



Lesson Plan:

Cemetery Spotlight: Rose Cemetery

Subject Area: American History, African American History, Florida History

Grades: 9-12

Theme: A Clash of Communities: Desegregation in Tarpon Springs

Student Learning Objectives:

- 1) Students will analyze secondary sources to evaluate the conflicts that emerged after Brown. vs. Board of Education.
- 2) Students will compare oral histories to determine continuities and changes of racial discrimination after desegregation.
- 3) Students will create artwork to illustrate the impacts of desegregation on the community of Tarpon Springs.

Cemetery Overview:

Rose (Hill) Cemetery is a historically segregated cemetery in Tarpon Springs, and as of 2023, the oldest known active segregated cemetery in Pinellas County. The region of Tarpon Springs was originally settled by Bahamian sponge fishermen. These men and generations of African American Pinellas residents dating back to the late 1800s are buried at Rose (Hill). There are approximately 600 grave markers, although it is estimated to have over 1000 burials. Rose (Hill) was originally a segregated part of Cycadia Cemetery. The Lake Butler Villa Company, which owned much of early Tarpon Springs real estate, transferred ownership of the cemetery to the Rose Hill Association. The name was later changed to Rose Cemetery to not conflict with Rose Hill Memorial Park in Tampa. Though Cycadia Cemetery receives local government funding, Rose (Hill) Cemetery instead relies on community volunteers and donors for funding and maintenance. Activists and community members work to preserve the culture and history of a once segregated community. Rose (Hill) has gone through periods of disrepair and revival throughout the 20th century and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2018.

Curricular Connections

VA.912.S.1.3 Interpret and reflect on cultural and historical events to create art.

LAF.

SS.912.A.1.2

Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify author, historical significance, audience, and authenticity to understand a historical period.

SS.912.A.5.10: Analyze support for and resistance to civil rights for women, African Americans, Native Americans, and other minorities.

SS.912.A.5.12: Examine key events and people in Florida history as they relate to United States history.

Learning Activities Sequence

Lesson Opener: Visual Thinking Strategy

Display slide 1 on the board.

Say: *What is going on here? What is happening in this picture?*



Some suggested follow up questions are:

- What age do the students appear to be?
- Are they different ages?
- What do you think the room is for?
- How much space is there?

Reveal that this is a classroom in a segregated school in Tarpon Springs, Florida called Union Academy. This building was very small, referred to

by students as a “chicken coup.” Ask students: what is a segregated school?

- Allow students to answer. If necessary, a follow up question could be: why do all of the students appear to be African American?

Reveal that American segregation was based on race and states passed laws that separated people based on race and created a racial hierarchy where the mistreatment, abuse, harassment and even murder of African Americans was legalized or ignored. There could be white and black water fountains, bathrooms, bus spaces, movie theaters, entrances to stores, churches, schools, and cemeteries. African Americans who disobeyed these rules were brutally punished or killed, and even those that followed the rules were not safe.

Display slide 2. Explain that this is Rose Cemetery, a historic segregated African American cemetery in Tarpon Springs that was originally a segregated area of a single cemetery, Cycadia. It was later formally divided when a road called Jasmine Avenue was paved and that served as a boundary to make into an entirely separate cemetery.

Display slide 3. Say: *Schools like Union Academy and classrooms like the one we looked at were segregated. This was allowed under a supreme court ruling called Plessy. vs. Fergusson, where the supreme court ruled that segregation was legal as long as the two different facilities for people considered white and African Americans was “separate but equal.” This was overturned in one of America’s most famous supreme court rulings, Brown vs. Board of Education.*

Say: *In Brown vs. Board of Education, segregation in schools was ruled as unconstitutional and all-American schools were required to integrate.*

Ask: based on the culture of segregation, how did southern states with segregation laws react to Brown vs. Board of Education?

Pass out the documents and graphic organizers. Say: ***Today, we are going to look at what the reactions were to Brown vs. Board of Education.***

Main Learning Activity: Document Analysis & Graphic Organizer

Go over the instructions to the graphic organizer. Students are to list examples of different community organizations and their actions in the graphic organizer. Be sure to point out that the first one is (White Citizen’s Council) is done for them. For document 3, they are to answer three questions in complete sentences. For documents 4 and 5, they are to complete the Venn Diagram comparing the experiences of “James” and “Ashley.”

Ask students to find a partner to work with. Give them **25 minutes** to complete the graphic organizer.

After 20 minutes, give students a 5 minute warning.

Lesson Closure

Debriefing Guide	
Below are recommended discussion questions on each of the documents. Many of these questions are open-ended and only provide some examples of answers, and not necessarily all.	
Documents 1 and 2: Organizations and Increasing Tensions	<p><i>1) How did most white residents in Pinellas County feel about desegregating schools? How did African American citizens feel?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ask students to support their answer with evidence from the text. If necessary, ask them to look in document 1. <p><i>2) Does anyone know what “political rhetoric” is? (pause to take answers). Rhetoric is a style of speaking to persuade someone. So what is political rhetoric?</i></p> <p><i>3) A common phrase you will hear on the news that is political rhetoric is supporting the “rule of law.” Do you think the people who resisted desegregation believed in the “rule of law?”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ask students to support their answer with evidence from the text. If necessary, follow up with: <i>“How did they protest? To what lengths were they willing to go to stop desegregation?”</i>

	<p>Additional follow up questions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What laws were they happy with? ○ Why were they now not happy with the law? ○ Did they follow the new law even when they weren't happy with it? ○ What does this say about people who might describe themselves as supporting "the law?" <p>4) Overall what was the purpose of the White Citizens Council and the Parents Against Forced Bussing?</p>
<p>Document 3: Neighborhood Schools and Bussing</p>	<p>1) What is a neighborhood school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allow students to answer that it is a school closest to them in their neighborhood that includes their closest neighbors and community. <p>2) What is the purpose of bussing? Why would the government pass laws requiring busses to drive further than necessary for desegregation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If necessary, ask students to think back to the very beginning of the lesson, to the classroom that was Union Academy. Ask: Thinking about the size of the classroom in Union Academy, why would people support bussing? <p>3) Read the third question on the worksheet. Say: "Some Pinellas County residents that opposed bussing claimed to want to "return" to neighborhood schools. Why was this not accurate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If necessary, ask students to reread the last paragraph in document 3. Ask: "Why were African American students being transported past schools they could have gone to in order to go to Union Academy or Pinellas High?" ○ Ask: Did the PAFB really want "neighborhood schools?"
<p>Document 4 and 5: Oral Histories of "James" and "Ashley"</p>	<p>1) How long after Brown. Vs. Board Education did James and Ashley's stories take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do you think this says about how long feelings of racial hostility/prejudice last for across generations? <p>2) In Ashley's story, how did treatment for her asthma problem relate to the issue with neighborhood schools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If necessary, a possible follow up question could be: Why was she driving all to another major town to go to the hospital?

	<p>3) <i>What did you find most surprising about these two stories?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>How do these stories relate to Brown vs. Board of Education and the reaction to it?</i>
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Share with the class: Today, James is a retired veteran and prominent Tarpon Springs community member who works on the board of the Rose (Hill) Cemetery Association to maintain Rose (Hill) Cemetery.

Ask students: *does segregation by law still exist?*

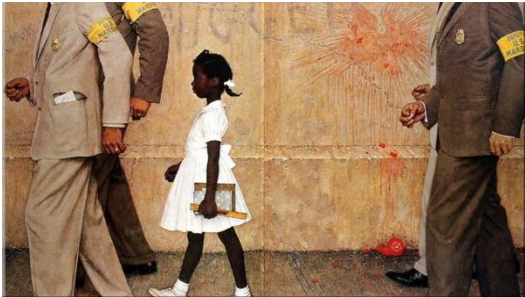
Though some segregation remains, called “de facto” segregation, or “segregation by a matter of fact,” it is unconstitutional to have “separate but equal schools” like Union Academy, or to openly discriminate against people based on race when offering services or employment.

Ask: *Why do you think Rose (Hill) Cemetery is still a segregated cemetery?*

Allow students to answer. Say: Rose (Hill) Cemetery is still “de facto” segregated, but “James’s” father is actually buried in Cycadia Cemetery, the all-Greek cemetery neighboring Rose Hill. He would not have had that option in 1950.

Ask: Can you think of any examples of “de facto segregation?”

Evaluation: Desegregation Artwork



Norman Rockwells" *The Problem We All Live With*, 1964.

Display slide 4. Ask students: *What is happening in this picture?* Allow students to answer.

Some follow up questions could include:

- What is the girl doing? Where is she going? How do you know?
- What are the people around her wearing? Who are they? How do you know?
- What do you notice in the background? Why is it there?



Ulloa Domingo. Racism at Little Rock. 1957

If time permits, show slide 5, and repeat the process of asking students what is happening in this picture.

- Why do you think the artist drew the things in the back ground that way?
- Where are the kids going? How do you know?

- *Did anyone read the caption under the picture in document 1? That was a famous riot against desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas. The students that were attending were called the “Little Rock Nine,” which are depicted here.*

Tell students they are going to create their own piece of art that shows the conflict that arose because of Brown vs. Board of Education and the fight for desegregation. Their art should visually depict some aspect of what they read in the documents. Ask them to name their art with an appropriate title, and write a single paragraph explaining the meaning behind their piece.

Distribute the materials, and give students the rest of the period to create their art.

Learner Accommodations

ESE and ELL students will benefit from graphic organizer use and visuals to organize the five texts.

Materials & Resources

Printed Documents

Graphic Organizers

Computer Printer Paper/White Paper

Colored Pencils/Markers

References

Bradway, R. (2018, June 5). *Norman Rockwell's "The problem we all live with" to be exhibited at the White House - Norman Rockwell Museum - the home for American illustration*. Norman Rockwell Museum.

<https://www.nrm.org/2011/05/norman-rockwells-the-problem-we-all-live-with-to-be-exhibited-at-the-white-house/>

Civil Rights Movement the Freedom Movement in art. Civil Rights Movement -- Freedom Movement Art. (n.d.). <https://www.crmvet.org/images/imgart.htm>

Schnur, J. A., "Sixty years of pirate pride : A history of Boca Ciega High School, 1953-2013" (2013). *COQEBS Background Materials*. 15.

https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/coqebs_background/15

Schnur, J. A. (1991) "Desegregation of public schools in Pinellas County, Florida," *Tampa Bay History*: Vol. 13 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.

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