“An Act to promote the comfort of passengers on railroads, street cars, urban, interurban, suburban cars, and at railroad stations”: Oklahoma’s Senate Bill 1

Inquiry Design Model (IDM) Blueprint™

Prior to implementing this lesson plan and its primary sources, review “Selecting Primary Sources: Criteria for Classroom Use” to determine if these selections are appropriate for your classroom. Many sources are included so that instructors may select based on their knowledge of their students.

https://primarysourcenexus.org/2012/04/selecting-primary-sources-criteria-to-consider/

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<th>Compelling Question</th>
<th>How do we determine what is important?</th>
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<td>Standards and Practices</td>
<td>OKH.5.2 Examine multiple points of view regarding the evolution of race relations in Oklahoma, including: B. passage of Senate Bill 1 establishing Jim Crow Laws</td>
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<td>Practice 2. Analyze and Address Authentic Civic Issues</td>
<td>Students will utilize interdisciplinary tools and master the basic concepts of the social studies in order to acquire and apply content understanding in all related fields of study.</td>
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<td>Staging the Question</td>
<td>Teacher will ask students what laws brand new states might consider passing. Teacher will observe the first few laws passed would probably be considered very important to the people of the state. Teacher will show photograph of signing of the Jim Crow law, sharing that this segregation law was the first law passed once Oklahoma became a state.</td>
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<td>Supporting Question 1</td>
<td>What opportunities and challenges did African Americans face as the twentieth century began?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative Performance Task</td>
<td>Students will use the featured sources to create a T-Chart describing the opportunities and challenges of the time for African Americans.</td>
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Students need to understand that white supremacy is powerful nationwide at the beginning of the twentieth century. They need to be aware that from 1896-1907, African Americans began moving out of the South, into cities, and built institutions and wealth. They did this within a framework of severe limitations, as the Plessy decision allowed cities and states to enact comprehensive systems of segregation, while smaller groups of actors repeatedly used violence against African Americans. The primary sources offer images of African American life that should allow students to recognize that African American experiences and material wealth varied. The secondary sources provide context and information on the challenges facing African Americans.
Featured Sources


P. “On the Beach, the Kids’ Ball Game, 1904-1910” https://www.historicnewengland.org/explore/collections-access/gusn/189873/


P. “East Side Pharmacy, Tennessee, 1907 “https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-f3de-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99

P. “Skaters at Rock Creek, 1905,” https://collections.si.edu/search/detail/edanmdm:siris_sic_9266?q=record_ID%3Dsiris_sic_9266&record=1&hlterm=record_ID%3Dsiris_sic_9266


P. “Mrs. Frances Smith; Keeper of Boarding House, Battle Creek, Mich., 1907.” https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-a1e5-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99

P. “Mrs. Anna Nemor; A great business woman, 1907.” https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-a1d8-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99

P. “African American class, 1906.” https://www.loc.gov/item/2002717904/

P. “Howard Law School Graduates, 1900.” https://www.loc.gov/item/2001699684/

P. “Mechanical Drawing at Tuskegee, 1902.” https://www.loc.gov/item/2014646488/


S. “Background: African American Experience at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century.” (included)
Supporting Question 2

As Oklahoma becomes a state, to what degree do leaders and their supporters in Oklahoma share in the racism of the nation?

Formative Performance Task

Students will briefly answer the questions: After reading the *Daily Oklahoman* articles, what arguments did supporters of the Jim Crow law use to try and convince others it was necessary? What arguments did the opposition use?

Students need to understand the Oklahoma legislators and their supporters shared racist beliefs with other Americans and acted upon those beliefs. They also need to be aware that Black communities mounted a strong defense. Students will read the newspaper articles and identify the central arguments used to gain support for the Jim Crow legislation. They will read a brief article on the law that informs them of the outcome.

Featured Sources


P. *Muskogee Cimeter*, December 20, 1907. (Included)

P. *Orlando Clipper*, December 13, 1907. (Included)

P. “Jim Crow Bill.” Letter to Editor by Joe Sherman. *Fairview Republican*, December 27, 1907. (Included)

P. “The Jim Crow Bill.” *Tulsa Democrat*, December 6, 1907. (Included)


Summative Performance Task

Argument

Students will respond to “In what ways did Oklahoma’s politicians and their constituents align with the dominant, national, white perspective on African Americans? Did you identify any differences?” with a strong thesis and specific, historical information to support their claims in an essay outline or verbal defense.
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What other measures do the architects of Oklahoma statehood pass to create a system of segregation in Oklahoma?

*School Segregation*
Appendix contains the original language in the Oklahoma Constitution establishing two school systems. For additional information, see [https://www.oklahoman.com/article/2884332/jim-crow-laws-in-oklahoma](https://www.oklahoman.com/article/2884332/jim-crow-laws-in-oklahoma)

*Denial of Women’s suffrage*

*Defeat of African American legislator*

*Grandfather Clause*

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Students can educate themselves about techniques and issues surrounding misinformation today.
Background:

The Elements of Jim Crow

_Plessy v. Ferguson_ and an expansion of Jim Crow segregation

In 1892, Homer Plessy challenged a Louisiana law enacting a “whites only” car in the first-class section of railway cars. This case reached the United States Supreme Court and the decision established the doctrine of “separate but equal” in public facilities. The opinion's author, Justice Henry Billings Brown, argued that separate treatment did not automatically result in unequal status. He stated that governments have the authority to make laws like this to protect the peace.¹ Cities and states throughout the South and West began passing segregation laws that strictly separated African Americans from whites in public facilities and private businesses. They were not afforded “separate but equal” alternatives, either. In Alabama, one county spent $15 on every white child's education and 33¢ for each African American student.² City governments refused to build parks in African American neighborhoods and those residents remained barred from the white parks. Laws and ordinances required segregation in hospitals and ambulances; most communities could not afford two separate health care systems, so they usually fully funded the white one and left the one serving the African American community to fend for itself. Most communities kept a separate Bible for African Americans to swear on before testifying.

*Disenfranchisement*

Because the Fifteenth Amendment granted the right to vote to African American men, it became increasingly important for the governments that built these systems of inequality and segregation to prevent African Americans from voting; otherwise, they would vote for people who promised to get rid of those laws. Communities did this through a variety of methods. Many passed a _poll tax_ that required paying a fee to vote. This eliminated a sizable number of rural sharecroppers because they did not have the money, however modest the tax, to spare. Many other communities used the literacy test to limit African American voting. This method took advantage of the limits in educational opportunity because of slavery and the minimal funding offered to African American public education during this time. In addition, the literacy test required the test taker to both read and “correctly” interpret any passage in the United States or state constitution. Whether the test taker “correctly” interpreted the passage fell upon the registrar, who knew to refuse African Americans regardless of how they answered. *In the nineteenth century, “franchise” meant the vote.*

Violence

The most important tool used to ensure that African Americans stayed away from the polls was also used to ensure that they conformed to segregation laws with minimal protest. Whites also employed violence against African Americans to scare them away from competing for jobs and housing in cities. Although whites directed many different types of violence against both individuals and groups since the days of slavery, lynching and riots emerged as two major forms of violence. Lynching is the killing of a person by a group that lacks the legal authority to do so. In the South, white communities rapidly embraced lynching as an instrument of terror to use on the African American community. Individuals that became targets of lynch mobs never had the opportunity to defend themselves. The white mobs used horrific violence to kill the victim and white communities viewed watching a lynching an entertaining family activity. In urban centers, another form of racist violence, riots, erupted in 1906 and 1908. In Atlanta in 1906, white mobs formed after newspapers published numerous false stories about black men

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attacking white women. These mobs attacked people, killed more than a dozen people, and injured hundreds. In 1908, more allegations of black men attacking white women resulted in a mob of about 5,000 whites resulted in the burning of African American neighborhoods and businesses and the killing of two African American men. Lynchings and race riots continued throughout the early twentieth century. One of the earliest and longest initiatives by the NAACP was the passage of anti-lynching legislation at the federal level.

Movement and Change

The hostility exhibited by white neighbors and expanding opportunities in cities fueled a sustained outmigration of African Americans from the rural South. Some elected to move west to the growing All-Black towns in Oklahoma and Kansas while others moved to cities in both the South and the North. Overcrowded and expensive living conditions and the effort of white workers to block African Americans from accessing industrial jobs on an equal footing meant conditions remained challenging for African Americans. However, this movement did build wealth and opportunity in the African American community. Some, such as Madame C. J. Walker and Maggie Walker became wealthy entrepreneurs and business operators. Others trained at historically black colleges like Howard University to become doctors, lawyers, and chemists. Thriving middle and upper classes grew. Institutions, such as the NAACP, faith-based institutions, fraternal organizations, and the black press, developed to support African Americans throughout the United States.

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### Graphic Organizer:
**Oklahoma’s Senate Bill 1**

#### Part 1

<table>
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<th>Challenges</th>
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#### Part 2

After reading the articles, what arguments did supporters of the Jim Crow law use to convince others it was necessary?

What arguments did the opposition use?
Primary Source:

_The Daily Oklahoman, September 13, 1907_

GIVES JUST

BOTH THE RACES

Negro Must Be Made to Know His Place—
Should Have Equal Privileges But
Entirely Separate

(By Roy E. Stafford.)

Give the negro a chance by making him understand that a line is drawn between the white and the black races.

Educate him in a school that is presided over by negroes and whose pupils are all negroes.

Give him entirely equal advantages of railway passenger facilities, but separate him from white passengers.

Provide a waiting room for him at every railway station in the new state, and make all appointments equally as good as those given the white man.

Permit him to better his moral and his financial condition, but let him realize always that he must not hope for social equality with the white man.

This is my attitude toward the negro.

I do not believe that he should be oppressed or that unnecessary hardships should be placed upon him. He has a right to live and he has a right to educate himself to a better understanding of

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO.
NEGRO MUST BE MADE TO KNOW HIS PLACE; IT'S ONLY JUSTICE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

what manslaughter means, but he should not be permitted to forget his position.

It was never intended by the Almighty that the races should be placed upon social equality and the foolish ideas that are being placed in the black man's head; to the contrary, by designating politicians, heled no good to either race. For the negro is an infant, figuratively as well as literally. His understanding of things is easily influenced. He is but so much putty in the hands of those of greater intelligence, and he believes what he is told to believe. His mind is as much a slave to dictations of his superiors as his body was a slave to masters who owned it before the war.

Give the negro a square deal. It isn't a square deal to teach him to aspire to things that can never be. Why not let him know the truth now? Tell him that when God ordained that his skin should be black it was intended as a sign to him that he and his kind should remain apart from the white man. Insofar as social position is concerned.

The outlooks of the country; those who are just coming from the darkness of ignorance are teaching men of their race to make moves to become more independent financially; to make their money; to build their own homes; to educate their children and in “the slave ship” among the members of their own race. This is the doctrine of Booker T. Washington, the greatest Negro in America.

In the larger cities, many training schools are being established for the benefit of the negro. These are taught how to fill the roles, how to cook; how to mind; how to make beds and, in short, how to do all the things for which they are fitted by their own, were loyal to the white race. They were happier than have been their offspring because they understood their position in life.

But conditions have changed. The negro of yesterday is not the negro of today. The new negro is seeking the advantages of a free civilization and it cannot be denied him, but keep before him the fact that there are limits beyond which he must not go. It is better for him to realize this.

When Oklahoma's first legislature broke up, a Jim Crow law should be passed providing for separate coaches and waiting rooms for blacks and whites.

As will be but a step in time.

The question is up to the American people.

What shall we do with the negro? Decide the negro NOW, when you may do so peacefully and before the need that is being planted in the negro's breast by designing republican politicians has had an opportunity to take root.

For no other purpose than that of controlling the vote of the black man
Primary Source:

*Muskogee Cimeter, December 20, 1907*

When Jim Crow street cars are put on in Muskogee then every Negro in the city should walk or ride in his own carriage. It is a duty we owe ourselves and the race.

T. S. Brown (T. S. E. Brown we presume) and B. L. Franklin of Ardmore, Oklahoma addressed an open letter to the legislature of Oklahoma asking for something. And as we see it, they have presented a case from a Jim Crow crow point of view. While Brown and his friends may be right yet when the whole article is read we cannot agree with them.

We do not wish social equality and neither do we enjoy seeing white men given the license to seduce Colored girls and snare Colored women without recourse, or redress on the — sound's. In fact all we ask is our rights under the law and we think that no self respecting Negro could ask for more or be satisfied with anything less.

It should not be necessary for us to petition for our lawful rights but if they are withheld then we should fight for them and use the courts and all other means at our command to secure them.
Primary Source:

_Orlando Clipper, December 13, 1907_

Jim Crow is a resident of Oklahoma at last. He is a pretty good kind of a fellow, too, and we hope his orders will be enforced as it is in some other states. It’s bad enough for a fellow to have to stand up for the accommodation of a white woman, but think of seating your best girl by the side of a big black negro while you either hunt a seat in the smoker or play the part of a strap hanger.
Primary Source:

*Fairview Republican, December 27, 1907*

Mr. Speaker,

I vote against the Jim Crow bill for various reasons, the first of which is, I do not and cannot see where it is an emergency at all; I am from Major County, we haven’t a dollar in the treasury, our schools were closing when I left home to come here and take up my duties, the above conditions were caused by the division of our county, which was against the will of the people, an injustice which will be remembered by them. I call long such conditions and need emergency, and there are numerous cases of this kind in the great State of Oklahoma that need immediate attention. This Jim Crow Bill has cost the State thousands upon thousands of dollars, which if it had been spent where needed would have done a great good to deserving people. I also voted against this bill because I believe it is right to do so. I have ridden in coaches with negroes all my life, and I do not think it would be right for me to stop and continue to do so for a few weeks or months longer. Another reason I have, I do not believe in discriminating against them as we do. There are colored people in this city that have as good clerical ability as a good many in this assembly, for instance, I will mention McCabe, who has handled the finances for years, and there are many others in this great State with the same fitness. Look at Booker T. Washington as well as many other noted men of color in this great Republic. I voted against this bill for another reason, and I am not ashamed to state it, and that is I have three brothers today silent sleeping in the grave—placed there by fighting for the freedom from bondage of these people of whom I speak; and I will not at this time deify and disgrace the name of Sherman by voting for a bill that is intended to eventually place them back in a more disgraceful bondage than that which my family fought to eradicate. These are my reasons, and I submit them to the people of Oklahoma for their approval. I care not.

Joe Sherman.

*Bowdre’s Reason*
The Jim Crow Bill

The Jim Crow bill has passed the house and of course it will go through the senate likewise. That much is a foregone conclusion as it is one of the proposed measures pressed by the democratic party during the recent state campaign.

No better advertisement for the new state of Oklahoma could be had than through the passage of such a law. It shows forcibly that Oklahoma is a white man's country and white men are bound to rule it. The overbearing disposition shown by the negroes of Kansas and other northern states toward the whites will not be tolerated here and a negro should be a good negro if he wishes to live in Oklahoma.

In passing this law the legislators show no animus toward the negro race. The bill provides that they shall have ample depot and car accommodations and so they have really nothing to object to. They should on the contrary be thankful to the first legislature for giving them separate apartments where they can enjoy the society of members of their own race unhindered by the association of the white people. There is no logical reason why such a procedure as this should not be equally pleasing to them as to the white inhabitants.

It goes further to show that the democrats are going to carry out every campaign promise they have made. Jim Crow was a leading issue and so Jim Crow is going through first of all. Other measures of probably equal importance will follow in the regular routine. The first legislature has started out to do its work well and thoroughly and will accomplish an inestimable amount of good.
Primary Source:

*Daily Ardmoreite, December 18, 1907*

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**AN OPEN LETTER**

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Oklahoma:

Most Worthy and Honorable Gentlemen: We venture to address you this open letter on the proposed "Jim Crow bill," so called.

Just now, since our admittance into the union, there seems to be an urgent and popular demand for the separation of the races (we mean yours and ours) in the common carriers of the state, that is passenger trains and street cars.

We are aware of the fact that many of you have gone to the legislature pledged to your constituency to see that the so-called "Jim Crow" bill becomes a law. We do not write you with the hope of having you break your pledges or promises to your constituency, but rather in an humble way, to insist that he serves his constituency best who serves humanity best.

It is not the nature of the colored man to intrude himself into the society of the white man, and generally, even when he is persistently insisted upon to do so, he consents very grudgingly. Hence it is therefore not because of any desire upon the races part to mix socially with your race, but because of our great desire to have our wives and dependent ones escape the humiliation and demoralization that seem to be the inseparable concomitants of the "Jim Crow" system.

In all the states where the separate coach law exists the different legislatures provide that "there shall be separate, but equal accommodation for persons of African descent etc., but how has this proviso been con-
Primary Source:

*Daily Ardmoreite, December 18, 1907*
Primary Source:

*Daily Ardmoreite, December 18, 1907*

Oklahoma’s Senate Bill 1

Primary Source:

*Daily Ardmoreite, December 18, 1907*
Primary Source:

*Daily Ardmoreite*, December 18, 1907

to prepare decently for us, and ought to be compelled to do so. Or shall we be required to ride in coaches that are used in part by the newsboy for his news and fruit stands and partly by the conductor for his counting room? Assure us that equal accommodation really means equal accommodation and we will cease to worry. assure us this fact and we will be unto you a most grateful people.

Given such a field, offer us all the encouragement possible, and we will contribute to the greatness of this splendid infant commonwealth in such a material way that your unborn generation will say that you bulled wisely.

Without respect to party or politics, we contend that there is a higher and nobler duty to perform than those incident to party fealty. The duty of man to man is a divine one, and the duty of an enlightened and Christian people to a people who by force, were attached from the soil of their nativity, and transplanted upon foreign lands to become citizens, is a duty to which all others are really subservient.

The colored man is a citizen of the American soil, by adoption. His home is here and he is here to stay. Now how shall you treat him so as to make him manifest an undiminished interest in this country? Oklahoma has a chance to teach her
Primary Source:

*Daily Ardmoreite, December 18, 1907*
philosophy, is shown in him who encourages the weak by lending to them manly aid, extending to them the olive branch of hope, peace and good will. Such a statesman builds not for the present only, but for all times to come.

We are most humbly yours,

T. S. E. BROWN,
B. C. FRANKLIN.
Ardmore, Okla.

(Note—The above letter was handed to the Ardmoreite yesterday, but too late for publication in Tuesday's issue.)
Appendix A

Oklahoma State Constitution
Article 1, Section 5

Sec. 5. Provisions shall be made for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools, which shall be open to all the children of the State and free from sectarian control, and said schools shall always be conducted in English. Provided, that nothing herein shall preclude the teaching of other languages in said public schools; and Provided further, that this shall not be construed to prevent the establishment and maintenance of separate schools for individuals of different religious persuasions.
Rubric for Summative Assessment

Did student answer the question with a clearly stated thesis?

Complex
Yes
No
Embedded but not clearly stated

Thesis Section
Points Possible
Points Awarded

Did student include at least three specific pieces of historical information as evidence to support the major points?

Comprehensive
Yes
No
Incomplete

Evidence Section
Points Possible
Points Awarded

Did student explain how the historical information demonstrated the major points?

Complex
Yes
No
Partial Analysis

Analysis Section
Points Possible
Points Awarded