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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1992 Volume I: The Constitution, Courts and Public Schools

The Brown Decision: Fact or Myth in Connecticut?

Guide for Curriculum Unit 92.01.09
by Henry A. Rhodes

This unit explores the history of desegregation in the United States. Before broaching the topic of school segregation an explanation of how the races became legally segregated in American society is provided, followed by a discussion of slavery and the Slave Codes. Next, the unit examines how Slave Codes evolved into the Black Codes and the means by which these Black Codes were eradicated. This is followed by an in-depth study of Plessy vs. Ferguson and the “separate but equal” doctrine which resulted. Several major court cases which helped legitimize Jim Crow in America are discussed. As the unit continues, cases specifically related to Jim Crow education, cases which helped entrench this system in American society and the cases which chipped away at this dual system of education are addressed. The unit also outlines the major participants and factors in the struggle to end segregation in the U.S. The unit concludes by examining the five major cases that were argued under the Brown title with their participants and the arguments put forth in each case. The five cases were: Brown vs. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas; Briggs vs. Elliot; Davis vs. County School Board of Prince Edward County; the Delaware cases of Belton vs. Gebhart and Bulah vs. Gebhart; and Bolling vs. Sharpe.

(Recommended for Social Studies, grade 8, and American History, grades 9-12)

Key Words

Afro-American School Desegregation Brown Board Education Law History

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