became bipedal, walking upright on two legs, and that the origins of human life began in Africa.

These findings are important not only for their contributions to science, but because they chip away at centuries of scientific racism claiming that the "races" belong to separate lineages and that some are inherently superior or inferior to others. Evidence unearthed from African fossils teach us that there is no genetic basis for modern notions of race, no "pure" ethnic groups and no racial hierarchies. Knowing that we are all from Africa helps us to dispel racial myths and to use science as a weapon against racism.

1 PBS Learning Media, "Discovering Human Origins in Africa," https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvdh-sci-humanorigins/discovering-human-origins-in-africa

Elementary School | Grades 3–5

UNCOVERING OUR AFRICAN PAST THROUGH TRACKS AND BONES

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Where did we all come from and how are we all the same?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- → Learn about key scientific discoveries advancing our understanding of human origin.
- → Explore the key evidence of early hominid existence in Africa.
- → Investigate the ways in which humans migrated and populated the Earth.
- → Understand the shared genetics of all humans and that humanity emerged in Africa.
- → Explain why racial categories based on skin color are false and not based in science.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

70 minutes

MATERIALS

- → AV equipment to show a video
- → *Lucy Bingo* handout (one per student)
- → *Animated Life: Mary Leakey* handout (one per student)
- → *Mapping "Footsteps of My Ancestors"* handout (one per pair or small group)
- → Yarn and glue (optional)

VOCABULARY

ancestor
Australopithecus afarensis
bipedal
DNA
evolution
extinct
fossil
genes/genetics
hominids
Homo sapiens
migrate
paleontologist
species

Procedures

PART I
Useful Doodle (20 mins)

1 Project Google's 'Lucy Doodle' [0:38] commemorating the 41st anniversary of the discovery of the skeletal remains of the early hominid named Lucy in 1974, in what is today Ethiopia: https://www.google.com/doodles/41st-anniversary-of-the-discovery-of-lucy.

2 Ask students: "What do you think is the message of this Google Doodle?" Likely responses should address the evolutionary history of humans. Show students photos of Lucy, such as those on the National Geographic website.

3 Have students play bingo using the *Lucy Bingo* handout, in order to find out more about what scientists have learned from the discovery. In pairs, students place an 'O' on statements they think are true and an 'X' on those they believe to be false. When they finish, review the answers as a class and discuss their significance. Teams that get four correct responses in a row (true or false) earn a bingo!

a O	**b** O	**c** O	**d** X
e O	**f** O	**g** X	**h** X
i O	**j** X	**k** O	**l** O
m X	**n** O	**o** O	**p** O

NOTE

All three figures in the Doodle—the primate, Lucy and the human—are members of the zoological family Hominidae (the "great apes"), which includes humans, chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans.

NOTE

Items d, g, h, j and m are false; all others are true. Here are the explanations for the false items: (d) Lucy's species was *Australopithecus afarensis*; (g) Lucy was bipedal; (h) Lucy lived to about 11 or 12 years of age; (j) Lucy's species could climb trees; (m) Lucy's brain was smaller than ours; it was about the size of a chimpanzee's.

PART II
Flinging Dung—Discovering Bipedal Hominids in Africa (20 minutes)

4 Share the following fact: Two years after Lucy's fossils were discovered and we learned that her species walked upright, another important discovery was made in Africa. Ancient footprints were discovered that showed the manner in which early hominids walked.

5 Show students the video "Animated Life: Mary Leakey" [7:51]: https://www.biointeractive.org/classroom-resources/animated-life-mary-leakey. Individually or in pairs, have them take notes on the *Animated Life: Mary Leakey* graphic organizer as they watch, using the questions below as a guide. Pause at strategic intervals to allow students to capture ideas and to discuss important concepts.

- **Who** uncovered the Laetoli footprints?
- **What** do the footprints teach us about early humans and evolution?
- **Where** were the footprints found?
- **When** were the footprints originally formed?
- **Why** was this discovery important?

6 Review the following information with students:

- Scientists know humans migrated from Africa to populate the rest of the world over thousands of years.
- Genetics are the traits we inherit from our parents and all of our ancestors.
- Scientists know people, worldwide, share the same genetics from common ancestors who lived in Africa at least 100,000-200,000 years ago.

7 Point out that in the Mary Leakey video, the narrator shares that before the discoveries of Lucy's fossils and the Laetoli footprints, most paleontologists in the Americas and Europe did not believe that humans evolved in Africa. Ask the class: "Before the physical evidence was found in the 1970s, why do you think scientists resisted that Africa was the origin of all humans?" Encourage students to consider how perspectives on race and culture might have influenced their beliefs.

PART III
Everyone on Earth is Related (30 minutes)

NOTE

This activity can be done as a whole class or in small groups if students have access to laptops or tablets.

8 Introduce students to the "Footsteps of My Ancestors Photo Gallery": https://www.nationalgeographic.com/traveler/photos/genographic0510/genographic_gallery2.html. Explain that the Genographic Project, created by the National Geographic Society and IBM, uses DNA samples to map how humans populated the Earth. Share that journalist Donovan Webster, who was aware of his Scottish heritage, learned after a DNA analysis that he also shares genetic markers with the peoples of Tanzania, Lebanon, Uzbekistan and Spain. He spent a summer visiting the descendants of his ancestors and documenting his journey.

9 Show students the photos in the gallery one at a time, reading together the captions for each image. In pairs or small groups, have students map Donovan's "genetic route" on the *Mapping "Footsteps of My Ancestors"* handout by attaching yarn or drawing lines from one country to the next. Then discuss the following questions:

- What was surprising to you about Donovan's discovery and his genetic makeup?
- What did you learn about how humans have populated the Earth?
- In what way is everyone on Earth related?
- What do you know about your own genetic route? What more would you like to find out?

10 Project or share the following quote from Dr. Spencer Wells, lead scientist of the Genographic Project:

You and I, in fact everyone all over the world, we're literally African under the skin; brothers and sisters separated by a mere two thousand generations. Old-fashioned concepts of race are not only socially divisive, but scientifically wrong.

Have students journal in response to the quote, discussing what they think it means, how it is we're all related ("African under the skin") and why some of society's ideas about race are incorrect. Allow time for students to share and discuss their writing in pairs or as a whole class.

Discussion Questions

1. What evidence points to Africa as the place where all of humanity originated?
2. Why is it important for us to know that our earliest ancestors came from Africa?
3. What conditions, can you imagine, motivated early Africans to migrate to other parts of the world?
4. What physical adaptations or changes were necessary for early humans to migrate?
5. How are all human beings connected genetically?
6. Why do you think categories of race based on skin color developed? How are such categories disproved by science?

Lesson Extensions

- Show students the video "Walking with Lucy" [1:58]: https://www.calacademy.org/educators/walking-with-lucy. This computer animation demonstrates the evolution of hominids by highlighting the anatomical similarities and differences among chimpanzees, *A. afarensis* (Lucy) and modern humans.
- Show students the video "Becoming a Fossil" [2:34], which explores how skeletal remains, such as Lucy's, might have become fossilized: https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/tdc02.sci.life.evo.becfossil/becoming-a-fossil. Then, have students create their own fossils by pressing natural materials (e.g., leaves, twigs, etc.) into a pan of wet plaster of Paris. After they have dried, students can observe one another's fossils and record salient facts, such as which parts of the object made the clearest impressions and which are harder to identify.
- Encourage students to look for tracks in their school's environment, including in dirt and on sidewalks. Following the precedent of Mary Leakey and her team, challenge the students to observe the tracks and make observations about who created them. Students can also create their own tracks on butcher paper by wetting their bare feet, dipping them in flour or powder, and walking or tiptoeing across the paper. Hairspray can be used to preserve the tracks so they can be displayed in the classroom.
- Read *All the Colors We Are/Todos los Colores de Nuestra Piel*, by Katie Kissinger, to students. This bilingual book offers a scientific description of the reasons human beings have different skin colors, including geographical and environmental factors. It also celebrates human diversity and raises awareness about the negative impact of stereotypes based on skin color.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Becker, J.R. *Annabelle & Aiden: SAPIENS: Our Human Evolution*. Imaginarium Press, 2019.
- Cummings, Judy Dodge. *Human Migration—Investigate the Global Journey of Humankind*. White River Junction, Vermont: Nomad Press, 2016.
- Gray, Richard. "The real reasons why we walk on two legs, not four." *BBC*, December 12, 2016. http://www.bbc.com/earth/story/20161209-the-real-reasons-why-we-walk-on-two-legs-and-not-four.
- Hogenboom, Melissa. "The Lucy Fossil Rewrote the Story of Humanity." *BBC*, November 27, 2014. http://www.bbc.com/earth/story/20141127-lucy-fossil-revealed-our-origins.
- Wow in the World—Where Did We Come From? *NPR*. Podcast audio. August 31, 2017. https://www.npr.org/2017/10/17/547337520/where-did-we-come-from.

HANDOUT

Lucy Bingo

Mark statements you think are true with an 'O' and those you think are false with an 'X.'

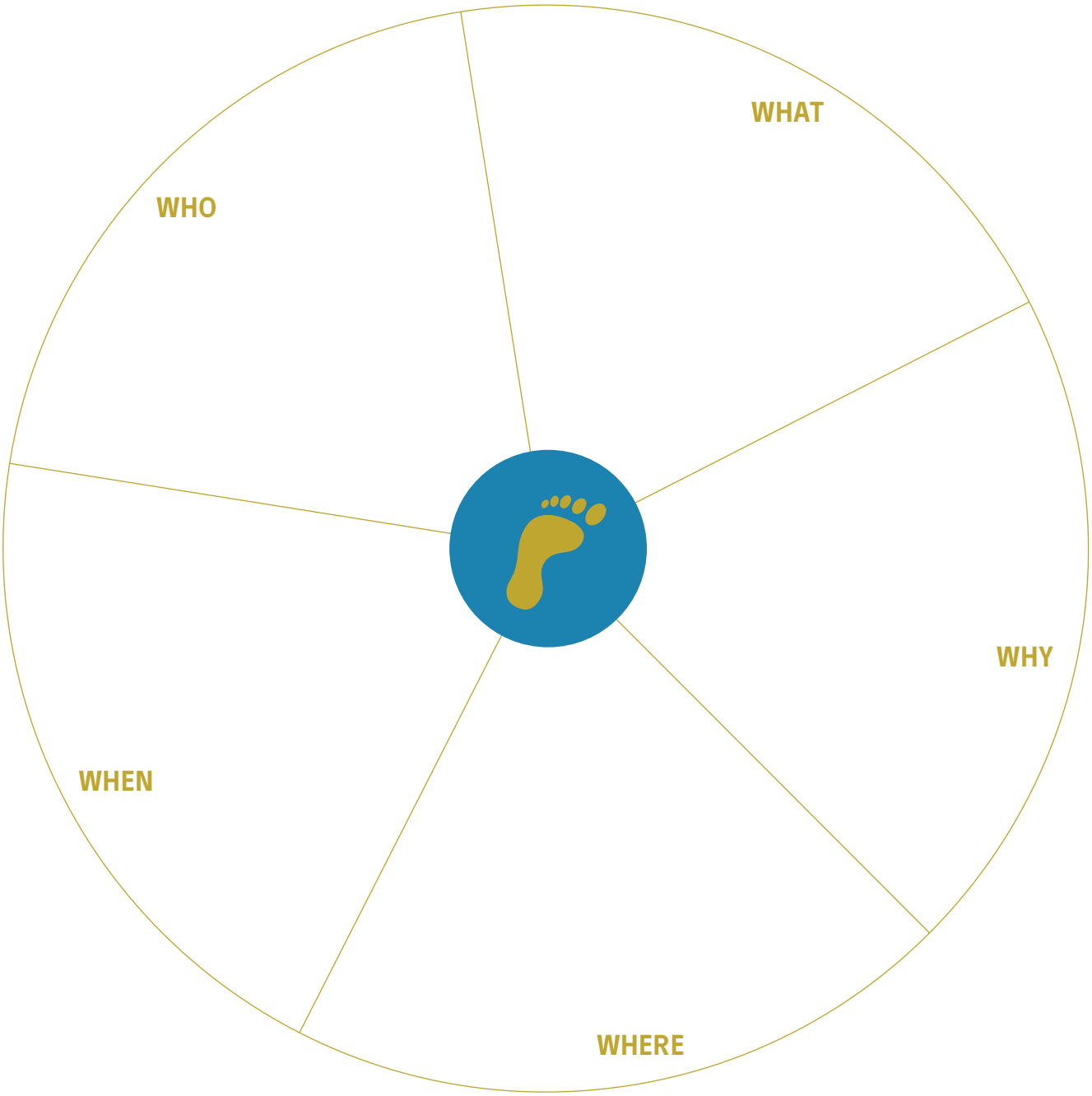
Four correct choices in a row ('O' or 'X') is a bingo!

a Lucy was named for the famous Beatles song, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."	**b** Lucy's species was Australopithecus afarensis, an early hominid (the "great apes").	**c** Lucy lived over 3 million years ago.	**d** Lucy was a member of the species Homo sapiens, which is what modern humans are.
e When scientists discovered Lucy, it helped them understand human evolution.	**f** Lucy was <u>not</u> a member of the species Homo sapiens, which is what modern humans are.	**g** Lucy and her species walked on all fours; only much later species could walk upright.	**h** Scientific tests show that Lucy lived to an old age of more than 70.
i Lucy was about 3.5 feet tall and 64 pounds.	**j** Lucy's species spent their time on the ground; only earlier species could climb trees.	**k** When Lucy died, she was about 11 or 12 years old.	**l** Lucy was considered an adult when she died, because she had fully formed adult wisdom teeth.
m Surprisingly, the size of Lucy's brain was similar to that of modern humans.	**n** Other hominids ("great apes") may have existed millions of years ago but, like Lucy, their species became extinct.	**o** Scientists have learned through the discovery of Lucy, that there may have been many different human-like species before us.	**p** Several human species have evolved on Earth, but only Homo sapiens (modern humans) have survived.

HANDOUT

Animated Life: Mary Leakey

Fill in the chart below with important information from the video about the Laetoli footprints discovery.



HANDOUT

Mapping "Footsteps of My Ancestors"

Middle School | Grades 6–8

MAPPING OUR ROOTS

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Where in the world did all human beings come from, and why does it matter?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify evidence about the origins of humanity and the nature of human evolution.
- Apply map skills and chronological reasoning to understand the migration patterns of early humans.
- Explain the significance of Africa as the geographical source of humankind.
- Discuss how racial and cultural perspectives about Africa and African people have influenced scientists' beliefs about the origins of humanity.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

60 minutes

MATERIALS

- Copies (one per student) of or digital access to the article "Finding Lucy: The Leakeys and the Search for Human Origins": https://newsela.com/read/BHP-U6-3-lucy-leakey/id/3759.
- *Map of Human Migration* handout (one per small group)
- *Connect the Dots* handouts (each small group needs copies for one region; there are four different regions in all—Australia, East/Southeast Asia, Western Europe, and the Americas)
- World atlas (one per small group) or access to online map sources for groups

VOCABULARY

adaptation	descendent	fossil	Homo sapiens
ancestor	evolution	genes/genetics	indigenous
the Dark Continent	extinct	hominin	migrate

Procedures

PART I
The Search for Human Origins (30 minutes)

1 Have students engage in a think-pair-share in response to the question: "Where did the first humans live?" As a class, discuss their ideas about where the earliest humans lived, especially from a geographic standpoint.

2 Tell students that they will look into this question further by reading the article "Finding Lucy: The Leakeys and the Search for Human Origins": https://newsela.com/read/BHP-U6-3-lucy-leakey/id/3759. Explain that they will "begin at the end." Together, read the final paragraph of the article, emphasizing the ideas that "humankind began in Africa" and "few others could think it." Individually or in pairs, have students read the article from the beginning, and instruct them to annotate the text in the following ways (post these instructions on the board):

- Underline all evidence that humankind began in Africa.
- Circle all reasons why few scientists could imagine this possibility until the Leakeys' discoveries.
- In the margins, record thoughts and questions that come up for you as you read.

3 Discuss the article as a class, using some of the following questions:

- What did you find to be the strongest evidence that humankind began in Africa?
- Why were early scientists convinced that *Homo sapiens* evolved in Europe? Why did they not consider Africa?
- Why was Africa once referred to as the "Dark Continent"?
- Why did the archaeologist Louis Leakey choose Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania as his main area of research?

NOTE

Articles on the Newsela website are available at different text levels and lengths. The link provided is to text level 5/800L, but you can choose the level or levels that are most appropriate for your students.

NOTE

According to the article "Why Was Africa Called the Dark Continent?": "The most common answer...is that Europe did not know much about Africa until the 19th century. But that answer is misleading and disingenuous...They called Africa the Dark Continent because of the mysteries and the savagery they expected to find in the interior." See more at https://www.thoughtco.com/why-africa-called-the-dark-continent-43310.

- ➔ Why was the discovery of "Lucy" so important? What did it teach us about human evolution?
- ➔ What is the legacy of Louis and Mary Leakey? What did they teach us about our ancestors?

PART II
Tracking the Routes of Human Migration (30 minutes)

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THIS LESSON

Early study of our human origins yielded two main theories. The multi-regional hypothesis held that some species of early humans populated the globe and modern humans evolved from them in different regions. The out-of-Africa theory postulated that modern humans evolved in Africa before dispersing to other parts of the world. Advances in genetic analysis beginning in the 1980s have provided support for the out-of-Africa theory, and scientists today largely agree that *Homo sapiens* evolved in Africa about 200,000 years ago. There is not uniform agreement, however, on the exact time periods and routes our ancestors took as they migrated across the world. Technological advances in archaeology and DNA analysis are constantly changing our understanding, and the discovery of new fossils and genetic evidence often challenges long-held theories. With each advancement, scientists are filling in the gaps in our understanding of human migration, yet the story keeps changing.

The migration routes used in this activity reflect a small sampling of the evidence and theories advanced by archaeologists, paleontologists, and other experts. However, they are not definitive. We have qualified all possible routes with phrases such as "may have…" and "could have…," so students understand our knowledge of human migration is uncertain. Sources are included so students and teachers can dig deeper into theories and evidence. As students work through this activity, we encourage them to embrace the contradictions and uncertainties just as actual scientists do. However, they can be certain about the activity's underlying premise—that humanity evolved from one place and that people from the far reaches of the world have many more similarities than differences.

4 Pose the question: "If humankind began in Africa, when and how did people get to other continents?" Allow students to share prior knowledge. Tell them they will participate in a mapping exercise and travel back in time 200,000 years to learn more about human migration.

5 Distribute the *Map of Human Migration* handout to each student. Review the cardinal directions and have students add a compass to their map. Together, review and identify the continents and oceans.

6 Check for chronological understanding. This activity will explore human activity going back 200,000 years. To contextualize, create a brief timeline on the board with 'today' as the reference point. Include data such as:

- Students' birth year
- Invention of the World Wide Web (1990)
- New Jersey becomes a state (1787)
- One of the first known groups of enslaved Africans brought to America (1619).
- Ancestors of humans evolve (one million years ago)

7 Divide students into small groups and distribute copies of one of the *Connect the Dots* handouts to each group. Have them follow the prompts to track on their maps the migration route of early humans to their assigned region. Students will need access to an atlas or online map sources in order to complete this activity.

8 When groups have finished, have them post their maps in a place that is visible to all. Allow students to circulate and view maps from different regions. Alternatively, share some of the different maps using a document camera. Conclude with a discussion using some of the following questions:

- Were you surprised by any of the migration patterns or cultural information? Explain why.
- What factors might have caused our early ancestors to migrate? What physical adaptations would have supported this migration?
- Why is it important to recognize that all of humanity originated in Africa? Why does this matter?

NOTE

Questions about color and race may arise, regarding why people look different if they all come from Africa. These questions should be directly addressed in a factual way (e.g. climate, geographic location and environmental conditions impacted human physical characteristics over time). Emphasize that color is "skin deep," and that all human beings are 99.9 percent identical in their genetic makeup. See the Smithsonian article "Modern Human Diversity–Skin Color" for more information: http://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/genetics/human-skin-color-variation/modern-human-diversity-skin-color.

Discussion Questions

1. What forms of evidence have scientists gathered that proves humankind emerged in Africa?
2. When and how did early humans populate the rest of the Earth?
3. How has cultural bias and racism influenced scientists' beliefs about the origins of humanity?
4. Does the fact that all human beings come from Africa (and are very genetically similar) support or contradict ideas about racial categories that you have learned? Explain.
5. Why does it matter in today's world that we all descended from African ancestors?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

+ 23 and Me and Khan Academy. "Human Prehistory 101 (Parts 1 and 2)," YouTube video, 5:34/3:24, April 17, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch/?v=8183HPmA2_I, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-9Nw66RCMhg.
+ Australian National University. "Study finds most likely route of first humans into Australia." October 31, 2018. https://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/study-finds-most-likely-route-of-first-humans-into-australia.
+ Bae, Christopher. "In to Asia." *Aeon*, March 29, 2018. https://aeon.co/essays/new-evidence-about-the-human-occupation-of-asia-is-cascading-in.
+ California Academy of Science. Human Odyssey Interactive Map, https://legacy.calacademy.org/human-odyssey/map.
+ Cummings, Judy Dodge. *Human Migration—Investigate the Global Journey of Humankind*. White River Junction, Vermont: Nomad Press, 2016.
+ Gugliotta, Guy. "The Great Human Migration." *Smithsonian Magazine*, July 2008. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-great-human-migration-13561.
+ National Geographic. "Around the World in Seven Years," YouTube video, 2:40, November 18, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1etsn0tjsE. Journalist Paul Salopek retraces ancient migration out of Africa and around the world... on foot!
+ Thimmesh, Catherine. *Lucy Long Ago: Uncovering the Mystery of Where We Came From*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009.
+ Wow in the World—Where Did We Come From? *NPR*. Podcast audio. August 31, 2017. https://www.npr.org/2017/10/17/547337520/where-did-we-come-from.
+ Zimmer, Carl. "Crossing From Asia, the First Americans Rushed Into the Unknown." *New York Times*, November 8, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/08/science/prehistoric-migration-americas.html.

HANDOUT

Map of Human Migration

HANDOUT

Australia:
CONNECT THE DOTS

Follow the instructions to track the possible migration route of early humans out of Africa and to the South Pacific region. Draw symbols from the map's legend along your route to represent different types of movement or features of the environment. Add symbols if you need to.

NOTE
The abbreviation 'c.,' for 'circa,' means approximately.

A	c. 200,000 years ago	What may be the earliest fossils of modern *Homo sapiens* were found at Omo Kibish in Ethiopia. ***Mark this spot.***
B	c. 50,000–100,000 years ago	A sudden cooling of the Earth's climate may have made life hard for our African ancestors and reduced their population to under 10,000. Once the climate improved and the population grew again, some adventurous explorers probably left Africa by crossing the Bab-al-Mandab Strait, separating present-day Yemen from Djibouti. The waters of the Red Sea between Africa (at the Horn of Africa) and the Arabian Peninsula were much shallower then, and your ancestors could have used simple rafts to cross. ***Track their route.***
C	c. 50,000–70,000 years ago	These early beachcombers may have moved along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula to India, and then Southeast Asia. During this time, the sea levels were lower and many of the islands of Southeast Asia formed a single landmass called Sunda. ***Track their route.***
D	c. 50,000–70,000 years ago	Some scientists think your ancestors travelled from Southeast Asia through Indonesia and Timor, then across the sea to the northwest coast of Australia. Others say there is evidence they travelled through Indonesia's northern islands into New Guinea and Australia (then part of a single continent known as Sahul). The migration to Sahul would have required seafaring, and this may be the first time humans anywhere in the world navigated the seas. ***Track both possible routes.***
E	c. 50,000 years ago	Your group arrived in what is today Australia. At a burial site at Lake Mungo in southeastern Australia, a fully intact human skeleton was found in 1974. The adult male body was sprinkled with a red powder made from clay before being buried over 40,000 years ago. Over time, his descendants—the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—formed hundreds of nations and spoke over 250 languages and 600 dialects. They are one of the oldest continuous civilizations on earth. ***Mark Australia on the map to represent these people.***

HANDOUT

Americas:
CONNECT THE DOTS

Follow the instructions to track the possible migration route of early humans out of Africa and to the Americas. Draw symbols from the map's legend along your route to represent different types of movement or features of the environment. Add symbols if you need to.

NOTE
The abbreviation 'c.,' for 'circa,' means approximately.

A	c. 200,000 years ago	What may be the earliest fossils of modern *Homo sapiens* were found at Omo Kibish in Ethiopia. ***Mark this spot.***
B	c. 115,000–120,000 years ago	After a long cooling period, the Earth warmed and your ancestors may have migrated through the Nile Valley into today's Egypt and Sudan, crossing the Sinai Peninsula into what is now Israel. Your ancestors were likely among the earliest farmers when they settled in the Fertile Crescent in the Middle East, today's Iraq and Jordan. ***Track their route.***
C	c. 30,000–40,000 years ago	Your ancestors probably lived on the steppes (flat grasslands) of today's China and Mongolia. In Salkhit, eastern Mongolia, the skullcap of a modern human was discovered and dated to about 34,000 years ago. It is the only hominid fossil from this time found in Mongolia. ***Track their route and mark this spot.***
D	c. 20,000–40,000 years ago	During the ice age, sea levels dropped and a land bridge emerged, connecting Siberia in northeastern Russia to Alaska in North America. Your ancestors likely crossed this Bering Land Bridge. One group of these ancient Beringians survived in the area near today's Alaska for thousands of years and then disappeared, leaving no known genetic trace in living people. ***Track their route and mark Alaska on the map.***
E	c. 10,000–20,000 years ago	Another group of Beringians kept moving beyond Alaska. They split into two branches about 16,000 years ago, one heading north into today's Canada and the other south into today's North and South America. This expansion happened rapidly. About 11,000 years ago, a man buried in a rabbit-skin blanket and reed mats was found in Spirit Cave in present-day Nevada. Scientists found a genetic link between these remains and a 10,900-year-old skeleton in what is today Chile. ***Track these routes.***
F		Your ancestors formed thousands of independent nations throughout the Americas (there are more than 570 alone in the U.S. today). These societies had advanced knowledge of mathematics, medicine, architecture, engineering, agriculture and more, long before European explorers arrived in this part of the world.

HANDOUT

Western Europe:
CONNECT THE DOTS

Follow the instructions to track the possible migration route of early humans out of Africa and into Europe. Draw symbols from the map's legend along your route to represent different types of movement or features of the environment. Add symbols if you need to.

NOTE

The abbreviation 'c.,' for 'circa,' means approximately.

A	c. 200,000 years ago	What may be the earliest fossils of modern *Homo sapiens* were found at Omo Kibish in Ethiopia. ***Mark this spot.***
B	c. 50,000–100,000 years ago	Some scientists think a very small group of your ancestors—maybe fewer than 1,000—migrated from Africa by crossing the area that is today the Red Sea. The waters of the Red Sea between Africa (at the Horn of Africa) and the Arabian Peninsula were much shallower then, and your ancestors might have used simple rafts to cross from present-day Djibouti into Yemen. They then may have continued along the Arabian coast to what is today Iraq and Jordan, where they became some of the world's earliest farmers. ***Track their route.***
C	c. 60,000–80,000 years ago	Your ancestors may have met *Neanderthals* (a now-extinct early human species) and interbred with them. This offshoot may have followed big prey, migrating into Central Asia—today's China and Mongolia—and then through southern Russia. ***Track their route.***
D	c. 40,000–50,000 years ago	Your ancestors are believed to have arrived in Europe more than 40,000 years ago. In the Bajondillo Cave, in today's Málaga, Spain, stone tools were found dating to about 44,000 years ago. In Chauvet Cave, in what is today southeastern France, cave paintings of lions and rhinos were found that are about 30,000 years old. Mammoth-ivory figurines found in Germany date back to the same period. ***Mark these areas.***
E	c. 40,000–50,000 years ago	Jaw fragments and teeth from your ancestors dating back to 40,000 years ago were discovered in Kent's Cavern, in what is today Devon, England. ***Mark this spot.***
F	c. 20,000–40,000 years ago	The Paglicci Grotto is a cave located northeast of Naples, Italy. Scientists have found thousands of pieces of evidence that your ancestors were there, including human bones, stone tools, handprints, wall paintings and a 32,000-year-old pestle (grinding stone) that might have been used in oat harvesting—one of the earliest examples of food processing in Europe. ***Mark this spot.***

HANDOUT

East and Southeast Asia:
CONNECT THE DOTS

Follow the instructions to track the possible migration route of early humans out of Africa and into Asia. Draw symbols from the map's legend along your route to represent different types of movement or features of the environment. Add symbols if you need to.

NOTE
The abbreviation 'c.,' for 'circa,' means approximately.

A	c. 200,000 years ago	What may be the earliest fossils of modern *Homo sapiens* were found at Omo Kibish in Ethiopia. ***Mark this spot.***
B	c. 50,000–100,000 years ago	Some scientists think that a period of drought may have driven the growing *Homo sapiens* population to search for greener lands. They might have followed the large game they depended on for food out of Africa from northern Egypt to the Sinai Peninsula (today's Israel) and settled across the Levant (the land around the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea). ***Track their route.***
C	c. 50,000–70,000 years ago	Some of your ancestors may have moved along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula, eventually making their way to what is today India and to Southeast Asian island chains like Indonesia. During this time, the sea levels were lower, and many of the islands of Southeast Asia formed a single landmass called Sunda. Scientists found teeth in Lida Ajer Cave in Sumatra, Indonesia, believed to be more than 60,000 years old. ***Track their route and mark this spot.***
D	c. 40,000–50,000 years ago	Your ancestors may have made their way around the coast of Southeast Asia and then followed river routes inland to today's China. At Tianyuan Cave near Beijing, China, scientists found DNA from an early fisher-gatherer dating back 40,000 years. This man shared genes with *Neanderthals*, an extinct cousin of *Homo sapiens*. ***Track their route and mark this spot.***
E	c. 30,000–35,000 years ago	Scientists have debated over a skull fragment found in what is today Salkhit in eastern Mongolia. It was originally thought to be from an ancient human and given the name *Mongolanthropus*. However, modern DNA analysis shows that it is in reality a modern human, who lived about 34,000 years ago. It is the only hominid fossil from this time found in Mongolia. ***Mark this spot.***
F	c. 15,000–30,000 years ago	Near the end of the last Ice Age, your ancestors may have followed animal herds over land bridges to what is today Japan. When the climate warmed and the sea levels rose, they found themselves on an island, where they survived by hunting, gathering and fishing. These people became the *Jomon* (patterned), a name that comes from the style of pottery they created. ***Track their route and mark this area.***

High School | Grades 9–12

AFRICA: GLOBAL PERCEPTION, HUMANITY'S CONNECTION

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why do our human origins matter in today's world?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Explain the impact of past and present biases related to Africa.
- Identify evidence of the origins of humanity and the nature of human evolution.
- Describe the contradictions between historical racial categories and science.
- Discuss the significance of Africa as the geographical source of humankind.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

65 minutes

MATERIALS

- *Africa or Not?* slideshow (PDF document under "Amistad" at www.njsbf.org) or handout (one per pair or small group)
- *Africa or Not? Image Descriptions* (one copy for teacher reference)
- Copies of or access to the article, "Why is Africa Called the Dark Continent?": https://www.sporcle.com/blog/2018/04/why-is-africa-called-the-dark-continent.
- AV equipment to show a video

VOCABULARY

characteristic	evolve	*Homo erectus*	Neanderthal
Dark Continent	exploitative	imperialist	savagery
emergence	fossil	missionary	scientific racism

Procedures

PART I
Personal Perceptions of Africa (15 minutes)

1 Ask students: "What words or pictures come to mind when you think of Africa?" Allow students to share, but don't comment on their associations. List their thoughts on the board.

2 Tell students you will show them a series of photos and they will need to decide which ones are set in Africa and which ones are not. Show students the *Africa or Not?* slideshow, moving through each image quickly and with no discussion. As they view the photos, students should note which images they think are set in Africa. Alternatively, provide pairs or small groups with copies of the *Africa or Not?* handout and have them circle images they think are set in Africa.

3 Ask students to share how many of the photos they think are set in Africa. Allow them to share their rationales for specific images. Reveal that only two (#6 and #11) are not set in Africa and are, in fact, set in the United States (see the *Africa or Not? Image Descriptions* for background on all photos). Debrief using some of the following questions:

- → Were you surprised by the results? Why?
- → What perceptions or assumptions about Africa do you think influenced your decisions? Where do you think they come from?
- → How do you think these perceptions affect people in Africa? How do they affect people in our own country?
- → What do you think we can all do to be more aware of our biases and to rid ourselves of them?

4 Conclude this exercise by sharing the following with students: "Many people associate Africa with poverty, war, a lack of development, wilderness and small village life. As you can see, though, Africa is a diverse continent of more than 50 countries, with all types of people and places—big cities, small villages, poverty, wealth, happiness and struggle. While Africa has more than its fair share of poverty (due, in part, to centuries of colonization), it's important to remember that there's much more to Africa than just hardship. And we must also remember that problems like poverty exist in our own backyard. Whether we're talking about the U.S. or distant places like Africa, it's important to avoid stereotypes—oversimplified ideas or prejudices—about the people who live there."

PART II
Historical Perceptions of Africa (30 minutes)

5 Comment to students that our current perceptions of Africa are rooted in enduring historical prejudices. Tell them that they will read an article that illustrates this idea. Provide students with copies of or access to "Why is Africa Called the Dark Continent?": https://www.sporcle.com/blog/2018/04/why-is-africa-called-the-dark-continent.

6 Highlight that the article discusses a controversy involving a newscaster who used the term "dark continent" in reference to a presidential trip to Africa. Tell students that, in pairs, they will read the article and write a comment they might have posted online in response to the original controversy. Post the following guidelines:

- The comment should be about a paragraph in length and written professionally (no insulting language).
- It should discuss the problematic history and nature of the term "dark continent," using at least three pieces of evidence from the article.
- It should conclude with a suggested resolution to the controversy.
- Annotate the article as you read by highlighting sections and making notes in the margins to help you identify evidence needed to support your point of view.

7 When students finish writing, have two pairs join together to exchange comments and share feedback about each other's arguments. Conclude with a class discussion using some of the following questions:

- ➔ Why do you think the stereotype of Africa as "dark" (as in savage or untamed) has persisted despite, as the author notes, its great natural beauty and historic empires?
- ➔ How was the notion of a "dark continent" used to justify exploitative practices, such as colonization and slavery? How was such exploitation blamed on Africans themselves?
- ➔ How do you think the idea of a "dark continent" continues to influence people's attitudes about Africa and Black people in the modern world?
- ➔ Though not a reference to skin color, how is the term "dark continent" connected to racism?
- ➔ How would you respond to someone you know who used the term "dark continent" today?

PART III
Humans—Evolving in Africa (20 minutes)

8 Explain to students that the notion of a "dark continent" and other stereotypes about Africa reflected the rise of scientific racism, the false belief that the "races" belong to separate lineages, and that some are inherently superior or inferior to others.

9 Provide students with the *Discovering Human Origins in Africa* handout and review the questions with them.[1] Tell them they will take notes on each question as they watch a video. Highlight that they will also record a quote from the video that they think reflects the central idea of this lesson (see SAMPLE QUOTES below).

SAMPLE QUOTES

"No one really had a sense that anything interesting occurred in Africa."

"This tied in nicely with racist and imperialist thoughts of the day."

1 Questions are from "Discovering Human Origins in Africa Support Materials." PBS Learning Media. Accessed March 21, 2020. https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvdh-sci-human-origins/discovering-human-origins-in-africa/support-materials.

"Up to that point, everyone said let's look to Europe for our ancestor."

"It was unthinkable that anything as important as the evolution of humans could have happened in Africa."

NOTE

See Additional Resources for videos that delve more deeply into the scientific evidence for the origins of humanity in Africa.

10 Show the video "Discovering Human Origins in Africa" [4:07], which explores how racial biases influenced scientists studying the origins of the human species (use the "download" feature to play the video offline if desired): https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvdh-sci-huma-norigins/discovering-human-origins-in-africa. Pause the video as needed to allow students to capture notes, or play the video twice.

11 After viewing the video, have students share and discuss their quotes in small groups using these guiding questions:

- How does the quote you selected reflect our discussions about anti-Africa bias?
- How did this bias influence scientists of that time? Why does it matter today?

12 Conclude the lesson by discussing, as a class, some of the questions on the *Discovering Human Origins in Africa* handout and the discussion questions provided on the next page. Emphasize the importance of understanding that all of humanity emerged in Africa as a way to dispel racial myths and stereotypes.

Discussion Questions

1. Where do historical stereotypes about Africa and African people come from? In what ways have they persisted into the 21st century?
2. What is the impact of these stereotypes on Black people? What is the impact on the broader society?
3. How has cultural bias and racism influenced scientific research in the past?
4. How does current evolutionary scientific evidence help debunk stereotypes that exist about Black people?
5. Why is it important to know that humankind emerged in Africa? How can this knowledge be used to challenge prejudice?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- BioInteractive, "Great Transitions: The Origins of Humans," video, https://www.biointeractive.org/classroom-resources/great-transitions-origin-humans.
- California Academy of Science, "Walking with Lucy," video, https://www.calacademy.org/educators/walking-with-lucy.
- PBS Learning Media, "Becoming Human/Fossil Evidence of Bipedalism," video, https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/novat10.sci.life.evo.lucy/fossil-evidence-of-bipedalism.
- PBS Learning Media, "Finding Lucy," video, https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/tdc02.sci.life.evo.findinglucy/finding-lucy.
- PBS Learning Media, "Laetoli Footprints," video, https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/tdc02.sci.life.evo.laetolifoot/laetoli-footprints.

HANDOUT

Africa or Not?

Circle the images below that you think are set in Africa.


1


2

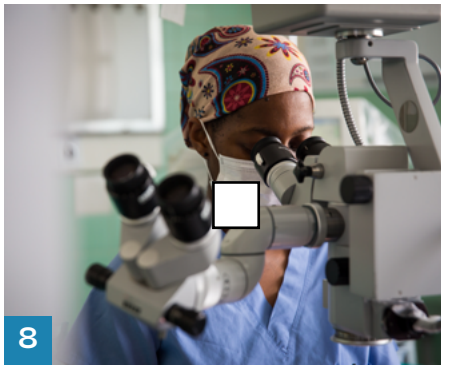

3


4


5


6


7


8


9


10


11


12

HANDOUT

Africa or Not? Image Descriptions

1 Women with water near Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, June 17, 2017 (Photographer RM / Shutterstock.com)

2 Aerial photo of Lagos Island, Nigeria, September 11, 2018 (Tayvay / Shutterstock.com)

3 Girl drinking fresh water from tap in Bamako, Mali (Riccardo Mayer / Shutterstock.com)

4 View of the Red Sea from a hotel window in Egypt (Zhukov Oleg / Shutterstock.com)

5 Main hall of the Giza Museum in Cairo, Egypt, May 4, 2019 (Gabriela Beres / Shutterstock.com)

6 Brothers and sisters on their front porch in the U.S. (Joseph Sohm / Shutterstock.com)

7 School children at high school graduation in Accra, Ghana, July 27,2013 (Nataly Reinch / Shutterstock.com)

8 Doctor looking through operating microscope in Cape Town, South Africa (Mark Fisher / Shutterstock.com)

9 Market street with people in Zanzibar, Tanzania, July 16, 2016 (Tatyana Vyc / Shutterstock.com)

10 Rugby game in Johannesburg, South Africa, August 21, 2010 (Luke Schmidt / Shutterstock.com)

11 Two boys playing with a skateboard in Los Angeles, CA (Joseph Sohm / Shutterstock.com)

12 People on the street in Kampala, Uganda (Pecold / Shutterstock.com)

HANDOUT

Discovering Human Origins in Africa

NAME: _____

As you watch the video, take notes in the spaces below to help you answer the questions.[1]
At the bottom of this handout, capture a quote from the video that represents the lesson's central idea.

1 Why didn't many scientists in the early 20th century believe that human origins began in Africa?

2 What evidence did Darwin and Huxley provide to support their belief that human origins were in Africa?

3 Why was Raymond Dart's finding of the Taung child so controversial? What was the implication of the finding?

QUOTE FROM THE VIDEO THAT REFLECTS THE LESSON'S CENTRAL IDEA:

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSING YOUR QUOTE:

→ How does the quote you selected reflect our discussions about anti-Africa bias?

→ How did this bias influence scientists of that time? Why does it matter today?

1 Questions are from "Discovering Human Origins in Africa Support Materials." PBS Learning Media. Accessed March 21, 2020. https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/nvdh-sci-humanorigins/discovering-human-origins-in-africa/support-materials.

What is a social construct and how is it connected to race?

In the late 18th century, German anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach created five categories to group human beings based on physical appearance and the geographic origin of their ancestors.[1] The establishment of different "races"—using physical identifiers such as skin color, hair texture and eye shape—altered human history in far-reaching ways. Social hierarchies and emerging pseudoscientific theories based on race have been used to justify exploration, colonization, forced removal, slavery and genocide.

In his celebrated *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), Thomas Jefferson wrote: "The first difference which strikes us is that of colour." He argued that Black people were inferior to both white people and Native Americans.[2] The false notion of white supremacy helped the nascent United States resolve the contradictions inherent in enslaving Africans and African Americans while proclaiming the ideals of liberty and equality. Deeply rooted beliefs about white superiority and Black inferiority fueled centuries of slavery, lynching and Jim Crow segregation. Current problems—such as neo-Nazi gatherings like the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA, and the aggressive policing that led to the unnecessary death of George Floyd in 2020—show that race remains a salient and often lethal way of sorting human beings.

Though we live in a racialized society, there is actually no scientific basis for race. As noted in the documentary *Race—The Power of an Illusion*, "There are no characteristics, no traits, not even one gene that distinguish all members of one so-called race from all members of another race."[3] The program highlights that most human variation occurs within and not between "races," so two random Koreans are likely to be as genetically different as a Korean and an Italian. Moreover, most traits are inherited independently of one another, and "the genes for skin color have nothing to do with genes for hair texture, eye shape, blood type, musical talent or athletic ability."[4]

Race is a social construct. It tells us nothing about a person's ability or character, yet it is often the first thing we notice about others, especially people of color. Race is not real, but racism is very much a reality. Historian Robin D.G. Kelley reminds us that "racism is not about how you look, it is about how people assign meaning to how you look."[5] The meaning of race has been created and sustained not by science, but by historical, social, economic and political practices that have created unequal access to opportunities and resources. Race remains significant because of widespread and shared social perceptions that it has value and meaning. Understanding that race is a social construct provides a critical lens through which we can better understand how racism operates and how to act to dismantle it.

1 Raj Bhopal, "The beautiful skull and Blumenbach's errors: the birth of the scientific concept of race" BMJ 335, no. 7633 (2007): 1308, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2151154.

2 Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Richmond: 1853), pages 149-152, 155.

3 California Newsreel, "Race Literacy Quiz," http://newsreel.org/guides/race/quiz.htm.

4 PBS, "What is Race? / Is Race for Real?," https://www.pbs.org/race/001_WhatIsRace/001_00-home.htm.

5 American Anthropological Association and Science Museum of Minnesota, "Race—Are We So Different?," https://www.understandingrace.org/LivedExperience.

Elementary School | Grades 3–5

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE: THE SKIN I AM IN

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What makes our skin colors different? When is it appropriate to categorize or refer to people by skin color or race, and when is it not?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Explain when it is appropriate and when it is problematic to categorize people by race or skin color.
- Learn that race does not have a scientific basis, but that racism is real and hurtful.
- Describe personal experiences of prejudice based on race or skin color.
- Identify the scientific reasons for skin color variation.
- Create a mural that celebrates skin color diversity.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

60 minutes

MATERIALS

- *All the Colors We Are, The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color* by Katie Kissinger (book, optional)
- Butcher paper and paints
- AV equipment to show a video (optional)

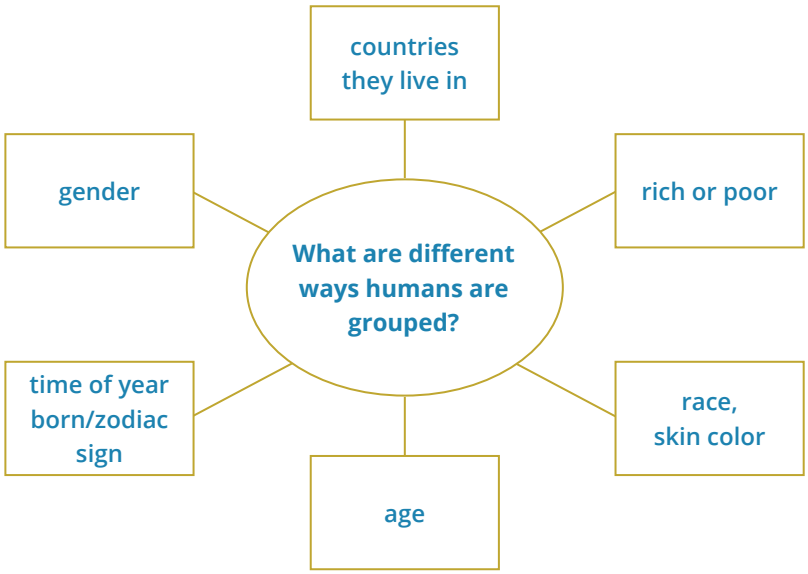
VOCABULARY

genes/genetic
identity
melanin
race
racism

Procedures

PART I
Are Race Categories a Categorical Problem? (30 minutes)

1 Ask students: "What are some different ways humans are grouped?" Suggest, for example, that people are often sorted and described according to their gender. In small groups, have students create a concept map with what they think are the most common ways humans are categorized. Here is a sample of what they might come up with:



2 Have groups share ideas from their maps and briefly discuss similarities and differences. Comment that it is natural for us to categorize—it's how we make sense of our world—but there are times when grouping people can lead to problems.

NOTE

The U.S. Census Bureau identifies these categories of race: "White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander." Some people might view certain of these categories as ethnic rather than racial groups. Race categories are generally determined by physical characteristics, such as skin, eye and hair color and facial structure or characteristics. Ethnicity is usually associated with the culture of a geographic region, including language, nationality, religion, dress and customs. Because race and ethnicity are socially constructed, they are overlapping and subjective categories. They are not fixed, and our understanding of them is continually evolving.

3 Highlight the category "race" or "skin color" as an example (some groups will have likely included this category). Ask students what race is. After they have had a chance to share their thoughts, post this definition:

Race is a category that people use to group human beings, based on features like skin color, hair texture and eye shape.

Ask students for examples of racial categories (e.g., Black, white, Asian, Native American). Highlight that race categories don't come from science or nature, but were created by people to make sense of their world.

4 Pose the following question: "Is grouping people by race a *harmless* way to make sense of our world, or is it a *harmful* practice?" Discuss this with students, and make sure to highlight the following ideas as part of your conversation:

- → It's appropriate to sometimes categorize by race; for example, we might talk about Black leaders in history or great Native American stories, and many of us identify ourselves by a race that makes us feel proud or unique.
- → When we label individuals using just race, however, we may not see all of the other unique qualities and identities they possess.
- → When we place human beings into just a handful of race categories, we may not appreciate their full diversity—the many thousands of cultures, customs, languages, etc. that make up our world.

5 If students have not already raised it, explain that racism is sometimes a problem when people are put into categories. Post this definition so all students have a common understanding of the term:

Racism is prejudice or discrimination, based on race, directed against people with less social power by people with more social power in a society. Racism can be expressed by individuals through their beliefs, attitudes and actions. Racism can also be *institutional* or carried out through a system of laws, policies, practices and values that benefit those with more power and harm those with less power.

6 Emphasize that racism is the biggest problem with race categories, and that when we make unfair or false assumptions about people based on their skin color, hair texture or eye shape, it can cause a lot of harm. Discuss some of the following questions:

- ➔ Has anyone ever made an assumption about you or someone you care about based on race? How did it affect you? *(Make sure no people are named, and that students only identify their own feelings.)*
- ➔ When we focus on a person's race, what other information do we lose about who they are as individuals?
- ➔ Do you think race is a good way to group people? Explain.

PART II
Skin Color is Skin Deep (30 minutes)

7 Engage students in a think-pair-share using the following question: "If race doesn't come from science or nature, but was created by people, why do we have different skin colors?" Allow them to share their prior knowledge.

8 To help students learn about the science of skin color, read aloud the book *All the Colors We Are, The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color* by Katie Kissinger, (more appropriate for younger students) or show the video *Why Do We Have Different Skin Colors?* [2:42], from the Kids Ask Why Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIYLTAo54ss. Discuss and/or have students write answers to the questions below.

- ➔ Why is it inaccurate to describe people as "Black" or "white"?
- ➔ What is the scientific explanation for skin color differences?
- ➔ What makes the pigment, melanin, more or less active in our bodies?
- ➔ How is skin color different from race?
- ➔ Does skin color tell us anything about a person other than skin color?

NOTE

This activity can be done as a whole class or in small groups using laptops or tablets. A read-aloud of *All the Colors We Are* is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fz0b5l5T4v8.

9 Comment that we often categorize humankind into a few skin colors, such as black, white, and brown. Ask students how many skin colors there actually are. Show them the gallery of photos at https://www.angelicadass.com/humanae-project, which depicts more than 200 skin tones. Explain that the Humanæ Project, led by Brazilian photographer Angélica Dass, seeks to reveal the range and beauty of human colors because "small differences in skin tone can swell into large misconceptions and stereotypes about race."

10 Have students create a class mural of handprints representing the "beauty of their human colors." After mixing paints to create a hue that reflects their skin tone, students paint their palms and fingertips and press them onto a large sheet of butcher paper. When it dries, students add their names and one unique fact about them that is more than "skin deep." Have the class determine a fitting title for their mural and display it in the classroom.

Discussion Questions

1. When is it okay to categorize or refer to people by race or skin color? When is it a problem?
2. Why do you think people started categorizing others by race or skin color in the first place? What are some examples of damage this has caused in the world?
3. Is your skin color an important part of your identity? Does it influence who you are? Explain.
4. Have you or has someone you know been affected by prejudice based on skin color? What happened, and how did it make you feel?
5. How might you use your knowledge of the science behind skin color to respond to racist ideas you hear?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- "Looking at Skin Color with Books and Activities," Welcoming Schools, https://www.welcomingschools.org/pages/looking-at-skin-color-with-books-and-activities.
- Pastels and Crayons. *The Moth*. Podcast audio. December 15, 2016. https://player.themoth.org/#/?actionType=ADD_AND_PLAY&storyId=16088.
- "Race—The Power of an Illusion," PBS, http://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm.
- TED-Ed. "The Science of Skin Color," YouTube video, 4:53, February 16, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_r4c2NT4naQ&feature=youtu.be.
- "Understanding Race," The American Anthropological Association. https://understandingrace.org/
- "Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race," California Newsreel, http://newsreel.org/guides/race/10things.htm.

Middle School | Grades 6–8

HOW WOULD YOU IDENTIFY? THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Is race what other people think you are or what you think you are?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Discuss the definition of race and the concept of the social construction of race.
- Examine the U.S. Census Bureau's historic and current race categories and definitions.
- Investigate the ways in which Black people have been defined and categorized over time.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

45 minutes

MATERIALS

- *U.S. Census Bureau—About Race* handout (one copy to project or one copy per student)
- *Determine My Identity* handout (one copy per student)
- *Determine My Identity Answer Key* handout (one copy per student)
- Pew Research Center's *What Census Calls Us: A Historical Timeline* (one copy per student): https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/PH_15.06.11_MultiRacial-Timeline.pdf

VOCABULARY

census genetic race social construct

Procedures

1 Write the term "decennial census" on the board (decennial means occurring every 10 years). Have students engage in a turn and talk on what the census is and what specifically it measures. Highlight that one area the census surveys is racial identity. Project or distribute the handout *U.S. Census Bureau—About Race*, and read together. Answer any questions students may have.

2 Tell students they will engage in a brief quiz using the racial categories defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Distribute the *Determine My Identity* handout and have students complete it in pairs or small groups. When they are done, distribute the *Determine My Identity Answer Key*. Discuss the following questions as a class:

- ➔ What was challenging for you about this exercise?
- ➔ How did you decide what categories to assign to each person?
- ➔ What does it mean to "pass"? Why might some people choose to hide their racial identity?
- ➔ What did you learn from this exercise about race?

3 In their pairs or groups, ask students to discuss and write down their definition of race, taking into account any new knowledge based on the *Determine My Identity* exercise. Post the definition below and discuss the idea that race is a "social construct"—a set of categories created by people to make sense of their world, with no basis in science.

Race: A socially constructed (made up) category for grouping people, based on features like skin color, hair texture and eye shape.

NOTE

The U.S. Census Bureau identifies these categories of race: "White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander." Some people might view some of these categories as ethnic rather than racial groups. Race categories are generally determined by physical characteristics, such as skin, eye and hair color and facial structure or characteristics. Ethnicity is usually associated with the culture of a geographic region, including language, nationality, religion, dress and customs. Because race and ethnicity are socially constructed, they are overlapping and subjective categories. They are not fixed, and our understanding of them is continually evolving.

NOTE

The racial categories we take for granted have no genetic basis. "There are no characteristics, no traits, not even one gene that distinguish all members of one so-called race from all members of another race."[1] For more information, see "Race—The Power of an Illusion" at https://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm.

1 California Newsreel, "Race Literacy Quiz," http://newsreel.org/guides/race/quiz.htm.

4 Distribute copies of the Pew Research Center's *What Census Calls Us: A Historical Timeline*: https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/PH_15.06.11_MultiRacial-Timeline.pdf. Post the question: "How does the history of the census show us that race is a social construct?" In their groups, have students discuss and annotate the handout, jotting notes and highlighting parts that answer the question.

5 Reconvene the class and discuss their findings. Emphasize how racial categories have shifted in response to politics, scientific trends and social attitudes, rather than being fixed or objective classifications. Highlight some of the following ideas:

- Before 1960, census takers identified a person's perceived race, while after 1960, respondents could identify their own race.
- Over time, the definition of Black changed from someone with "one-fourth Black blood" (quadroon) to "one-eighth Black blood" (octoroon) to "one drop" of Black blood—a way to taint Black ancestry and protect white privilege.
- Beginning in 2000, respondents could identify themselves as more than one race.
- Beginning in 2020, the term "Negro" was eliminated, and all individuals are now asked to identify their racial origins (e.g., a Black person can indicate Nigerian or Haitian; a white person can indicate Irish or Polish).

6 Have students journal in response to one of the prompts below. If students feel safe, allow them to share and discuss their reflections with a partner. However, do not require students to share or submit their entries if they prefer to keep them private.

- Do you fit into the racial categories constructed by the U.S. Census Bureau or by our society? Explain.
- How do you define yourself racially? Is race an important part of your identity? Explain.
- Is there a difference between how you identify yourself racially and how others identify you? If so, describe the difference and how others' assumptions have affected you.
- Is race what other people think you are or what you think you are? Explain.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean that race is a "social construct"? Why is race more "social" than "scientific"?
2. What are some examples of the way our society has shifted categories and definitions of race over time? What do you think has motivated or caused these changes?
3. How have Black people in particular been affected by society's changing definitions of race?
4. How have you been personally affected by society's racial categories and definitions?
5. Have you ever made assumptions related to another person's race? What might be the problem with this?
6. Is it important to know another person's race? What can you do if you are unsure of a person's race?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- AAAS, "Variations in Human Skin Color," http://sciencenetlinks.com/lessons/variation-in-human-skin-color.
- Lind, Dara. "See every term the US Census has used to describe black Americans." Last modified September 11, 2015. https://www.vox.com/2015/6/11/8767179/census-history-race.
- Pastels and Crayons. *The Moth*. Podcast audio. December 15, 2016. https://player.themoth.org/#/?actionType=ADD_AND_PLAY&storyId=16088.
- PBS, "Race—The Power of an Illusion," https://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm.

HANDOUT

U.S. Census Bureau—About Race[1]

NAME: _____

[The] U.S. Census is designed to count every resident in the United States. It is mandated by Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution and takes place every 10 years. The data collected by the decennial census determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives... [It] tells us who we are and where we are going as a nation, and helps our communities determine where to build everything from schools to supermarkets, and from homes to hospitals. It helps the government decide how to distribute funds and assistance to states and localities.

What is Race?

The racial categories included in the census questionnaire generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country and not an attempt to define race biologically...or genetically... People may choose to report more than one race to indicate their racial mixture, such as "American Indian" and "White." People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino or Spanish may be of any race... The Census Bureau does not tell individuals which boxes to mark or what heritage to write in.

The U.S. government requires five minimum categories [of race]:

- **White**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa
- **Black or African American**—A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa
- **American Indian or Alaska Native**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment
- **Asian**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands

1 The text on this handout is taken from: U.S. Census Bureau, "Decennial Census," https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/censuses.html; "About Race," https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html.

HANDOUT

Determine My Identity

Use the U.S. Census Bureau definitions to identify the race of the following individuals.

A. White
B. Black or African American
C. American Indian and Alaska Native
D. Asian
E. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
F. Some other race
G. Two or more races

1 Walter White

_____

2 Mary Church Terrell

_____

3 Homer Plessy

_____

4 George J. Herriman

_____

5 Timothy Thomas Fortune

_____

6 Lena Horne

_____

7 Jean Toomer

_____

8 Rashida Jones

_____

9 Shirley Graham Du Bois

_____

10 Maya Rudolf

_____

IMAGE CREDITS

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→ Walter F White, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Walter_F_White.jpg&oldid=252157617
→ Mary Church Terrell, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Mary_Church_Terrell,_three-quarter_length_portrait,_seated,_facing_front_(no_border).jpg&oldid=285681350
→ Homerplessy02.jpg, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Homerplessy02.jpg&oldid=335784048
→ Herriman 1902, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herriman_1902.png
→ Timothy Thomas Fortune 2, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Timothy_Thomas_Fortune_2.JPG&oldid=203846692
→ Lena Horne 1955, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Lena_Horne_1955.JPG&oldid=110563391
→ Jean Toomer passport 1926, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Jean_Toomer_passport_1926.jpg&oldid=149371887
→ Rashida Jones (7116540149), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rashida_Jones_(7116540149).jpg
→ Portrait of Shirley Graham, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Portrait_of_Shirley_Graham.jpg&oldid=294718698
→ Maya Rudolph at the "Up All Night" Cast at Paley Center. 2012. MingleMediaTVNetwork, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Maya_Rudolph.jpg&oldid=289182462

HANDOUT

Determine My Identity Answer Key

Below are brief biographies of each of the people in the quiz. The information about their racial and ethnic backgrounds shows how problematic it is to fit people into the racial categories society has created. Although these people were of mixed ancestry, most were treated as Black and therefore subject to the discrimination faced by Black people. Many had lived experiences and/or self-identified as Black or African American. Several were able to "pass" as white and chose to live at least part of their lives as white people.

1 **Walter White** (1893–1955) was a civil rights activist, who led the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and investigated lynchings in the South. White was of mixed African and European ancestry. He sometimes passed as white to protect himself when investigating racism. "I am a Negro," he said of himself. "My skin is white, my eyes are blue, my hair is blond. The traits of my race are nowhere visible upon me."

2 **Mary Church Terrell** (1863–1954) was one of the first African American women to earn a college degree and became known as a national activist for civil rights and suffrage. Her parents were both freed enslaved people of mixed racial ancestry, including Black, white, and Austronesian (from Madagascar in the Indian Ocean) people. Her autobiography was entitled, *A Colored Woman in a White World*.

3 **Homer Plessy** (1862–1925) was a French-speaking Creole from Louisiana and the plaintiff in the famous U.S. Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, in which he argued that being forced to sit in the Black car of a train was unconstitutional. The Court held that "separate but equal" racial facilities were legal. Plessy was an "octoroon" or one-eighth Black. His family, both Black and white, came to the U.S. from Haiti and France.

4 **George J. Herriman** (1880–1944) was an American cartoonist, best known for the comic strip, "Krazy Kat." He was born to a family of mixed-race French-speaking Louisiana Creole "mulattoes," and one of his grandmothers was Cuban. Herriman's birth certificate lists him as "colored" and his death certificate as "Caucasian." He may have passed as white for part of his adult life.

5 **Timothy Thomas Fortune** (1856–1928) was an African American civil rights leader, journalist and publisher. He was the editor of the nation's leading Black newspaper, *The New York Age*, and was a leading economist in the Black community. Fortune was born into slavery and freed by the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

6 **Lena Horne** (1917–2010) was an American singer, dancer, actress and civil rights activist. Her career in film, television and theater spanned over 70 years. Horne's family was of African, Native American and European descent. "I was unique," she said, "in that I was a kind of Black that white people could accept."

7 **Jean Toomer** (1994–1967) was a school principal in Georgia, and a poet and novelist associated with the Harlem Renaissance. His parents were both mixed-race and he was majority white in his ancestry. Toomer was classified as white on the 1920 and 1930 censuses and on his marriage license, and as "Negro" on draft registrations in 1917 and 1942. He passed as white for periods of his life, but claimed he was not bound by race and was simply an American.

8 **Rashida Jones** (1976–) is an American actress, writer and producer, and the daughter of musician Quincy Jones. Her father is African American with roots in Cameroon and a paternal Welsh grandfather. Her mother was an Ashkenazi (European) Jew. Jones has said she identifies with being Black and biracial. She has also commented, "I have gone through periods where I only feel Black or Jewish. Now I have a good balance."

9 **Shirley Graham Du Bois** (1896–1977) was an American author, playwright, composer and activist for African American and other causes. Her father was an African Methodist Episcopal minister and her mother was European.

10 **Maya Rudolph** (1972–) is an American actress who has been a cast member of *Saturday Night Live* and appeared in many movies. Her mother was African American and her father is white and Jewish. Rudolph has said she never felt either Black or white and identified most with biracial people of any race. "I just never felt like that was the first place to go," she has commented, "to define myself by race."

High School | Grades 9-12

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE: WHY IS IT AN ILLUSION?

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Is race real? What are the dangers of categorizing people using the concept of race?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Discuss the concept of "colorblindness" as a response to racism in our society.
- Explain why race is a social construct, with no basis in science.
- Examine the impact that categorizing people by race has had on humanity.
- Define the terms "race," "racism" and "social construct."

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

60 minutes

MATERIALS

- AV equipment to show a video
- *Video Response Guide* handout (one per student)
- *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 1—The Difference Between Us* (video)
- *What is Race? / Is Race for Real?* handout (one per student)

VOCABULARY

assumption	genetic	race	social construct
colorblindness	institutional	racism	

Procedures

1 Prior to the lesson, post the following two quotes on opposite walls of the classroom:

"I don't look at people and see color and race. I see inside." —Jennifer Lopez, American actress, singer, dancer and businesswoman

"There's this idea that people don't see color, and that's a lie. It's about appreciating it, instead of pretending that it's not there." —Ali LeRoi, American television producer, director, writer and actor

2 Write the following question on the board: "Is race real?" Draw students' attention to the two posted quotes. Have them stand near the quote—or at any point between the two—that represents their viewpoint. Ask for a few volunteers from different points on the continuum to share their opinions. Discuss some of the following questions:

- What are the positive intentions behind saying we don't see race? What are some of the pitfalls of this way of thinking?
- When is it appropriate to "see race" or categorize people by race, and when is it problematic?
- Is race real or something artificial, constructed by society? What does race mean to you?

3 Tell students they will be watching a clip from a documentary that will further explore the way race has been used to categorize people. Distribute the *Video Response Guide* and review the instructions. Tell students they will have a "back-channel" discussion with their classmates at three intervals using the questions on the handout. This can be done via a back-channel site or app that allows students to respond in real time. If access to this type of technology is not available, follow these offline instructions:

NOTE

Make sure students feel safe as they share their opinions about issues of race, and that the class discussion remains respectful and constructive. See "Creating Brave Spaces" at the beginning of the guide for guidelines on how to facilitate dialogue around sensitive topics.

- Create groups of three students and give each student three index cards.
- At the first interval, students use their notes from the handout to write a brief response to the designated question on one of their cards.
- They pass their cards around and allow their partners to react in writing. Students collect and review their own cards to see their peer's questions, comments and opinions.
- The process is repeated for all three sections of the video clip.

4 Show *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 1—The Difference Between Us* up to 10:00: http://bit.ly/3dXo302. Pause at the designated intervals so students can participate in the "back-channel" response activity. Following the video, allow students to share their reactions and questions as time allows, and help them clarify ideas presented in the film.

5 In small groups, have students come up with their own definitions for the following terms, based on prior knowledge and what they learned from the video: "race," "racism" and "social construct." Have students post their definitions and discuss as a class. Offer these definitions (project them on the board) and review with students:

- **Race:** A socially constructed category for grouping people, based on features like skin color, hair texture and eye shape
- **Racism:** Prejudice or discrimination, based on race, directed against people with less social power by people with more social power in a society. Racism can be expressed by individuals through their beliefs, attitudes and actions. Racism can also be *institutional* or carried out through a system of laws, policies, practices and values that benefit those with more power and harm those with less power.
- **Social construct:** An idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society

1

NOTE

Back-channel sites or apps allow students to have an online discussion in conjunction with a classroom activity. The website Common Sense Education offers recommendations on safe tools for classroom use: https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/3-backchanneling-websites-to-replace-todaysmeet.

6 Independently or in pairs, have students read the handout *What is Race? / Is Race for Real?* Direct them to annotate the text by writing thoughts or questions in the margins and highlighting at least three key ideas that resonate for them. Conduct a read-around in which each student reads aloud one phrase from the reading that is meaningful for them. Make certain that the following important ideas are communicated before concluding the lesson:

- Race is a social construct—it has no basis in science or nature.
- Race is a social reality—humanity has been sorted by race for centuries, and this has had real effects.
- Racial identity is real—it is a part of who we are, and often a source of pride and cultural connection.
- Racism is painful—prejudice and discrimination are very real consequences of racial hierarchy.
- Racism should be challenged—we can confront racial bias in ourselves and others, but only by "seeing" it.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think have been the historical dangers of classifying people based on race?
2. How do scientific studies challenge the notion of race? What is the "biological myth of race?"
3. The idea of race assumes that external differences (e.g., skin color) are linked to internal differences (e.g., intelligence). What false links are you aware of that people often create between race and other attributes?
4. How have assumptions and misconceptions about race become part of laws and policies?
5. If "race is not real," why is "colorblindness" an inadequate outlook for one to adopt?
6. When is it appropriate to acknowledge others' race and when is it a problem?
7. In your opinion, why has the "illusion" of race had such staying power in our world?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- California Newsreel, "Race—The Power of an Illusion," http://newsreel.org/video/race-the-power-of-an-illusion.
- Race Project, "The Human Spectrum: Where Do You Draw the Line?," https://www.understandingrace.org/TheHumanSpectrum.
- Wright, Daniel, "Black By Choice: The Story of Walter White, Mr. NAACP," YouTube video, 9:52, February 5, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5cTUX-QADJM.
- Vox, "The myth of race, debunked in 3 minutes," YouTube video, 3:07, January 13, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vn-fKgffCZ7U.

Lesson Extensions

- Show students the remainder of *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 1* and/or the other episodes: *Episode 2—The Story We Tell* (which explores the roots of the race concept in North America) and *Episode 3—The House We Live In* (which explores how race resides not in nature, but in social institutions that privilege whiteness). Visit http://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm for accompanying lessons and resources.

HANDOUT

Video Response Guide
Race: The Power of an Illusion

NAME: _____

As you watch the video, take notes that will help you respond to the questions below. The video will stop at each point indicated, and you will have a chance to react to that section of the film and to share ideas with your partners.

[2:45] *"We can't find any genetic markers that are in everybody of a particular race and nobody of some other race; we can't find any genetic markers that define race."*

➔ What is your reaction to the idea that race is a biological and genetic myth?

[7:00] *"The way it all falls out tends to point to what your race is."*

➔ What assumptions do the students in the video make about race? What assumptions have you or people you know made? What are the dangers of these assumptions?

[10:00] *"We have a long history of searching for racial differences and attributing performance and behavior to them."*

➔ How is race "an illusion"? What has motivated people to classify humans in this way? What has powered this false idea for centuries?

HANDOUT

What is Race? / Is Race for Real?

NAME: _____

1 **Race is a modern idea.** Ancient societies did not divide people according to physical differences, but according to religion, status, class and even language.

2 **Race has no genetic basis.** Not one characteristic, trait or gene distinguishes all members of one so-called race from all members of another so-called race.

3 **Slavery predates race.** Throughout history, societies have enslaved others, often as a result of conquest or war, but not because of physical characteristics or a belief in natural inferiority. In America, a unique set of circumstances led to the enslavement of peoples who looked similar.

4 **Race and freedom were born together.** When the United States was founded, equality was a radical new idea. But our early economy was based largely on slavery. The concept of race helped explain why some people could be denied the rights and freedoms that others took for granted.

5 **Race justified social inequalities as natural.** As the race concept evolved, it justified the extermination of Native Americans, the exclusion of Asian immigrants and the taking of Mexican lands. Racial practices were institutionalized within government, laws and society.

6 **Human subspecies don't exist.** Unlike many animals, modern humans have not been isolated enough to evolve into separate subspecies or races. Despite surface differences, we are among the most similar of all species.

7 **Skin color is only skin deep.** Most traits are inherited independent of one another. The genes for skin color have nothing to do with genes for hair texture, eye shape, blood type, musical talent or athletic ability.

8 **Most variation is within, not between "races."** Of the small amount of total human genetic variation, 85% exists within any local population, be they Italians, Kurds, Koreans or Cherokees. Two random Koreans are likely to be as genetically different as a Korean and an Italian.

9 **Race is not biological but racism is still real.** Race is still a powerful social idea that gives people different access to opportunities and resources. Our government and society have created advantages of being white. This affects everyone, whether we are aware of it or not.

10 **Colorblindness will not end racism.** Pretending race doesn't exist is not the same as creating equality. Racism is more than stereotypes and individual prejudice. To combat racism, we need to identify and remedy social policies that advantage some groups at the expense of others.

SOURCE: PBS, "What is Race? / Is Race for Real?," https://www.pbs.org/race/001_WhatIsRace/001_00-home.htm.

What have been the consequences of social constructs about race in our country?

Though there is no biological basis for race, centuries of deeply ingrained ideology about the differentness of the "races" has led to vast racial and ethnic inequalities in the United States. People of color face structural barriers daily in the form of laws and policies governing education, housing, voting rights and much more.

The 1954 landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* ended the almost 60-year precedent of "separate but equal" in U.S. law. For the Browns and millions of other people whose children were forced to attend segregated schools, their education was anything but equal. Today, schools are much improved, yet disparities perpetuate. According to the UCLA Civil Rights Project, "intense levels of segregation" have been on the rise since the 1990s, when court decisions nationwide began releasing schools from desegregation orders and plans. Their research shows that about 15 percent of Black and Hispanic students today attend so-called "apartheid schools" that are less than 1 percent white—levels of segregation today have not been seen since the 1960s. "These trends matter," notes a project report, "[because] segregation has strong, negative relationships with the achievement, college success, long-term employment and income of students of color."[1]

Housing policy and trends similarly show the persistent nature of segregation and racial inequality. Beginning in the 1930s, there was a series of systematic policy decisions that reinforced and expanded residential segregation. During this era, for example, the notorious practice of "redlining" began, in which federal underwriters drew red lines around poor, mostly Black neighborhoods on zoning maps and marked them as "hazardous" or too risky for bank loans. After World War II, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) guaranteed mortgages for thousands of single-family homes in new suburbs, but prohibited the awarding of loans for homes in or near neighborhoods with "incompatible racial elements." In 2018, Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting exposed that redlining still occurs today, despite the 1968 Fair Housing Act banning this form of discrimination.[2] In fact, more than 50 years after that historic legislation, U.S. communities are just as segregated and struggling with many of the same problems, including inequality in mortgage lending and homeownership. In addition to being unjust, these practices have a "negative impact on everything from the quality of education Black children receive to the health and longevity of their parents."[3]

1 Gary Orfield, Erica Frankenberg, Jongyeon Ee, Jennifer B. Ayscue, "Harming Our Common Future: America's Segregated Schools 65 Years after Brown," UCLA Civil Rights Project, May 10, 2019, https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/harming-our-common-future-americas-segregated-schools-65-years-after-brown.

2 Aaron Glantz and Emmanuel Martinez, "For people of color, banks are shutting the door to homeownership," Reveal, February 15, 2018, https://www.revealnews.org/article/for-people-of-color-banks-are-shutting-the-door-to-homeownership.

3 Joseph P. Williams, "Segregation's Legacy: Fifty years after the Fair Housing Act was signed, America is nearly as segregated as when President Lyndon Johnson signed the law," U.S. News & World Report, April 20, 2018, https://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2018-04-20/us-is-still-segregated-even-after-fair-housing-act.

Nothing is more fundamental to U.S. democracy than the right to vote. However, since the passage of the 15th Amendment in 1870, granting Black men the right to vote, a host of discriminatory laws, policies and practices have ensued, aimed at depressing this right. These practices included poll taxes and literacy tests, as well as campaigns of violence and intimidation. It was not until the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 that these discriminatory laws and practices were outlawed and tens of millions of people of color were enfranchised for the first time. In 2012, the national voter turnout rate among Black citizens exceeded that of white citizens for the first time in U.S. history.[4] Yet in recent years, a new wave of voter suppression efforts, targeted mostly at people of color, threaten our democracy. Court rulings eliminating core voting protections have paved the way for voter ID laws, voter roll purges and felony disenfranchisement. According to the Center for American Progress, in 2017 "Native Americans, Latinos, and African Americans were two, three, and four times, respectively, more likely than their white counterparts to report experiencing racial discrimination when trying to vote or participate in politics."[5]

In his speech on race, then Senator Barack Obama commented: "...for all those who scratched and clawed their way to get a piece of the American Dream, there were many who didn't make it—those who were ultimately defeated, in one way or another, by discrimination." This is the legacy of structural inequality, the use of laws, policies and discriminatory practices by those in power to keep some groups from obtaining the resources and opportunities needed to attain their American dream.

4 Jens Manuel Krogstad and Mark Hugo Lopez, "Black voter turnout fell in 2016, even as a record number of Americans cast ballots," Pew Research Center, May 12, 2017, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/12/black-voter-turnout-fell-in-2016-even-as-a-record-number-of-americans-cast-ballots.

5 Danyelle Solomon, Connor Maxwell and Abril Castro, "Systematic Inequality and American Democracy," Center for American Progress, August 7, 2019, https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2019/08/07/473003/systematic-inequality-american-democracy

Elementary School | Grades 3–5

RACISM IN RULES AND LAWS

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How have rules and laws been created in our country based on race?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Define the concepts of segregation and integration.
- Explain the significance of *Brown v. Board of Education*.
- Describe how school segregation harms all members of a community.
- Identify examples of individual and institutional racism.
- Generate ideas for making their community welcoming for people from all backgrounds.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

45–60 minutes

MATERIALS

- *The School is Not White!* by Doreen Rappapo (book)
- *Individual Acts or Government Acts?* handout (one per pair or small group)
- *School Segregation Today* handout (one copy to project or multiple copies for small groups)
- AV equipment to show a video (optional)

VOCABULARY

Brown v. Board of Education
institutional
integration
race
racism
segregation

Procedures

PART I
Individual and Institutional Racism (30–40 minutes)

1 Tell students you will read aloud a story titled *The School is Not White!* that took place in 1965 in Mississippi, just 11 years after an important court case called *Brown v. Board of Education*. Before reading the book, have students do a turn and talk where they share any prior knowledge about "schools in the South in the 1960s" and *"Brown v. Board of Education."* (Write these phrases on the board.)

2 Discuss students' responses and help them clarify ideas. Explain that for most of our country's history, Black people were forced to attend separate schools from white people, but that in 1954 an important court case called *Brown v. Board of Education* ended school segregation. Post and review the definitions of segregation and integration.

- ➔ Segregation: The act of keeping different groups separate from each other
- ➔ Integration: The act of bringing together separate people or things

3 Read *The School is Not White!* by Doreen Rappapo (if you do not have the book, a read-aloud is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DNhkejN4NE). Discuss some of the following questions as you read:

- ➔ How did the plantation boss stand in the way of the family's plans to attend the all-white school? Why do you think he felt angry about their desire for a better education?
- ➔ The book talks about how the Carter children were "going off to war." How was the experience of the Carter family like going to war?

NOTE

If you have not taught Lesson 2, "The Social Construction of Race," review the definitions of *race* and *racism* with students prior to conducting this lesson (see the Unit 1 Glossary). Highlight that racial categories don't come from science or nature, but were created by people to make sense of their world.

- Even though other Black people did not send their children to the all-white school at first, how did the community participate in integration and support the Carters?
- The Carter children struggled daily at school. What were their experiences and reactions, and how did they affect them?
- Matthew (the dad) tells his children: "We have to show others it can be done and maybe they will stop being afraid." What personal qualities do you think it took for this family to be first, and to not give up?
- What does Mae Bertha (the mom) mean when she says: "The school is not white, it's brown brick"?
- Mae Bertha says, "people who hate cannot feel good." How does this apply to both the people who behaved in racist ways and Mae Bertha's own children?

4 Distribute copies of the handout *Individual Acts or Government Acts?* and review the instructions with students. Provide clarifications and examples as needed so students understand the distinction between the two different forms of racism. Have students complete the activity in pairs or small groups. Provide access to copies of the book and/or the online read-aloud as needed.

5 Discuss how groups categorized the acts of racism from the story and any additional examples they identified. Debrief using the questions below. Emphasize that racism isn't just carried out by individuals, but also through the rules and laws of governments and people in power.

- How does it affect people differently when racism is part of a government rule or law, as compared to when it is an individual act?
- How does it affect people differently when a leader—like a principal or a boss—treats people unfairly, as compared to when an ordinary person does it?
- School segregation is an example of racism that was once a part of rules and laws. Can you think of other examples of this kind of racism, either in the past or now?

NOTE

Several of the examples on the handout might be interpreted in different ways. For example, "The principal wouldn't let a White girl talk to Deborah" could be seen as an individual act of racism or a government sponsored act, since many schools are public institutions and principals are in positions of power. Encourage students to discuss these nuances as they work. The overall goal is for students to begin to think about how racism is not simply spontaneous, but often perpetrated through deliberate policy and through people with power or authority.

6 Ask students: "Do you think school segregation is still a problem today, even though it is no longer part of our country's rules and laws?" Project the handout *School Segregation Today*. Review the graph and together answer the two questions. Alternatively, provide copies of the handout to students and have them analyze the graph in small groups. Then discuss the following questions:

- What might be some possible reasons for the rise in school segregation since the 1990s? *(E.g., the neighborhoods where children live are more segregated, governments are carrying out fewer rules and laws that promote integration.)*
- What problems happen when there is a lot of school segregation? *(E.g., kids from different backgrounds don't learn as much about each other, stereotypes and prejudice might increase, kids in different schools may not have the same opportunities and resources—some groups may get more than others.)*

PART II
All are Welcome Here (15–20 minutes)

7 Comment that treating people differently because of their race is one way people might feel different or excluded in a school community. Ask them:

- What other identities have been used to make people feel unwelcome, either in our community or in other communities (e.g., gender, religion, immigration status, sexual orientation, etc.)?
- What might it feel like to be left out because you are different from other people?
- Have you ever been left out of something because of who you are?

8 Remind students that all are welcome in your school, that it is the law and the right thing to do. Write "All are welcome here" on the board. In pairs or small groups, have them brainstorm ways that groups who might experience exclusion can be made to feel welcome in the community. Discuss ways to implement one or more of their ideas in the future.

Discussion Questions

1. What are examples of government rules and laws that have been created based on race?
2. How do racist laws harm Black people and other people of color? How do they harm everyone?
3. How is racism in rules and laws different from racism carried out by ordinary people?
4. Why was *Brown v. Board of Education* an important court case? How did it change our country?
5. What can we do to fight against rules and laws that harm people because of their race or other identities?
6. How can we make our school and community more welcoming for all kinds of people?

Lesson Extensions

- Have students plan and implement one of the "All are welcome here" ideas identified in the last step of this lesson plan. For example, they might create a buddy system for welcoming new immigrant students into the community; encourage more mixed-gender sporting or other events at their school; or work to get more books in the school library about same-sex headed families. Students can focus on an issue that is most relevant to their community and plan concrete ways to create a more welcoming environment.
- Have students research *Brown v. Board of Education* in order to learn more about the importance of this landmark decision. After gathering facts about Linda Brown and her family, and their experience in Kansas' segregated schools, have students create a poster, dramatization, short video or other project demonstrating what they learned.
- Have students interview a trusted family member or friend over the age of 60 about their experiences with the lesson theme of school segregation. Have students report back on the interviews. Sample questions might include:
  - **a** Where did you grow up and go to school?
  - **b** Did you have classmates or friends of other races?
  - **c** Was your school or community affected by school segregation or other types of racism?
  - **d** What are your memories of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s? Did you participate?
  - **e** How do you think people's attitudes about race have changed since that time?
  - **f** Why do you think U.S. schools are becoming more segregated today?
  - **g** What do you think our country should be doing today about problems like segregation?
  - **h** Do you think it's important for people of different races to interact? Why?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Nast, Phil. "K–5 Brown vs. Board of Education and School Desegregation Teaching Resources," NEA, http://ftp.arizonaea.org/tools/lessons/brown-vs-board-teaching-resources-gradesK-5.html.
- "Resources for Welcoming All Families," Welcoming Schools, https://www.welcomingschools.org/resources/school-tips/diverse-families-what.
- State Bar of Georgia. "Brown v. Board of Education (1954)—Separate Is NOT Equal," YouTube video, 8:04, May 21, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aX9Dmo24_cc.

HANDOUT

Individual Acts or Government Acts?

NAME: _____

In The School is Not White! by Doreen Rappapo, the Carter family experienced different forms of racism:

➔ **Individual acts**—committed by ordinary people and mostly unplanned

➔ **Government acts**—built into the rules, laws and customs of society or local communities

The strips below contain acts of racism from the story. Cut them apart and create two groups—individual acts and government acts. Discuss each act carefully with your partners. If you think of additional examples from the story, you can write them on the blank strips.

Someone shot through the walls and windows of the Carter house.
There were all-Black and all-white schools in the family's town.
At school there was name-calling, mocking laughter, ugly words, angry faces, raised fists, spitballs and kicking.
The principal wouldn't let a white girl talk to Deborah.
Everything in the all-white school was crisp and new.
The plantation overseer ordered them not to attend the all-white school—he took away their house, jobs and credit.
No one would sit with the Black kids in the cafeteria or on the bus.
The all-Black schools were inferior.
No one would play with the Black kids in the school yard.
Pearl's teacher told her she smelled.
The school refused to answer Mama's letters and help her.

HANDOUT

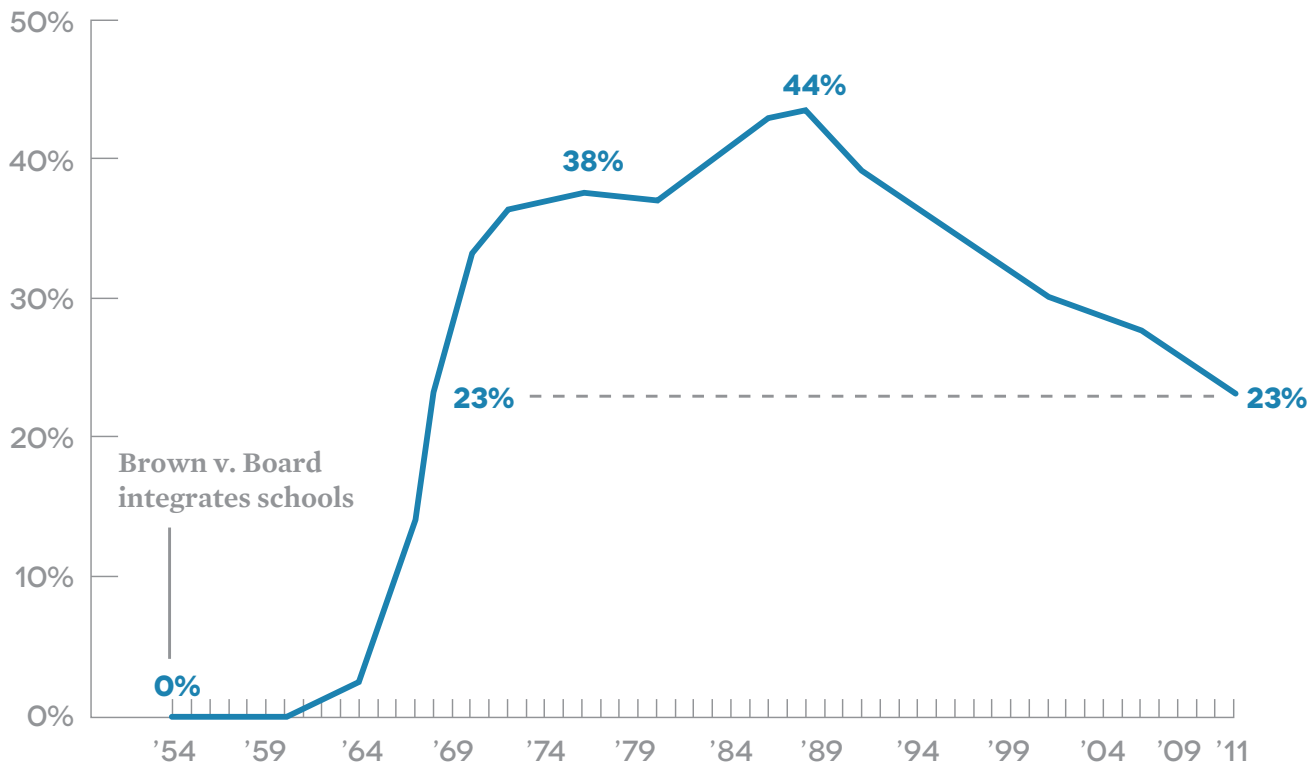
School Segregation Today

The graph below shows the number of Black and white students who share the same school in the U.S. South, where the Carter family in the story lived.

- In 1954, before *Brown v. Board of Education*, no Black and white students went to the same school (0%).
- In 1989, 44 out of every 100 Black students went to a school that was at least half white (44%).
- In 2011, 23 out of every 100 Black students went to a school that was at least half white (23%).

1. Based on the graph, what do you estimate the percentage to be today?
2. Do you think school segregation is still a problem today? Explain.

PERCENTAGE OF BLACK STUDENTS IN THE SOUTH WHO ATTEND SCHOOLS THAT ARE AT LEAST 50 PERCENT WHITE



Source: Alvin Chang, "The data proves that school segregation is getting worse," Vox, March 5, 2018, https://www.vox.com/2018/3/5/17080218/school-segregation-getting-worse-data.

Middle School | Grades 6–8

SUPPRESSING THE BLACK VOTE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How have Black people been deprived of their right to vote? How has this harmed our country?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify groups of people who have been extended and denied the right to vote in United States history.
- Explain how voting policies have been unfairly applied based on race in the U.S.
- Describe how policy and intimidation worked together to disenfranchise Black citizens.
- Examine a primary source document—a literacy test from the 1960s—to gain a deeper understanding of voter suppression tactics.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

45 minutes

MATERIALS

- AV equipment to show a video
- *Voting Rights* handout (one per student)
- *Alabama Voter Literacy Test (c. 1965)—Sample Questions* handout (one per student)

VOCABULARY

amendment
intimidation
policy
suffrage
suppress/suppression

Procedures

1 Comment that the right to vote is one of the most basic and important rights in the United States, a right that has not always been available to all. On the board, write the headings "1789" and "Today." In small groups, ask students to estimate what percentage of the population of the U.S. was eligible to vote in 1789 and what percentage is eligible today. Invite groups to record their responses under each heading. Reveal the correct answers: approximately six percent in 1789 and 71 percent today.[1] Discuss the following questions with students:

- ➔ What surprises you about these statistics?
- ➔ What groups do you think were left out in 1789? Why do you think they were excluded?
- ➔ What events in our country's history led to the expansion of voting rights?

NOTE

In 1789, only property-owning or tax-paying white males could vote. Today, all U.S. citizens age 18 or older can vote, though some states limit the voting rights of people with criminal convictions.

2 Distribute the *Voting Rights* handout to students and review the instructions. Show TED-Ed's *The Fight for the Right to Vote in the United States* [4:30]: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9VdyPbbzII. Pause the video to highlight important points and allow students to take notes. Following the video, give students time to complete the "WHO COULD NOT VOTE?" column on the handout in small groups. Review student responses and answer any questions they may have.

NOTE

The video states that felons cannot vote, but this varies by state. For information on your state's policy, see *Felon Voting Rights* at http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights.aspx.

3 Point out this fact from the video: In 1892, after the 15th Amendment extended voting rights, six percent of Black men in Mississippi were registered; in 1960, that number decreased to one percent. Ask students what policies (plans of action) were put into place—even after the law had changed—to suppress voter registration. (The video highlights poll taxes, literacy tests, and voter intimidation.)

1 TED-Ed, "The fight for the right to vote in the United States," November 5, 2013, video, 4:30, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9VdyPbbzII.

NOTE

A copy of the original literacy test is available at https://www.crmvet.org/info/litques.pdf. It can be projected as you review answers so students can view the primary source.

4 Tell students that they will take a literacy test given to Black citizens in Alabama in the 1960s. Inform them that they will have eight minutes to work independently on the test, that it will be graded and that three or more wrong answers will be considered a failing grade. Distribute the handout, *Alabama Voter Literacy Test (c. 1965)—Sample Questions*, and have students begin. After eight minutes, have them stop work and allow them to grade their own tests using the answer key below. Ask students to raise their hands if they passed the test.

Answer Key: Alabama Voter Literacy Test (c. 1965)—Sample Questions

1. Collection of income taxes
2. True
3. No
4. United States
5. Two
6. Senate
7. A duty
8. Two
9. 12 noon
10. Ten
11. Vice president
12. No
13. Naturalization
14. True
15. The president

5 Show the following clip from the 2015 film *Selma* [1:05], which depicts a woman attempting to register to vote in Alabama in 1965: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YRUUFYeOPI. Discuss some of the following questions:

- Based on the test you took, what percentage of our class would have been eligible to vote in the 1960s South? What is your reaction to the built-in unfairness of the test and the process?
- How did it make you feel to take the test, even knowing the stakes were low? How must it have felt to Black people in that era, for whom the stakes were high?
- In the video clip, what did you notice about the body language and tone of the administrator? What did his charge that she was "making a fuss" reveal about his world view?
- What did you notice about the body language and tone of the Black woman? What might have been the consequences for Black people who stood up to authority figures during that era?

Discussion Questions

1. What is the power in being able to vote? How does it harm our country when some groups are denied that power?
2. What groups have been denied the right to vote in U.S. history? Why and how was this done?
3. If the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1870) provided voting rights for Black men and the 19th Amendment (1920) gave voting rights to women, what policies and practices prevented them from voting?
4. What is the women's suffrage movement? How were Black women doubly challenged in winning the right to vote?
5. How are the votes of Black people and other groups still suppressed in the U.S. today? Why do you think voter suppression is still a problem in the 21st century?
6. The video noted that today only 60% of people who can vote do. Why do you think so few people vote?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Civil Rights Movement, "Voting Rights: Are You 'Qualified' to Vote? Take a 'Literacy Test' to Find Out," https://www.crmvet.org/info/lithome.htm.
- Onion, Rebecca. "Take the Impossible 'Literacy' Test Louisiana Gave Black Voters in the 1960s," Slate.com, June 28, 2013, https://slate.com/human-interest/2013/06/voting-rights-and-the-supreme-court-the-impossible-literacy-test-louisiana-used-to-give-black-voters.html.
- PBS, "Eyes on the Prize: (Part 5) Mississippi—Is This America? (1962–1964)," YouTube video, 55:45, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aP2A6_2b6g8.

Lesson Extensions

- Have students examine the primary source literacy tests and voter applications on the Civil Rights Movement site at https://www.crmvet.org/info/lithome.htm. Assign them to write a report, with specific examples, about the ways in which Black citizens were treated unfairly and prevented from exercising their right to vote.
- Read about and discuss with students the problem of voter suppression today, especially the ways in which it impacts people of color and poor people. See, for example, "Teaching the Truth About Voter Suppression" on the Teaching Tolerance website at https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/teaching-the-truth-about-voter-suppression.

HANDOUT

Voting Rights

NAME: _____

As you watch *The Fight for the Right to Vote in the United States*, keep track of who could vote during each time period in column one. After the video, record who could not vote during each period in column two.

YEAR	COLUMN ONE WHO COULD VOTE? (Answer while watching the video)	COLUMN TWO WHO COULD NOT VOTE? (Answer after watching the video)
1789		
1830s		
1850s		
1890s		
1920s		
1960s		
1970s		

HANDOUT

Alabama Voter Literacy Test (c. 1965)—Sample Questions

NAME: _____

1. Which of the following is one of the duties of the United States Internal Revenue Service?
   a) _____ passing legislation
   b) _____ collection of income taxes
   c) _____ giving welfare checks
2. Law requires that "In God we trust" be placed on all money issued in the United States. (True or False)
3. Does the population of the state affect the amount of individual or corporate income taxes which may be levied on its citizens? (Yes or No)
4. Who pays members of Congress for their services, their home states or the United States? _____
5. How many senators are elected from each state? _____
6. What body can try impeachments of the president of the United States? _____
7. Check the applicable definition for responsibility:
   a) ____ a duty
   b) ____ a speech
   c) ____ a failure
8. If a person charged with treason denies his guilt, how many persons must testify against him before he can be convicted? _____
9. At what time of day on January 20 each four years does the term of the president of the United States end? _____
10. If the president does not wish to sign a bill, how many days is he allowed in which to return it to Congress for reconsideration? _____
11. What officer is designated by the Constitution to be president of the Senate of the United States? _____
12. Can the state coin money with the consent of Congress? (Yes or No)
13. In addition to becoming a U.S. citizen by birth, a person may become a citizen by:
   a) ____ immigration
   b) ____ naturalization
   c) ____ voting
14. The first sentence of the United States Constitution is called the Preamble. (True or False)
15. Who is the commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States? _____

SOURCE: Civil Rights Movement Archive, "Alabama Voter Literacy Test (c. 1965)," https://www.crmvet.org/info/littest.htm.

High School | Grades 9–12

RACE AND PUBLIC POLICY: "CONSTRUCTING WHITENESS" WITH SEGREGATED HOUSING POLICY

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How has housing policy been used as a tool of racism in the United States?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Explain the difference between a law and a policy.
- Identify examples of laws and policies that have promoted racial segregation and inequality.
- Discuss racism and segregation in U.S. housing policy and its impact on Black Americans.
- Analyze primary source material on "redlining" in the U.S. in the 1930s and 1940s.
- Connect contemporary housing patterns and their historical antecedents.

LEARNING STANDARDS

See the standards alignment chart to learn how this lesson supports New Jersey State Standards.

TIME NEEDED

60 minutes

MATERIALS

- AV equipment to show a video
- *The House We Live In* handout (one per student)
- *Redlining in Essex County, NJ (1940)* handout (one per student)

VOCABULARY

FHA	policy	segregation
GI Bill	redlining	

Procedures

1 Have students engage in a turn-and-talk in response to the following questions: "What is the difference between a law and a policy? What are examples of laws and policies that affect our lives?" Discuss students' responses and make sure they understand the following distinctions:

- ➔ A law is a formal procedure that must be followed; it is usually aimed at ensuring justice and is enforced through a justice system, including the police and the courts. Examples that govern students' lives include minimum ages for working, voting and driving, as well as regulations against drug use.
- ➔ A *policy* is a set of guidelines or plan of action for achieving certain goals. It is not a law, but can lead to new laws. Examples include school attendance, cellphone use, dress codes and respectful use of social media.

2 Review the definition of *segregation* (the act of keeping different racial groups separate from each other) with students: Ask them to identify ways that segregation of Black people has been enforced in our country through laws and policies, past or present. List their thoughts on the board (see examples below). Help them clarify ideas and emphasize that laws and policies have worked together throughout our country's history to produce racial inequality.

LAWS	POLICIES
— Black people had to attend separate schools.	— There have been tests, taxes, voter ID checks and other ways to keep Black people from voting.
— Black people were not allowed to marry white people.	— Banks have made it hard for Black people to get loans.
— Black people were barred from voting.	— Some schools have had unfair admissions policies based on race.
— Black people had to sit in separate sections on the bus.	
— Black people had to use separate water fountains and bathrooms.	

NOTE

The full version of *The House We Live In* (approximately 55 minutes) can be found online at https://vimeo.com/265756935.

3 Distribute copies of *The House We Live In* handout to each student and review the instructions. Divide the class into four groups and assign each one of the categories on the handout. Explain that they will watch a video clip exploring how housing policy has fostered segregation and racial inequality throughout our country's history. Show *Race: The Power of an Illusion, Episode 3—The House We Live In* [6:04]: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW764dXEI_8. Pause the video at key spots to highlight important points and allow students to take notes.

4 After the video, divide students into small groups of four so each group contains students who have focused on a different category on the handout. Direct them to share the quote, question and graphic they recorded, and to describe how their responses address their assigned topic. Circulate and help groups process key information from the video clip.

NOTE

If laptops or tablets are available, this exercise can be done online at "Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America": https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=4/40.953/-105.499. Users can search for a city, then click on neighborhoods for demographic and descriptive information.

5 Have students remain in their small groups and distribute a copy of *Redlining in Essex County, NJ (1940)* to each student. Review the introduction together, explaining that the chart and map contain primary source information demonstrating how redlining was used in one county in New Jersey. Direct groups to read through the materials and highlight evidence of bias or unfairness in the lending industry at that time.

6 Conclude the lesson by reviewing the evidence students identified in the redlining source material, and by discussing some of the questions listed on the following page.

Discussion Questions

1. How did World War II and the GI Bill lead to new economic opportunities? How were the opportunities different for white people and people of color?
2. How did suburbs like Levittown represent the American Dream for some people and a bad dream for others?
3. How did the U.S. government "racialize" or create inequality in housing?
4. Where does the term "redlining" come from? How did this practice worsen patterns of segregation?
5. How did housing policy contribute to the gap in net worth or wealth between Black and white people?
6. What are the benefits of home ownership? What are the consequences of being left out of this opportunity?
7. What advantages or disadvantages do people have when they live in a community that consists of only people like themselves?
8. Is your community segregated racially? What do you think contributes to residential segregation in today's world?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Clark, Adam, "N.J. schools are among the most segregated in U.S. This lawsuit could change that," nj.com, last modified January 20, 2019, https://www.nj.com/education/2018/05/lawsuit_calls_for_statewide_desegregation_of_nj_sc.html.
- Massey, Douglas S. and Denton, Nancy, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
- Jackson, Kenneth T., "Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream: How Washington Changed the American Housing Market" in *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 190–218.
- Rothstein, Richard, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017).
- Teaching Tolerance, "Toolkit for 'Segregation by Design'" https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2018/toolkit-for-segregation-by-design.
- *This American Life*, "House Rules," aired November 22, 2013, https://www.thisamericanlife.org/512/house-rules.

Lesson Extensions

- The title of *The House We Live In* is taken from a 1940s short film called *The House I Live in*, starring Frank Sinatra (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhPwtnGviyg). It was made to combat antisemitism at the end of World War II. Though the film promotes a message of inclusion, it uses derogatory language in reference to Japanese people and is silent on issues of interracial understanding. Have students watch the film and discuss its merits and drawbacks within the context of the 1940s. Then have them update one or more stanzas of the title song to reflect an inclusive message by today's standards. (See the original lyrics at https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/franksinatra/thehouseilivein.html).
- Investigate the legacy of housing policy set in the early and mid-20th century, and how it continues to perpetuate racial segregation and inequality today. Have students listen to *House Rules*, a multi-part radio series from *This American Life*: https://www.thisamericanlife.org/512/house-rules. The series, featuring the voices of New York City residents, explores the "destiny of your address" and how where you live can dictate education, health, employment and other opportunities. In response, students might journal about their own experiences related to residential segregation or create their own short video about its consequences in today's world.

HANDOUT

The House We Live In

NAME: _____

As you watch *The House We Live In*, consider the questions for your assigned category. In the box, record a quote, a question and a graphic (a symbol or illustration) in response to the questions.

Back from the War → What role did returning soldiers from World War II play in the creation of new housing policy? → What was the FHA and how did FHA policy lead to inequality?	**Life in Suburbia** → How did the suburbs represent the new American dream? → Why wasn't this dream within reach for all Americans?
Redlining → What was redlining and who created it? → How was racism built into the system for rating neighborhoods?	**Our Net Worth** → If you are a homeowner, how is your home like a savings bank? → How did housing policy create big gaps in net worth or wealth between white people and people of color?

HANDOUT

Redlining in Essex County, NJ (1940)

During the 1930s and 1940s, it was common for real estate professionals to assign grades to local neighborhoods. The grades were based on quality of the land and homes, and also on the income, racial and ethnic backgrounds of the residents. These grades would be turned into color-coded maps that reflected "mortgage security." Neighborhoods receiving the highest grade of "A" (green) were judged to pose the least risk for banks when they were deciding who should receive loans and which areas were safe investments. Those receiving the lowest grade of "D" (red) were considered "hazardous."

The chart and map below show the ratings for four of the dozens of neighborhoods in Essex County, NJ in 1940. As you review them, highlight sections that show bias or unfairness in the lending industry.

AREA	GRADE	POPULATION	DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AREA
A22 Glen Ridge—Ridgewood Ave., North	A / Green	Shifting or Infiltration: None Foreign Families: 0% Nationalities: Negro: 0 Class and Occupation: White collar—business executives, etc. Est. income $5000–50,000	Terrain is level and fairly high. All city facilities, good schools, etc. Excellent transportation of all kinds including commutation to New York City. Highly restricted to one-family dwellings. Land improved 80%. This area embraces the newer end of a town which is strictly and entirely high grade residential. Houses are all of good type up to high priced ones. Most of the inhabitants are substantial business men of Newark or New York City. The town has all the characteristics of a first grade suburban area which is still growing.
B36 Glen Ridge—North Side	B / Blue	Shifting or Infiltration: None Foreign Families: 0% Nationalities: Negro: 0 Class and Occupation: White collar Est. income $2500–10000	High and level- 100% improved. All city facilities. Convenient to everything including commutation to New York City. Formerly a desirable section in a very high grade residential town. Houses are substantial although of considerable age. While poorer neighborhoods are pressing from the west, those to the north and east are very high class, so that this area can still claim a degree of desirability.
C32 Bloomfield	C / Yellow	Shifting or Infiltration: None Foreign Families: 25% Nationalities: Italian Negro: Few Class and Occupation: Mixed—white collar—labor Est. income $750–2000	Level terrain, approximately 90% improved. All city facilities, schools, etc. Good transportation of all kinds including to Newark and New York City. This area of substantial age is a mixture of one and two family houses of modest type. There are also a few apartment houses of quite good class on Franklin St. On the east section borders on a poor section of Newark. While the neighborhood is slowly going down-hill, it has some attraction in the way of convenience for workers in local industries; easy access to Newark; and good commuting facilities to New York City. The few negroes are concentrated on John St. in the northeast corner of the area.
D4 Newark—"Third Ward" etc.	D / Red	Shifting or Infiltration: Many on relief Foreign Families: 20% Nationalities: Italian Negro: 70% Class and Occupation: Labor; Est. income $500–1500	This is Newark's worst slum section and embraces a large area adjacent to the downtown business district. A few small portions were good residential many years ago. About 45% of the structures are tenements and low-grade flats. Considerable demolition and boarding-up has taken place. Institutional holdings are heavy and ultimate disposition is a problem. Sales have been made, some to negroes, some with the help of B/L shares at discounts. It is an area of minimum values and useful only to those in lowest income brackets who need to be in walking distance of work. A slum clearance—US Housing—is under way on Orange Street, others are proposed.

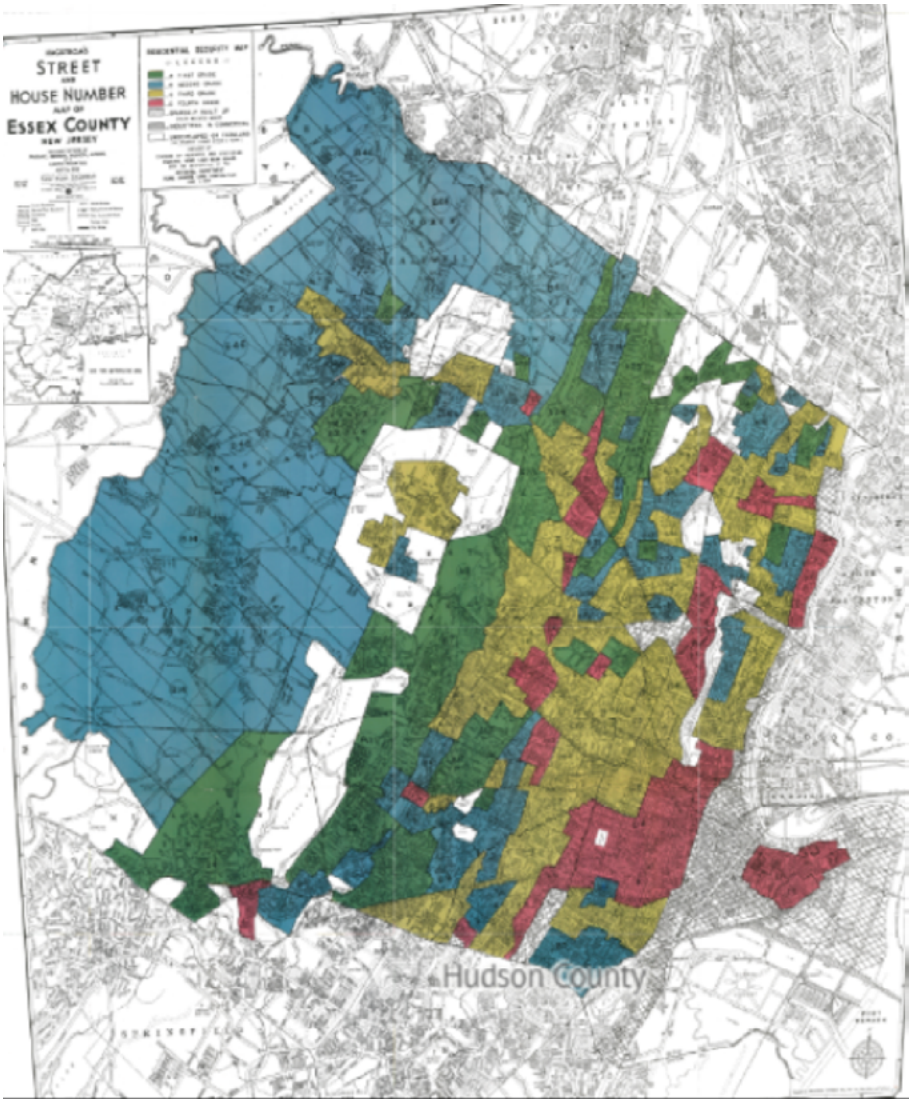
SOURCE: The Digital Scholarship Lab, "Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America," https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=10/40.793/-74.629&city=essex-co.-nj&area=A30.

HANDOUT

Redlining in Essex County, NJ (1940)

NAME: _____

AREAS BY GRADE		
Green	A "Best"	20%
Blue	B "Still Desirable"	50%
Yellow	C "Definitely Declining"	21%
Red	D "Hazardous"	9%
Population: 837,340 (18% Foreign-born white)		



SOURCE: The Digital Scholarship Lab, "Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America," https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=10/40.793/-74.629&city=essex-co.-nj&area=A30.

Alignment of Lessons to NJ Student Learning Standards, Social Studies

UNIT 1

GRADES 3–5	LESSON		
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	Uncovering Our African Past	The Social Construction of Race	Racism in Rules and Laws
6.1.5.CivicsPD.2: Explain how individuals can initiate and/or influence local, state, or national public policymaking (e.g., petitions, proposing laws, contacting elected officials).			✓
6.1.5.CivicsPD.3: Explain how and why it is important that people from diverse cultures collaborate to find solutions to community, state, national, and global challenges.		✓	✓
6.1.5.Civic.DP.1: Using evidence, explain how the core civic virtues and democratic principles impact the decisions made at the local, state, and national government (e.g., fairness, equality, common good).			✓
6.1.5.CivicsDP.2: Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g., fairness, civil rights, human rights).			✓
6.1.5.CivicsPR.4: Explain how policies are developed to address public problems.			✓
6.1.5.CivicsHR.2: Research and cite evidence for how the actions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other historical civil rights leaders served as catalysts for social change, inspired social activism in subsequent generations.			✓
6.1.5.CivicsHR.4: Identify actions that are unfair or discriminatory, such as bullying, and propose solutions to address such actions.			✓
6.1.5.CivicsCM.1: Use a variety of sources to describe the characteristics exhibited by real and fictional people that contribute(d) to the well-being of their community and country.			✓
6.1.5.GeoPP.6: Compare and contrast the voluntary and involuntary migratory experiences of different groups of people and explain why their experiences differed.	✓		
6.1.5.EconET.1: Identify positive and negative incentives that influence the decisions people make.		✓	✓

GRADES 3–5

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	LESSON: Uncovering Our African Past	LESSON: The Social Construction of Race	LESSON: Racism in Rules and Laws
6.1.5.HistoryCC.2: Use a variety of sources to illustrate how the American identity has evolved over time.		✓	
6.1.5.HistoryUP.6: Evaluate the impact of different interpretations of experiences and events by people with different cultural or individual perspectives.			✓
6.1.5.HistoryUP.7: Describe why it is important to understand the perspectives of other cultures in an interconnected world.		✓	✓

GRADES 6–8

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	LESSON: Mapping Our Roots	LESSON: How Would You Identify?	LESSON: Suppressing the Black Vote
6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a: Cite evidence to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and decisions of early administrations of the national government met the goals established in the Constitution.			✓
6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a:Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.		✓	✓
6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.a: Analyze the effectiveness of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution from multiple perspectives.			✓
6.2.8.GeoPP.1.b: Use maps to examine the impact of the various migratory patterns of hunters/gatherers that moved from Africa to Eurasia, Australia, and the Americas.	✓		
6.3.8.CivicsHR.1: Construct an argument as to the source of human rights and how they are best protected.		✓	✓

GRADES 9–12

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	LESSON: Africa: Global Perception	LESSON: The Social Construction of Race	LESSON: Race and Public Policy
6.1.12.HistoryUP.2.c: Explain why American ideals put forth in the Constitution have been denied to different groups of people throughout time (i.e., due process, rule of law and individual rights).			✓