

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION *IN NORTH CAROLINA*

A TEACHING GUIDE FOR  
HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATORS



The North Carolina

African American

Heritage

Commission

K-12

CAROLINA

[www.CarolinaK12.org](http://www.CarolinaK12.org)

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This Teaching Guide was developed in partnership with the [North Carolina Department of Natural & Cultural Resources](https://www.ncdncr.org/) (NCDNCR) and [Carolina K-12](https://www.ncdncr.org/Carolina-K-12/), under the leadership the [North Carolina African American Heritage Commission](https://www.ncdncr.org/NCAAHC/) (NCAAHC).

For questions about this guide, contact Christie Norris, Director of Carolina K-12, at [cnorris@unc.edu](mailto:cnorris@unc.edu).

Photo Credit: image 1 ([www.digital.ncdcr.gov](http://www.digital.ncdcr.gov/)), image 2 ([www.davidcecelski.com](http://www.davidcecelski.com/)), image 3 ([www.hmdb.org](http://www.hmdb.org/)), and image 4 ([www.historicsites.nc.gov](http://www.historicsites.nc.gov/)).

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The history of Black education in North Carolina and the nation is complex, marked by an arduous struggle. From laws and customs that forbade enslaved people to learn, to a system of Jim Crow segregation in which Black schools were under-resourced, and finally court-ordered desegregation that often sent Black students to unfamiliar spaces, there have been countless legal and lawless moves to limit access to education for Black people. Yet, despite the restrictions and inequities faced, the value placed upon education by Black people across time is clear. From the connections between education, emancipation, and civil rights - to the agency, enterprise, and leadership shown in creating their own educational opportunities - Black communities have never relinquished the ongoing fight for educational access and equity. It is a story of resilience, resistance and hope; a story that all students should learn and one that all students can be inspired by.

The lessons and activities contained in this guide explore the educational barriers Black North Carolinians have faced throughout history, while also elevating the ways in which they tackled such barriers to form their own opportunities for learning, sometimes with white allies, and often completely on their own. The span of history this guide supplements is vast and includes the period of enslavement, Reconstruction, the Jim Crow Era, and desegregation. There are also many entry points for connecting how this history impacts our world today. With such a wide span of time covered, this guide cannot be entirely comprehensive. There are countless Black education leaders, numerous historically Black schools, and endless stories of resistance and resilience all around the state of North Carolina. It is impossible to include every aspect of a history so rich and deep in one resource guide. Thus, **this document should be considered simply a place to begin your long and curious journey into the history of Black education in North Carolina.**

“The story of education as a central focus of civil and human rights is an important framework for helping people understand their role in the culture, in society, and their political and economic rights. Education is fundamental to being able to advocate for individual rights and work in solidarity with other people.”

CALINDA N. LEE

National Center for Civil  
and Human Rights



Photo Credit: [www.the74million.org](http://www.the74million.org)

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

CONTINUED

Lessons are designed for implementation in high school social studies courses, with cross-curricular ideas for use in other subject areas. (Teachers in middle school grades are also encouraged to utilize these materials, though modifications will be necessary to ensure grade level compatibility.) The suggested duration for each unit, lesson, or activity will vary greatly based on each classroom's pacing guide, amount of time provided for discussion, activity choices (all of which can be tailored), etc.

### TEACHER PREPARATION

Each lesson plan in this series offers recommended resources for teachers to consult for gaining important background knowledge. While these resources are optional, they help ensure appropriate educator content knowledge on the topics to be covered, many of which are complex and interrelated. The following sources are recommended for providing a general foundation of content and pedagogy for the overall theme of Black education:

- [National Report on the Teaching of Reconstruction](#) | This report includes critical information that teachers should know and cover when teaching Reconstruction, an analysis of common mistakes and oversights in school curriculums, as well as numerous resources for better understanding and teaching this complex period of history. The report specifically addresses, for instance, that often “standards and curricula mention strides in education as an aim of the Freedmen’s Bureau, but do not adequately acknowledge the revolutionary nature of widely accessible, state-funded public school systems and their origins in Black frameworks for civic life.”
- [Teaching Hard History \(American Slavery\)](#) | An equally critical report, Teaching Hard History offers considerations and recommendations regarding the ways we should and should not teach about the period of enslavement.
- [Deep Rooted: A Brief History of Race & Education in North Carolina](#) | This report by [Ethan Roy](#) and [James E. Ford](#) provides an exceptional overview of the history of Black education in North Carolina, from enslavement through present day, and is a highly recommended source for reading for educators before engaging in the lesson plans contained within this guide.
- [The Rosenwald Schools of North Carolina](#) | This 30-minute film by Longleaf Productions provides an overview of Black education in North Carolina before Rosenwald Schools and details the Rosenwald initiative across the state.
- [Towards a Framework of Black Historical Consciousness](#) | This article conceptualizes teaching Black histories through Black historical consciousness principles.
- For additional reading recommendations specifically related to the history of Black education, see the list of “Reference Books” provided by the [Lost in Transition project](#), a celebration of Wilmington, NC’s black educational past.

**“But [history] is not exclusively a story of despair; hard history is not hopeless history.”**

DR. HASAN KWAME JEFFRIES





## PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TEACHING “HARD HISTORY”

Historical topics, events and/or periods that involve violence, injustice, oppression, racism, genocide, pain, and/or trauma are characterised as “hard history,” a phrase coined in the Southern Poverty Law Center’s [report of the same name](#). Such history also often reverberates into the present, making it potentially challenging to address in the classroom.

It is thus imperative that students understand [expectations for respectfully discussing periods of “hard history”](#) such as enslavement, Jim Crow, and segregation, all of which are addressed within this guide. While this history brings up difficult topics such as racism and inequity, such history represents a part of our shared state and national history that students must understand to comprehend its impact on the present, and to be empowered to create a better future.

That said, as Dr. Hasan Kwame Jeffries noted, “Hard history isn’t hopeless history.” These resources encourage students to critically examine and reconsider aspects of the history of Black education and related themes with a focus on resistance, Black agency, collaboration with white allies, resilience, hope, and empowerment. The stories of the educational leaders and persevering students mentioned throughout are stories we can all celebrate and be inspired by, using the lessons of their hard work and sacrifice as lights that guide us forward in the ongoing struggle for civil rights. As poet Amanda Gorman said,

“**Being American is more than a pride we inherit. It’s the past we step into and how we repair it.**”

To ensure students are able to respectfully and empathetically discuss such topics, teachers must ensure a foundation of respect, curiosity and empathy in the classroom. For suggestions and techniques, see Carolina K-12’s guide [Tips for Tackling Sensitive History & Controversial Current Events in the Classroom](#) and/or video module [Teaching Hard History, The Why and the How](#).

- Align to the Standards
- Share Clear Intentions & Teaching Goals
- Know Yourself, Your Students, & Your Community.
- Build Relationships (With Students, Their Families, & Community Allies)
- Teach Through a Lens of Hope & Empowerment
- Elevate Stories of Resistance & Resilience
- Maintain Family/Community Communication
- Be Transparent
- Take One Step At a Time
- Explore These Strategies (& More) [Here](#)

## MAKE LOCAL CONNECTIONS

As we work to better educate ourselves about less-known state and national history, making connections to local history is imperative. Uncovering the local stories that have shaped where students live can help them develop a strong sense of connection (to history and to their present community), historical relevance, identity, and agency. Since every North Carolina county contains schools, the study of education is fertile ground for making connections to history in your own backyard. This might mean researching the history of the closest Rosenwald School to your present school location (as described in the lesson [North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools](#)); researching your school district's process of desegregation (as part of the timeline activity in the lesson [The History of Black Education in North Carolina Part II: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#)); finding and inviting local education leaders into your classroom to speak about the history of Black education in your area; asking your students to research their own questions, such as "Who are our local schools named after and why?"; and more.

## PLANNING

**“The study  
of Black  
education is  
an excellent  
pathway to  
showing  
students  
that history  
happens  
here.”**

## MAKE LOCAL CONNECTIONS

## WHAT LOCAL LOOKS LIKE FOR ME



## PLANNING

[illegible]

## WORDS MATTER

When studying history, it is imperative to use language that recognizes all people's humanity, elevates the language of survivors and resisters rather than victims, and cultivates empathy. The words and terminology we use in the classroom matter. For instance, while there is no universal agreement on the terminology to use when discussing enslavement, this guide utilizes terms such as “**enslaved**,” “**enslaved person**,” or “**freedom seeker**” instead of “**slave**.” For more on this topic, see [The Language of Slavery](#).

“ Language is a powerful part of our identities and inclusion, so we'll leave you with this friendly reminder to ask what the people in your life prefer. ”

[SOURCE](#)

Photo Credit: Canva



Prepare students for historical language describing Black people that they may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with. While terms such as “**Negro**” and “**colored**” were utilized during certain periods of history, these words are not considered respectful or appropriate to use today. Instead, **African American** or **Black** are used. (For a discussion of these terms and their differences, including the debate over whether or not to use the phrase “**people of color**,” click [here](#).)

Students may also benefit from an exploration of the difference in terms “**integration**” and “**desegregation**.” Desegregation is achieved through court order or voluntary means. Integration refers to a social process in which members of different racial and ethnic groups experience fair and equal treatment within a desegregated environment. Integration requires further action beyond desegregation.

The words bias and prejudice, as well as discrimination and racism, are often used interchangeably; a review of definitions may be helpful:

- **Prejudice:** Preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience
- **Bias:** Prejudice (preconceived opinion) in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair
- **Discrimination:** The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex
- **Racism:** The marginalization and/or oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people

It might also be of interest to discuss the controversies surrounding words such as the “**n-word**,” and the term “**minority**” and its implications.

While engaging in complex discussions such as those outlined throughout this guide, it is worth a sidebar discussion with students that when learning history, and when considering the actions and views of “Black people” and/or “white people,” neither group is a monolith. In reality, any large group of people, composed of millions of individuals, will represent differing backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and opinions. So while historical discussions can often group an entire people into one position for simplicity, the reality is much more complex. [Differences in Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois’s views on education (covered in [North Carolina’s Rosenwald Schools](#)), and diverging Black views on desegregation (covered in [The History of Black Education in North Carolina Part II: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#)), are good examples.]



## LESSONS & ACTIVITIES

### The History of Black Education in North Carolina Part I: Enslavement to Reconstruction

Despite the legal and lawless moves to limit Black education throughout Enslavement, Reconstruction, and beyond, the value Black communities have placed on education has always been strong. In this unit, students will explore the educational barriers Black people faced throughout enslavement, as well as the ways in which Black people tackled such barriers to form their own opportunities for learning. Through class discussion, reading, examination of primary and secondary sources, and a creative research project in which students learn about a North Carolina leader in Black education, students will gain an overview of the rich history of Black education in North Carolina throughout the periods of enslavement to Reconstruction.

#### Topics Addressed

This unit provides an overview of education and its restrictions during enslavement; the creation of NC's public school system; education during the Civil War and Reconstruction; the Freedmen's Bureau; Freedmen's Schools; NC's Freedmen's Conventions; and the NC Constitutional Convention of 1868. A suggested list of Black educational leaders for student research projects is included who range in birthdate from 1770 - 1860.

### The History of Black Education in North Carolina Part II: Jim Crow & Desegregation

Throughout the period of Jim Crow and segregation, there were numerous efforts to marginalize the rights and educational pursuits of Black communities. However, equally constant was and is the resistance, agency & resilience Black people have exhibited in fighting for their rights, including the right to education. In this lesson, students will continue their study of the rich history of Black education in North Carolina, focusing on the period of Jim Crow and school desegregation. Through the exploration of oral histories, reading, class discussion, and an interactive timeline, students will gain a deeper understanding of the systemic barriers that Black people have faced in education, as well as the ways in which they have fought for educational equity and equality throughout history.

#### Topics Addressed

This unit focuses on education throughout the period of Jim Crow, from the 1880s into the 1960s, when North Carolina enforced segregation and restrictive social etiquette through "[Jim Crow laws](#)" and related customs. Topics covered include both the restrictions faced in obtaining equitable education by Black communities across these years, as well as ways in which Black communities created their own educational opportunities through HBCUs, Rosenwald Schools, and Black boarding schools. Individual experiences of desegregation are also highlighted via oral histories and prominent events such as the Hyde County Boycott (1968-69) are included.

**“The cause of freedom is not the cause of a race or a sect, a party or a class—it is the cause of humankind, the very birthright of humanity.”**

ANNA JULIA COOPER

## LESSONS & ACTIVITIES

CONTINUED

### The Purpose of Education, Black Boarding Schools, and Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown

Despite the oppression and injustice faced in the Jim Crow South, both in education and otherwise, a distinct tradition emerged to provide the best education possible for Black children: historically Black boarding schools. There were more than 100 Black boarding schools across the United States prior to the 1970s, with North Carolina's Palmer Memorial Institute being one example of many around the state. Palmer became a beacon of Black excellence, founded by educator, activist, and school leader [Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#). In this lesson, students will explore the life, work, and legacy of Dr. Brown, as well as the impact of Palmer (which transformed the lives of over 2,000 African American students between 1902 to 1971), through reading, partner and class discussion, and primary source analysis. Students will culminate their learning by designing an art installation that honors Dr. Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute.

#### Topics Addressed

Palmer Memorial Institute operated from 1902 - 1971 as a high-quality education option for Black students during Jim Crow. In addition to an exploration of Black boarding schools, with a look at Palmer Institute specifically, this lesson also addresses the educational philosophies and civil rights activism of Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown.

**“ I sit in a Jim Crow car, but my mind keeps company with the kings and queens I have known. External constraints must not be allowed to segregate mind or soul. ”**

DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

### North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools

In the early 1900s, segregation was entrenched across North Carolina, and educational opportunities for Black children were limited. However, a community-based movement, ignited by a collaboration between Black education leader and reformer Booker T. Washington and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, enacted with the support and contributions of local Black communities, provided the opportunity to overcome the systemic barriers to Black rural education across the state. In this lesson plan, students will explore the history of Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina, where more Rosenwald Schools were erected than any other state. Students will engage in reading, discussion, primary source review, and conduct their own local research to explore the ingenuity, collaborations, challenges, and legacy of the Rosenwald Schools, the Rosenwald Fellows, and the Rosenwald Fund.

#### Topics Addressed

In response to Jim Crow inequities, the Rosenwald Fund and the concept of Rosenwald Schools were born around 1910, with school construction taking place until 1932. The last NC school closed in the 1960s. This lesson covers the impetus behind and creation of the schools throughout these years, while also covering topics such as educational philosophies; Jeanes Teachers; the collaborative funding structure of Rosenwald Schools; Black musicians and artists that were part of the Rosenwald Fellowship, as well as a discussion of the concept of philanthropy in general (including the often overlooked role of Black philanthropy.) Also mentioned are the independent Black schools, outside of the Rosenwald initiative, that were established during Jim Crow and segregation.

# LESSONS & ACTIVITIES

CONTINUED

## North Carolina's Historical Black Colleges and Universities

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are institutions of higher education that were established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the primary intention of providing educational access to the African American community. Today, North Carolina is home to twelve such institutions and ranks as the second state in the nation with the highest number of HBCUs. From the stories of their founding and each institution's rich history, to their dedication to the struggle for civil rights, to their graduates who are changing the world each day, this lesson will provide students with an understanding of North Carolina's HBCU landscape and how these institutions are integral to the state's system of education, past and present. Students will culminate the lesson with a "deep dive" into one of North Carolina's HBCUs and create a brochure for the school based on their research.

### Topics Addressed

The majority of HBCUs originated between 1865-1900, with the greatest number of HBCUs started in 1867, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.



*Photo Credit: Fertile Ground*

Members of the Barge Hall House Council at Bennett College. c. 1963. From North Carolina Yearbooks Collection, North Carolina Digital Heritage Center.



*Photo Credit: Fertile Ground*

Winston-Salem State University Marching Band. c. 1955. From North Carolina Yearbooks Collection, North Carolina Digital Heritage Center.

“ Students, especially those students from HBCUs, played an important role in the civil rights movement in North Carolina. ”

### FERTILE GROUND: THE STORIES OF NORTH CAROLINA'S HBCUS



*Photo Credit: pulse.ncpolicywatch.org*



*Photo Credit: www.wunc.org*



*Photo Credit: www.wfmynews2.com*

# LESSON PLANS



## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## OVERVIEW

Despite the legal and lawless moves to limit Black education throughout enslavement, Reconstruction, and beyond, the value Black communities have placed on education has always been strong. In this unit, students will explore the educational barriers Black people faced throughout enslavement, as well as the ways in which Black people tackled such barriers to form their own opportunities for learning. Through class discussion, reading, examination of primary and secondary sources, and a creative research project in which students learn about a North Carolina leader in Black education, students will gain an overview of the rich history of Black education in North Carolina throughout the periods of enslavement to Reconstruction.

“Once you learn to read, you  
will be forever free.”

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK  
DOUGLASS, AN AMERICAN SLAVE,  
1845



Photo Credit: Canva

## TEACHER PREPARATION & BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- [National Report on the Teaching of Reconstruction](#): This report includes critical information that teachers should know and cover when teaching Reconstruction, an analysis of common mistakes and oversights in school curriculums, as well as numerous resources for better understanding and teaching this complex period of history. The report specifically addresses, for instance, that often “standards and curricula mention strides in education as an aim of the Freedmen’s Bureau, but do not adequately acknowledge the revolutionary nature of widely accessible, state-funded public school systems and their origins in Black frameworks for civic life.”
- [Teaching Hard History \(American Slavery\)](#) is an equally critical report with considerations and recommendations regarding the ways we should and should not teach about the period of enslavement
- For an overall history of Black education in North Carolina, see [Deep Rooted: A Brief History of Race & Education in North Carolina](#)
- [Towards a Framework of Black Historical Consciousness offers considerations for educators when teaching Black history](#)

## DURATION

- 2-3 periods

## GRADES

9-12

- Duration will vary depending on whether and how teachers break up the material. Each section can be broken up over several classes throughout one’s unit on enslavement and Reconstruction. The material can be implemented as a whole thematic unit on Black education from enslavement through Reconstruction

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## WHERE DOES THIS FIT IN THE CURRICULUM?

For NC Standards Alignment, [click here](#). This lesson plan provides an overview of education during enslavement; the creation of NC's public school system; education during the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Freedmen's Bureau, and Freedmen's Schools; NC's Freedmen's Conventions; and the NC Constitutional Convention of 1868. The suggested list of Black educational leaders for student research projects range in birthdate from 1770 - 1860.

- **North Carolina History & American History:** Teachers can break up the various [segments](#) as desired and as they fit within an overall unit on enslavement, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. The lesson also works well towards the end of such a unit, both to review and elevate the theme of the value placed on education by Black communities and an example of the barriers they faced
- **Civics & Economics:** C & E teachers can emphasize the history of public school funding, as well as the revolutionary legislative and civic aspects of Reconstruction (such as the NC Freedmen's Conventions and the NC Constitutional Convention of 1868.) This material also wraps into a study of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments
- **English Language Arts/Media Center:** There are many rich literature connections that address the themes of education and literacy during and after the period of enslavement. While the following novels are written for middle school-level readers, they still make excellent additions (either excerpts or the entire novel) in high school courses
  - [Copper Sun](#) by Sharon Draper
  - [Night John](#) by Gary Paulsen
  - [CROW](#) by Barbara Wright (teaching guide available [here](#))

## MATERIALS

- [Education as Emancipation](#), 2 minute video clip
- [John Chavis: An American Story](#), 4:30 minute video
- Overview Reading: [Emancipation & Black Education: From Enslavement to Reconstruction](#)
- [Document Analysis Worksheet](#) & [Document Set](#), available [here](#)
  - The Analysis Worksheet has space for responding to 3 documents; teachers can make multiple front/back copies for students, or have them recreate the chart on notebook paper
- Culminating project description/handout: [A Historical "YearBook" Highlighting Black Educational Leaders](#)

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Way Out is Back Through](#) podcast
- [History of African American Education in North Carolina](#) website (primary sources)
- [Public Education in North Carolina](#) website
- [Self Taught: African America Education in Slavery and Freedom](#) by Heather Andre Williams
- [The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935](#) by James D. Anderson
- [North Carolina Freedmen's Bureau, North Carolina Records](#) website (primary sources)

## RELATED LESSON PLANS

- [Freedom Seeking Across North Carolina](#)
- [Fighting for Freedom: Black Contributions to the Civil War](#)
- [Freedom Music: From Spirituals to Protest Songs](#)
- [Albion Tourg  e & the Fight for Civil Rights](#)
- [From Wyatt Outlaw to the Kirk Holden War](#)
- [The Wilmington Coup of 1898](#)

## PREPARATION

When working with young people, it is imperative to use words that elevate the humanity of those who were enslaved and cultivate empathy. This lesson plan utilizes “enslaved,” “enslaved person,” or “freedom seeker,” instead of “slave.” (For more on this topic, see [The Language of Slavery](#).)

“ For every year that the system of slavery existed, so too did resistance to slavery. Those enslaved defied their unjust situation in ways great and small, in every aspect of life. From subtle resistance, such as working slowly, breaking tools, or playing dumb - to more extreme examples such as arson, running away, and revolt, Black people constantly pushed back and sought freedom. ”

# PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## PROCEDURE

### The Connection Between Education & Emancipation

1. As a warm-up, project the following quote: "**Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.**" ~**Frederick Douglass** (*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, 1845.) Teachers should also have the song "[Oh Freedom](#)" playing in the background. Ask students to spend 2 minutes considering the quote and jotting down a response to what they think Frederick Douglass meant.



Photo Credit: African American Registry

“Children need to know their history, and their relationship to education, freedom, and full emancipation, in order to understand that they have a critical role in this process of education.”

DR. JOSIE JOHNSON  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST, EDUCATOR & PUBLIC SERVANT

2. Allow students to share their thoughts regarding what they think the quote means with the class and further discuss:

- Consider the song “Oh Freedom” that was playing. How did the song make you feel? What do you think its message is, and how does this connect to the Frederick Douglass quote?
- After the Civil War ended, how did formerly enslaved people engage in actual freedom? What do you think were some of the very first institutions created by newly freed, formerly enslaved people?
  - Allow students to discuss, letting them know that one major way freedpeople worked to actualize freedom was through the creation of schools. Despite having practically nothing, freedpeople pooled their resources to prioritize education and quickly had schools up and running.
  - According to historian [Eric Foner](#), “They pooled their resources — which were very meager — to hire a teacher, to find a building, to build a building, to use an abandoned building, to create a school. And at these schools, *everybody* is going... This is one of the critical definitions of freedom for black people: the ability to get an education.”
- When thinking about the word **education**, both currently and historically, what comes to mind?
- What are the various forms education might take beyond the walls of a traditional classroom?
- Why do you think enslaved and free Black people placed such a high priority on education?



# PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## PROCEDURE

### The Connection Between Education & Emancipation

3. Play the 2-minute video of Dr. Josie Johnson discussing the concept of education as emancipation, located [here](#). Before playing, let students know that Dr. Josie Johnson is an educator, author, and civil rights activist. She is a graduate of Fisk University, an HBCU in Nashville, TN. In this segment, she shares wisdom about the importance of education, historically and in the present. After viewing, discuss:

- Dr. Josie Johnson states, “Our ancestors believed in education, and they equated education with emancipation.” How does she explain this concept?
- What examples does she cite that illustrate(d) the power of education? (i.e., the constant effort to control or limit Black education, such as Southern legislation against educating Black people, punishments for efforts to educate Black people, etc.)
- Dr. Johnson goes on to say that “Children need to know their history, and their relationship to education and freedom and full emancipation, in order to understand that they have a critical role in this process of education.” What message is she conveying? What do you think is your “critical role in this process of education?” What examples can you cite that illustrate the power/importance of education today?
- Do you agree that sometimes young people don’t understand how important education is? Why or why not? What can be done to better help young people understand education’s importance?

4. Let students know that throughout history, Black people have valued and sought education, even throughout the many periods it has been denied. One of the best examples of this relentless dedication to education and educational advocacy can be seen in North Carolina’s [John Chavis](#).

5. Let students know that John Chavis was born free in Oxford, NC, around 1763 and enlisted in December 1778 in the Fifth Virginia Regiment, serving honorably for three years in the Revolutionary War. He went on to become a tutor to orphaned children and received training at Washington Academy (now Washington and Lee University) before he was recognized in 1801 by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. After serving as a missionary outside the state for several years, he was appointed minister to Presbyterian churches in Granville, Wake, and Orange counties. Throughout history, there is an ongoing connection between Black education and the **Black church**, as evidenced in John Chavis’s story. As an early and strong advocate of education in the missionary field, he went on to organize a school in Raleigh.

### Self-Determination & Black Agency: A Look at John Chavis

6. Play the 4:30 minute video [John Chavis: An American Story](#) then discuss:

- In what ways did John Chavis defy typical societal notions during his lifetime?
- John Chavis wrote to Wiley P. Mangum (a U.S. Senator from NC), “...prove that you are an American.” What do you think John Chavis’s concept of a true American was?
- Helen Chavis Othow, a descendent of John Chavis, says: “He had a great sense of purpose, a sense of responsibility to his community...he wanted to uplift those who were enslaved.” She later talks of his “revolutionary spirit.” What examples from John Chavis’s life exemplify this statement and his “revolutionary” spirit?

# PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## PROCEDURE

### Student Overview: Black Education from Slavery to Reconstruction

7. Explain to students that throughout the period of enslavement in America and into the Civil War, the education of enslaved people (as well as free Black people) was discouraged, discredited, and at times denied via law in the majority of Southern states. Yet, despite incredible risks, many enslaved people sought out education, teaching themselves or seeking others to teach them to read and write. Union occupations in the South throughout the Civil War, and the Union victory after the war, opened many windows of opportunities for free and newly freed Black people, Union soldiers, and northern aid societies to build upon the fertile foundation for Black education in North Carolina.

8. Provide students with the reading, [Emancipation & Black Education: From Enslavement to Reconstruction](#), and explain to students that they will be exploring this history in more detail. The reading is segmented into the following periods; each section has a guiding question that students should consider while reading. They should answer the question upon completing the section. *(Teachers can break up these sections into multiple readings across several class periods, based on individual classroom pacing guides.)*

- **Enslavement**

- Guiding question: Why do you think education, including learning to read and write, was so important to enslaved people? Why did many take the incredible risk to learn, despite the severe consequences that could befall them?

- **Free Black People**

- Guiding question: Free Black people made important contributions to society before and during the Civil War. Why do you think they viewed education as an important part of this?

- **The Creation of a Public School System (for Whites Only)**

- Guiding Question: In what ways was the public school system in North Carolina created to serve white children only? How did the foundation of inequality influence education in NC?

- **Black Education During the Civil War**

- Guiding Question: In what ways was the ground for Black education incredibly fertile as the Union occupied the south, and how did Black people make use of the opportunities Union occupation presented?

- **Reconstruction & the Freedmen's Bureau**

- Guiding Question: How did the Black church, and the collaboration between free/newly freed Blacks, Union soldiers, and northern aid societies, strengthen the foundation for Black education that already existed in the state?

- **The Freedmen's Convention, the 1868 Constitutional Convention, & Black Education**

- Guiding Question: Finally having the opportunity to serve in leadership roles, in what ways did Black legislators set out to improve education for Black and white children?

- **Black Determination in the Face of Backlash**

- Guiding Question: In what ways did those in power in the late-1800s push back against equal education for Black people, and why?

# PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

## PROCEDURE

### The History of Black Education: From Enslavement to Reconstruction

9. After students have read the material, lead the class in a discussion of their thoughts regarding the guiding questions provided. In closing, ask:

- What themes seem to be common/recurring throughout our study of this history so far? (Themes to spotlight include: the value placed on education by Black people throughout time; education as emancipation; agency, determination, and collaboration; deliberate exclusion and systemized inequities; the cycle of progress and backlash; etc.)

### Group Activity: Reviewing Primary & Secondary Sources

10. Tell students that they are going to review a Document Set in small groups, which will deepen their understanding of the history of Black education in the state. Let students know that the documents they will review are primary and secondary sources that span the period of enslavement through Reconstruction, with a few documents representing the early 1900s as a window to what comes next in this story, in which most of North Carolina's white leaders focused almost exclusively on the progress of white schooling with little regard for the success of Black people. Once again, however, Black people would continue to carve out and create their own opportunities.

- Optionally, teachers may want to review the [difference in primary and secondary sources](#) with students and instruct them to identify each source's type as they work.

11. Review expectations for productive group work, then provide students with instructions. (For instance, teachers may want to have one student in each group focus on one specific document, then have each student take turns leading their whole group in an analysis.) The amount of time students will need to work in their groups will be dependent upon the number of documents teachers have them review.

- The [Document Analysis Worksheet](#) & [Document Set](#) are available [here](#). The Analysis Worksheet has space for responding to 3 documents; teachers can make multiple front/back copies for students, or have them recreate the chart on notebook paper.
- Teachers can customize the [Document Set](#) as they see fit, omitting or adding resources. (Including a local resource from your particular area is highly recommended, if possible.)
- Teachers with access to classroom laptops may also want to consider providing this activity in electronic format.

12. After students have reviewed their Document Sets and discussed the questions, culminate with a class discussion:

- Earlier we discussed recurring themes. Which of these themes do you see represented in these documents? Are there any additional themes that you would add after reviewing these sources?
- Considering the few documents that were included in your packet that start to reach into the early 1900s, how do you think these themes will continue to stay in play? In what ways do you predict the entrenchment of Jim Crow and segregation will continue the struggle for access to equal and equitable education?
  - Let students know that they will eventually examine how the fight continues; teachers can utilize [The History of Black Education in North Carolina Part II: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#) to cover this material.

## PART I: ENSLAVEMENT TO RECONSTRUCTION

### PROCEDURE

#### Culminating Project: A Historical “Yearbook” Highlighting Black Educational Leaders

**13.** As a creative culminating project, tell students that they are going to be choosing and researching one Black person from this period of North Carolina history who represented a commitment to education. From teachers and political leaders, to school founders and early civil rights activists, students will tell the story of a Black person who valued and fought for the right to education. Tell students that they'll be putting a creative spin on this research project: since education is their focus, they will be designing their work as if it is a page in a school yearbook.

#### Culminating Project: A Historical “Yearbook” Highlighting Black Educational Leaders

**14.** Hand out the attached project description, reminding students that yearbooks serve to record, highlight, and commemorate. Their research spin-off from this favored tradition will involve creating a multi-generational yearbook that highlights Black educational leaders from North Carolina, across time, and across each of the state's 100 counties. Go over the requirements of the yearbook page they each will create as described on the [assignment sheet](#), answering any questions.

- While the assignment sheet provides sample people students may want to research, it is only a fraction of the Black leaders across the state that students could choose to learn more about. **To make the project even more relevant, teachers may want to have students specifically choose someone from their own locality to research.**
- In addition to their own school's yearbooks, teachers may also want to project a historic example of a yearbook. [Here](#), for instance, is one 1950 example from the all-Black high school Central High, in Goldsboro, NC.
- Teachers will want to decide the medium students will use to create their work (i.e., design on paper or via a technology application; if technology is allowed, determine if there are specific programs you want students to utilize.) Also, let students know how their work will be compiled and/or displayed. (For instance, teachers might display the final yearbook pages on a bulletin board, or combine the pages or electronic files into an actual book.)
- It is worth having a side discussion regarding the history of Black schools and their yearbooks, even though this is more connected to the period of Jim Crow and segregation. ([The History of Black Education Part II: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#) goes into this period in more detail.) As students have gotten a glimpse of, during the early to mid- 20th century, the system of segregation in North Carolina schools would become formalized and entrenched. According to state-published educational directories, by the early 1960s between 260-270 public African American high schools operated in 92 of North Carolina's 100 counties. Separate schools for white and Black students also meant separate yearbooks. The NC Digital Heritage Center has a working list of historically Black schools in the state, and for some, digital copies of yearbooks from those schools. (Click [here](#) for more information.) However, when desegregation occurred and many Black schools were closed, much of the records - from yearbooks to trophy case contents - were thrown out.



## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### OVERVIEW

Throughout the period of Jim Crow and segregation, there were continued efforts to marginalize the rights and educational pursuits of Black communities. However, equally constant was and is the agency and resilience that Black people have exhibited in fighting for their rights, including the right to education. In this lesson, students will continue their study of the rich history of Black education in North Carolina, focusing on the period of Jim Crow and school desegregation. Through the exploration of oral histories, reading, class discussion, and an interactive timeline, students will gain a deeper understanding of the systemic barriers that Black people have faced in education, as well as the ways in which they have fought for educational equity and equality throughout history. Students will explore various individual experiences of desegregation as well as prominent events such as the Hyde County Boycott in 1968-69. Students will culminate their work by researching local desegregation history in order to create their own timeline entry.

“Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. Named after a Black minstrel show character, the laws—which existed for about 100 years, from the post-Civil War era until 1968—were meant to marginalize African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or other opportunities.”

[WWW.HISTORY.COM/TOPICS/EARLY-20TH-CENTURY-US/JIM-CROW-LAWS](http://WWW.HISTORY.COM/TOPICS/EARLY-20TH-CENTURY-US/JIM-CROW-LAWS)

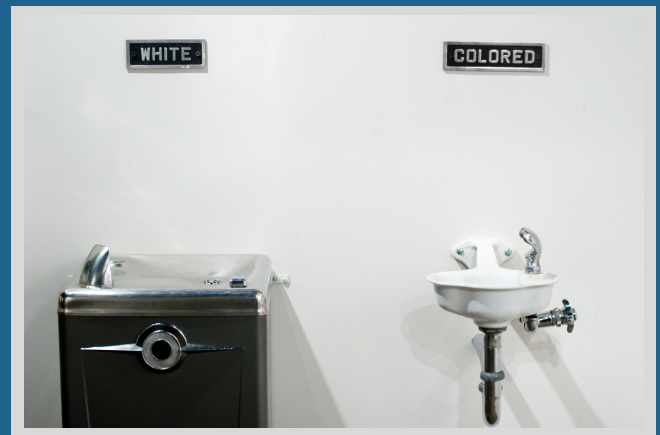


Photo Credit: Canva

### TEACHER PREPARATION & BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- [This article](#) provides an overall context for the evolution of Jim Crow laws, from their roots in Black Codes to their expansion post-Reconstruction
- For an overall history of Black education in North Carolina, see [Deep Rooted: A Brief History of Race & Education in North Carolina](#)
- [The Long Struggle of NC Desegregation: A Short History of Education](#) is a 13-minute video that provides an overview of Jim Crow education in the state and the process of desegregation
- [Towards a Framework of Black Historical Consciousness](#) offers considerations for educators when teaching Black history

### DURATION

- Duration will vary depending on whether and how teachers break up the material over several classes or implement this material as a whole unit; the amount of time provided for discussion of complex concepts will also impact duration.

### GRADES

- 9-12

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

## WHERE DOES THIS FIT IN THE CURRICULUM?

For NC Standards Alignment, [click here](#). From the **1880s into the 1960s**, a majority of American states, including North Carolina, enforced segregation and restrictive social etiquette through "[Jim Crow](#)" laws and related customs (named after a Black character in minstrel shows).

This lesson plan features both the restrictions faced in obtaining equitable education by Black communities across these years, as well as ways in which Black communities created their own educational opportunities through HBCUs, Rosenwald Schools, and Black boarding schools. Students will explore various individual experiences of desegregation via oral histories and prominent events such as the Hyde County Boycott in 1968-69. This material and its focus on Black education is best situated after students have a basic understanding of the period of Jim Crow and segregation.

- **North Carolina History & American History:** This material is a direct connection to a unit on Jim Crow and segregation and the post-*Brown* decision period of desegregation
- **Civics & Economics:** This lesson has numerous connections to government and civic action, from an exploration of the Jim Crow laws themselves, to topics such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, the NC Pearsall Plan, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*
- **English Language Arts/Media Center:** There are many rich literature connections that can supplement a study of Jim Crow, segregation, and desegregation. Such written works are also highly effective at building empathy and understanding regarding this period of difficult history.

Examples include:

- [Stella by Starlight](#) by Sharon Draper
- [March](#), a graphic novel series
- [Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story](#), FOR's 1957 comic book (includes curriculum guide)
- **Humanities Courses:** The music of the Civil Rights Movement provides an excellent entry point and/or extension for utilizing this material in music class and other humanities courses. For one song's story, read [We Shall Overcome: The Story Behind the Song](#).

## RELATED LESSON PLANS

Visit the UNC Libraries' website [Jim Crow and Algorithms of Resistance](#), which is a digital, searchable repository of North Carolina's Jim Crow laws. [This page](#) contains numerous lesson plans related to Jim Crow and resistance to the unjust system.

## PREPARATION

This lesson plan will be best received if students have previously been exposed to the information in [The History of Black Education in North Carolina Part I: Enslavement to Reconstruction](#).

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

## MATERIALS

- Oral history interview with Benjamin Chavis; 5-minute excerpt available [here](#)
  - Teachers will need a device connected to the internet with speakers, to play the clip
- [Black Education in North Carolina: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#), overview reading
  - For students who struggle with reading, this 13-minute video contains very similar information: [The Long Struggle of NC Desegregation: A Short History of Education](#)
- [Why 1965 Matters](#), 5 minute podcast excerpt
- The Hyde County, NC School Boycott, PPT presentation available [here](#)
- [Interview excerpt with Mrs. Bertha Boykin Todd](#) (1 minute)
- [Oral history excerpt with Sheila Florence](#) (3:30 minutes)
- [Image of Dorothy Counts](#)
- [Interview excerpt with Dorothy Counts](#) (1:31 minutes)
- Access to computers with internet and the [North Carolina School Desegregation & Resegregation Timeline](#), by the [Dudley Flood Center - Public School Forum of NC and the corresponding worksheet](#) (this can be printed/provided in hardcopy, or students can work via an electronic version)
  - Since this timeline also includes media elements, such as oral history interview excerpts, students may need headphones and splitters as well
  - When doing local desegregation research, students may want to utilize sites such as:
    - [African American High Schools in North Carolina](#)
    - [Chronicling America](#)
    - [Digital NC](#)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Way Out is Back Through](#) podcast
- [History of African American Education in North Carolina](#) website of primary sources
- [Oral Histories of the American South on Race & Education](#)
- [Southern Oral History Program - Mapping the Voices of NC's Past \(Desegregation\)](#)
- [The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935](#) by James D. Anderson
- [Fugitive Pedagogy: Carter G. Woodson & the Art of Black Teaching](#) by Jarvis R. Givens
- [The Lost Education of Horace Tate](#) by Vanessa Walker
- [Oasis Spaces: North Carolina's Greenbook Project](#), by the NC African American Heritage Commission
- [Greater than Equal: African American Struggles for Schools and Citizenship in North Carolina, 1919-1965](#), by Sarah Caroline Thuesen
- [E\(race\)ing Inequities: The State of Racial Equity in NC Public Schools](#)
- [History Notes Podcast, "Best of Enemies": A Talk with Osha Gray Davidson](#) (The podcast is a conversation with author Osha Gray Davidson who wrote the book "Best of Enemies," turned into a movie of the same name, that covers the integration of Durham County Schools in 1971.) See also the documentary [An Unlikely Friendship](#)
- [Lost in Transition](#), this website features portraits, artist renderings, and interviews regarding Black educators from Wilmington who taught in segregated and desegregated schools

## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

#### Introducing the Themes of Segregation, Education, & Resistance

1. As a warm-up, tell students they are going to listen to a short excerpt from an oral history interview with North Carolina civil rights leader **Benjamin Chavis**, available [here](#).
2. Explain to students that a descendent of the groundbreaking NC educator [John Chavis](#) ([discussed in The History of Black Education Part I: Enslavement to Reconstruction](#)), Ben Chavis was born in Oxford, NC in 1948. He worked as an assistant to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. At the age of 23, in 1971, Ben Chavis rose to international prominence as the leader of the [Wilmington Ten](#), civil rights activists who were wrongfully convicted of committing arson. They were not freed from their wrongful conviction until 1980. He went on to become the Executive Director of the NAACP and has a long career of leadership in civil rights. Tell students that they are going to be listening to Chavis describe something else from his past, however - when he took a courageous action as a young 13-year-old boy. Instruct them as they listen to think about the themes of **resistance** and **education**. Ask them to jot down notes regarding points where they hear connections to these themes, as well as noting any points of the interview that strike them.



“The Wilmington Ten were nine civil rights activists, most of whom were teenagers, who were wrongfully convicted in 1971 in Wilmington, NC, of arson and conspiracy. They each served nearly a decade in jail before an appeal won their release.”

SOURCE & PHOTO CREDIT: WWW.NCDCR.GOV

## NOTES

## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

#### Introducing the Themes of Segregation, Education, & Resistance

#### 3. After listening, discuss as a class:

- What parts of that interview struck you/stood out and why? What was your favorite moment?
- In what ways was 13-year-old Ben Chavis impacted by **segregation** and **Jim Crow**?
  - Students may need a review of **Jim Crow**, the system of **racial apartheid** that would infect every southern state from 1877 throughout the next one hundred years. The system's laws and customs severely limited the civil rights of non-whites. Jim Crow dictated everything from **racial segregation** to **social etiquette**, most infamously through racial segregation in schools and public spaces. The reading students do in the next phase of the lesson will also provide this recap.
  - Encourage students to think about the types of segregation Chavis directly addresses (i.e., second-hand books, segregated libraries, segregated water fountains) as well as the additional ways his day-to-day life would have been impacted (school, dining, Jim Crow expectations/customs, etc.)
  - How was his access to **education** in particular impacted by Jim Crow and segregation? What do you imagine the long-term consequences of such restrictions and inequity were/are on Black students?
- Why did Chavis say he always drank out of the "white" water fountain?
- What is "**resistance**?" (Or, perhaps as Chavis called it, "**defiance**?") How does this interview excerpt relate to this theme?
- What was Chavis risking by making the choices he made? How could things have gone differently (both for Ben, as well as for his parents?) What was the librarian risking by making the choice she made?
- Why do you think Chavis did what he did that day? What were his actions about?
- How do you think Chavis views education and literacy? What makes you think this?

“ The only supplies black teachers received from the county were a broom and a bucket...Textbooks for the black schools were rented by African American parents, and they were always second hand books from the white schools. ”

NORTH CAROLINA TEACHER, LOLA SOLICE



## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

#### Black Education in North Carolina: Jim Crow & Desegregation in NC

4. Tell students that they are going to be continuing their exploration of the history of Black education in North Carolina, with a focus on the period of Jim Crow through desegregation. To provide an overview of the period, provide students with the reading and discussion questions, [Black Education in North Carolina: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#). (Depending on each teacher's pacing guide, this reading can be broken up and implemented over several classes, or delivered as one unit.) After students have read (individually or in reading partners) debrief with a class discussion:

- What was the system of Jim Crow, and what circumstances allowed this unjust system of laws and customs to take root in the South?
- What evidence shows that separate schools were not equal?
- Despite all the barriers facing them, in what ways did Black people create educational opportunities?
- How many Rosenwald Schools existed in North Carolina? Why do you think NC had more than any other state?
- What important opportunities did HBCUs, Rosenwald Schools and Black boarding schools offer?
- Even though *Brown v. Board of Education* declared in 1954 that separate schools were unequal, and thus unconstitutional, desegregation did not fully take place in North Carolina until almost twenty years later. Why? What tactics did North Carolina legislators use to delay?
  - \*\*\*Take a moment to play this 5 minute podcast excerpt for students, [Why 1965 Matters](#), to deepen student understanding of this time period. This excerpt is from the July 23, 1956 special session of the NC General Assembly, in which then NC Governor Luther Hodges discusses his view on the Brown decision, integration in general, and North Carolina's plan to respond. As students listen, tell them to jot down any powerful phrases that stand out to them. After students listen, discuss further:
    - How does Governor Hodges describe the US Supreme Court decision and his own view on integration? (Point out phrases he used such as the Brown decision being "one of the greatest crises of our time," a "sociological experiment", a "source of trouble," etc.)
    - What were the "safety valves" Governor Hodges acknowledges for North Carolina schools and parents to avoid integrated schools? (i.e., vouchers, shutting down public schools, etc.)
    - Why was giving parents the choice in whether to attend integrated schools problematic at the time?
    - Ann McColl asks "Why does this matter to us today?" What is her answer and would you add anything further to why this is still very relevant today? According to Ann McColl, what is so dangerous about states ignoring a Supreme Court decision?
    - Why does Ann McColl say that we should all investigate primary source documents, rather than take people - and even your textbooks - at their word?

## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

#### Black Education in North Carolina: Jim Crow & Desegregation in NC

**4. CONTINUED** Tell students that they are going to be continuing their exploration of the history of Black education in North Carolina, with a focus on the period of Jim Crow through desegregation.

- What challenges and inequalities again faced Black people throughout the process of desegregation?
  - Among the challenges noted in the article is Black teachers losing their jobs at higher rates than their white counterparts. Teachers who choose to explore this conversation in further detail may also want to note that many Black teachers who participated in civil rights activism in particular were often reprimanded and/or fired. [North Carolina's Johnson v. Branch \(1966\) case](#) (which has a place on the timeline students will review in the later half of this activity) offers a prime example of the myriad challenges Black teachers faced.
- What lasting consequences do you think such inequalities created? Given that the process of desegregation took place just around fifty years ago, how do you think schools are still impacted today?
- What questions do you still have? What are you finding confusing or unsettling? What would you like to know more about?

**TEACHER NOTE:** While engaging in this complex discussion, it is worth a sidebar discussion with students to explore the fact that when learning history, and when considering the actions and views of “Black people” and “white people,” neither group is a “monolith.” (Meaning, each group in reality was/is comprised of millions of individuals with differing perspectives, experiences, opinions, etc. So while our historical discussions are usually spent grouping people into one position, it’s worth remembering that it’s actually much more complex. The discussion about diverging Black views on desegregation, which will be covered in the next session, serves as a good example.)

#### Individual Stories of Desegregation

**5.** As the reading stated, throughout North Carolina history, in the face of numerous obstacles, Black people built proud communities, schools included. To illustrate this point, play [this 1-minute video excerpt](#) in which “longtime Wilmington, N.C. educator, community strategist and author Bertha Boykin Todd discusses the impact Black educators historically have on their students.” Mrs. Todd was a librarian at [Williston Industrial High School](#). (Video by Paul Charles for the Lost in Transition project.)

- How does Mrs. Todd describe Black educators? What were their priorities/concerns?

**6.** Explain to students that while many Black people felt the Brown decision would make the road to equality more clear, others were concerned and wanted to stay in their own schools, albeit while wanting equitable funding and resources. As the reading touched upon, the actual process of desegregation was also inequitable in the way it was carried out, with Black communities often bearing more sacrifices and Black students placed in traumatic situations. Ask students to think about the potential impact of a Black student in a classroom with an educator like Mrs. Todd being forced into a new school and classroom without the same level of support. Two examples of student experiences to share with students include:

## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

#### Individual Stories of Desegregation

**6. CONTINUED** Explain to students that while many Black people felt the *Brown* decision would make the road to equality more clear, others were concerned and wanted to stay in their own schools, albeit while wanting equitable funding and resources.

**A. Sheila Florence** was one of the first Black students to desegregate schools in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. When she began attending Chapel Hill Junior High School in 1962, she endured deeply hurtful and traumatic treatment from her white classmates. Play [this 3:30 min. oral history excerpt with Ms. Florence](#), as she remembers her first day of integration.

- Afterwards, allow students to comment on what stood out to them while listening.
- Why did young Sheila get dressed up? How does she describe feeling? What does it say about her that she was able to push through?
- Why would an experience like this be traumatic for a child, or anyone for that matter? How might experiences like this stay with a person for their entire life?
  - It is worth a conversation with students discussing the concept of [racial trauma](#), which can be a long-lasting emotional and mental injury caused by such painful experiences of injustice and hate. (Remind students how hard young teenage life and school can be, from insecurities of fitting in to the pain of being teased. It's not uncommon for people who were bullied in school, for instance, to struggle with the experiences into their adult lives. People like Sheila, on top of this, had to manage the trauma of racism.)

**B.** Next, project [this image](#) of **Dorothy Counts** and ask students to comment on what they see and think is taking place. Explain that on the morning of September 4, 1957, fifteen-year-old Dorothy set out on a harrowing path toward Harding High in Charlotte, NC, where-as the first Black student to attend the all-white school, she was swarmed by white students who spat, threw trash, and yelled racial slurs at her as she entered the building. Allow students to listen to some of what Dorothy experienced in her own words by playing [this 1:31 min. interview excerpt](#). Afterwards, allow students to comment on what stood out to them from what they heard.

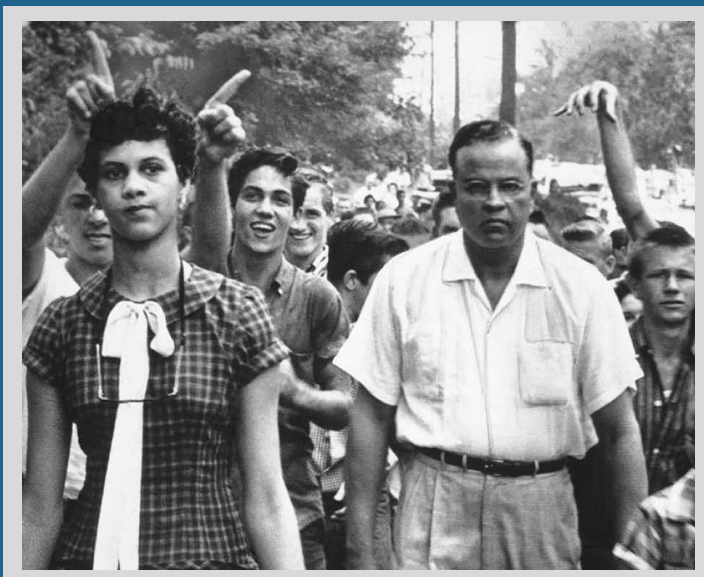


Photo Credit: [www.rarehistoricalphotos.com/dorothy-counts-iconic-photograph](http://www.rarehistoricalphotos.com/dorothy-counts-iconic-photograph)

## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

#### Individual Stories of Desegregation

**B. CONTINUED** Remind students that while it is important to face the realities and trauma of racism, it's also important to note the strength, perseverance and resistance that many Black people incredibly exhibited in the face of such adversity. Teachers can share this 2010 article, [Where Are They Now: Dorothy Counts](#), in which she says: "What happened on that day really set me on a path," says Dorothy Counts-Scoggins, then a vibrant sixty-something grandmother. 'I've always wanted to work to make sure that bad things don't happen to other children.'" Share with students that while her parents removed her from the Charlotte school due to fear for her safety, she would go on to graduate from HBCU Johnson C. Smith then spent her career working with abused and neglected children.

**C.** To counter these difficult testimonies, teachers may want to share a more uplifting story with students, such as the ["secret" basketball game of 1944](#), when the all-white Duke University, and all-Black HBCU, NC Central University, met in secret to play basketball together, even though the action was illegal under North Carolina's Jim Crow laws.

**D.** Additional oral history excerpts regarding North Carolina desegregation are available in this interactive map and collection: [Southern Oral History Program - Mapping the Voices of NC's Past \(Desegregation\)](#).

#### Demanding Equitable Integration: Hyde County, NC Makes Civil Rights History

**7.** Explain to students that it was these types of experiences inflicted upon Black children, coupled with the desire to maintain the proud communities and schools that Black people had built and controlled, that resulted in some Black people protesting integration while calling for equitable funding and resources. One of the most prominent examples is the 1968-69 school boycott in Hyde County, NC, which went on to become known as one of the most sustained and successful protests of the civil rights movement.

**8.** Utilizing [this short PowerPoint presentation](#), provide an overview of the Hyde County school boycott for students. (For additional information, including an interview with two student protesters at the time, consult WUNC's [How One Rural NC County Made History](#).) Questions to discuss throughout the PPT:

- Why did Hyde County's Black families boycott the local process of school desegregation? What exactly were they asking for?
- What do you imagine would have been difficult in sustaining a school boycott for an entire year? What traits did it take to organize and see the boycott through to success? How would you describe the participants, as well as Black leaders involved, such as **Golden Frinks** and **Dr. Dudley Flood**?
- Why did Dr. Flood believe that school integration was so critical?
- How does the story of the Hyde County school boycott fit with what you typically think of or learn about when studying the period of desegregation?
- How does the Hyde County boycott illustrate both the progress made due to *Brown V. BOE*, as well as the shortcomings?
- Despite the difficulty, why is critical to learn about this, from the realities experienced during desegregation, to the inequities strategically created in law and in execution (or lack of execution), to the ways in which Black people resisted and/or persevered?

## PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

### PROCEDURE

“I went to Hyde County to learn about the history of the school boycott in 1968-69, but what I discovered was far bigger: it was an extraordinary history of civil rights activism & an African American freedom struggle that reached into almost every corner of eastern North Carolina. That civil rights movement is a part of our history about which all of us who grew up or live in eastern North Carolina can be very proud. And when we face our own dark times, as we are now in America, we can look to Hyde County & all those other civil rights struggles in eastern North Carolina for inspiration & hope.”

David Cecelski, [Freedom Stories-Celebrating the Hyde County Boycott](#)

### Partner Timeline Activity: Exploring Desegregation

9. Explain that numerous federal, state, and local policies, court cases, and important historical events (from integration attempts to boycotts) shaped the process of school desegregation in North Carolina. The state was mostly considered as having met the desegregation requirements set forth in the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision satisfactorily by the 1971-72 school year. In a review of the primary and secondary sources available on the timeline, students will explore the process of desegregation and consider whether true integration ever successfully occurred.

10. Provide the attached Timeline Worksheet (either in hardcopy or electronic format) and tell students that they will be using the [North Carolina School Desegregation & Resegregation Timeline](#), by the [Dudley Flood Center - Public School Forum of NC](#). Students should start by spending 10-15 minutes first browsing the timeline, and then drilling down to answer the questions provided on [this handout](#).

11. The final question instructs students to create their own timeline entry based on something that occurred locally. Teachers may want to have students research local desegregation history in general, or have a list of people, events, or schools to assign to each pair. Student entries could then be combined to effectively create a supplementary local timeline within the context of the state events. Teachers should decide how students will create/display their final products (either on paper or electronically) as well as how they will review each other's work upon completion.

- One intriguing place to start is by discovering the African American High Schools in your county. Digital NC offers a list of Black high schools: [African American High Schools in North Carolina](#). Students can click on the arrows in the title column to filter by alphabetical order and search by city/county. When available, the site also links to digitized yearbooks from those schools that students can browse for more historical information about each school
- Historic newspapers can also offer a fruitful source of information. [Chronicling America](#) and [Digital NC](#) offer digitized newspapers that can be filtered by state, date, and keywords.
- As a student in North Carolina schools, do you feel that North Carolina is meeting its constitutional obligation of providing a “sound basic education” to all of its children? Why or why not? What recommendations for improvement would you make?



# PART II: JIM CROW & DESEGREGATION

## PROCEDURE

### Partner Timeline Activity: Exploring Desegregation

12. As a final written reflection, have students respond to one of the following two prompts:
- 20 years after the Brown ruling, North Carolina would be recognized nationwide as the “blueprint” for successful integration strategies, based on the Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education landmark case. Based on this timeline and everything you have learned, would you consider desegregation in North Carolina as “successful?” Why or why not?
  - As a student in North Carolina schools, do you feel that North Carolina is meeting its constitutional obligation of providing a “sound basic education” to all of its children? Why or why not? What recommendations for improvement would you make?



Photo Credit: West Charlotte High School students leave a bus on May 15, 1972. (AP/Harold L. Valentine)

## TEACHER NOTES

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## LESSON PLAN

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## OVERVIEW

Despite the oppression and injustice faced in the Jim Crow South, both in education and otherwise, a distinct tradition emerged to provide the best education possible for Black children: historically Black boarding schools. There were more than 100 Black boarding schools across the United States prior to the 1970s, with North Carolina's Palmer Memorial Institute being one example of many around the state. Founded by educator, activist, and school leader [Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#), Palmer became a beacon of Black excellence. In this lesson, students will explore the life, work, and legacy of Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, as well as the impact of the Palmer Memorial Institute (which transformed the lives of over 2,000 African American students between 1902 to 1971), through reading, partner and class discussion, and primary source analysis. Students will culminate their learning by designing an art installation that honors Dr. Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute.

“I believe that the end of all education is to teach one to live completely.”

CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN



Photo Credit: Canva

## TEACHER PREPARATION & BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- Teachers should read [A Rich, Disappearing Legacy Remembering Black boarding schools: A tradition obscured by desegregation's impact](#) for an overview of the rich history of Black boarding schools in North Carolina and around the nation
- [The Other Side of the Story: The World of African American Academies \(private day & boarding schools\) in the South After the Civil War](#) provides a more in-depth look at this history of private day schools and boarding schools for Black people
- The [Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum & Historic Site](#) website offers an abundance of information about the educational leadership and civil rights activism of Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, as well as the history and impact of Palmer Memorial Institute.

## DURATION

- 60-90 minutes

## GRADES

- 8-12

## LESSON PLAN

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## WHERE DOES THIS FIT IN THE CURRICULUM?

For NC Standards Alignment, [click here](#). Palmer Memorial Institute was founded in 1902 by Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, who was 18-years-old at the time. Dr. Brown would remain an important leader in the areas of education and civil rights until her death in 1961. Palmer would serve over 2,000 students until it closed in 1971. In addition to an exploration of Black boarding schools and educational philosophies, a study of Dr. Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute connects to the larger themes of African American history and women's history during the 20th century, particularly elevating Black contributions to these areas.

- **North Carolina History & American History:** This material coordinates well within a unit on Jim Crow, segregation and the [“Long”](#) Civil Rights Movement. Dr. Brown's heavy involvement in women's clubs and her fight for suffrage also integrates well with a unit on the Women's Suffrage Movement
- **Civics and Economics:** Dr. Brown exhibited a true dedication to service and civic engagement throughout her life, and can be used as an excellent exemplar of an active citizen/community member. This lesson touches on her civil rights activism, and [this article](#) provides additional details regarding her civic life in general. Her work as a women's suffrage activist also provides an excellent connection to the C & E curriculum
- **English Language Arts:** In addition to a few writings by Dr. Brown included within this activity, ELA teachers may want to have students engage with more of her written work. Browse the Charlotte Hawkins Brown papers [here](#)
- **Art:** This lesson ends with an activity in which students develop a design concept for an art installation celebrating Black boarding schools, Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, and/or Palmer Memorial Institute. Art teachers are well positioned to expand the activity and have students both conceptualize and then design an installation. For an example of a group actually doing this, see [Be Great Foundation's proposal for an art installation](#)

## RELATED LESSON PLANS

- [Surviving and Thriving Despite Jim Crow: Durham's Black Wall Street](#)
- Visit the UNC Libraries' website [Jim Crow and Algorithms of Resistance](#), which is a digital, searchable repository of North Carolina's Jim Crow laws. [This page](#) contains numerous lesson plans related to Jim Crow and resistance to the unjust system
- [A Red Record curriculum](#), a website and accompanying lesson plans for teaching about lynching

“ Let us take time, therefore, to be gracious, to be thoughtful, to be kind...with greater velocity on the upward road to equal opportunity and justice for all. ”

DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## LESSON PLAN

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## MATERIALS

- Excerpt from [A Rich, Disappearing Legacy Remembering Black boarding schools: A tradition obscured by desegregation's impact](#) for student reading; teachers should assign the reading prior to implementing this lesson
- [Quotes from Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#)
- Video on Dr. [Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#) (4:53 minutes)
- [Excerpt from "The Importance of Overcoming Discrimination,"](#) by Dr. Charlotte Hawkins
- [Oral history excerpt with Viola Turner](#), speaking on Palmer Memorial (3:30 minutes)
- [Lessons from the Past at Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum](#), student reading (original article is [here](#))
  - This article mentions the danger of **lynching** during these years; teachers should ensure students have context to understand this reference. For curricular resources for teaching about the history of racial terror lynching in North Carolina, [click here](#).
- [Primary Source Packet](#) and [analysis worksheet](#)
- Excerpt from [The Correct Thing to Do, to Say, to Wear](#), written by Dr. Brown
- (Optional) Devices connected to the internet to access the [Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum & Historic Site](#) website and the [Conduct a Website Audit](#) student worksheet

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [NCDNCR Digital Collection on African American Education](#); this site includes primary sources (letters, photographs, yearbooks, and more) related to Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown & Palmer Memorial Institute
- [Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum Facebook Page](#)
- [Learn at Home with NC Historic Sites](#)
- [Alice Freeman Palmer Digital Exhibit](#)
- [Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute](#), by Charles Wadlington & Richard Knapp

“ I have devoted my life to establishing for Negro youth something superior to Jim Crowism.”

DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## PROCEDURE

### Warm Up: What is the Purpose of Education?

1. Begin the lesson by asking students to reflect on the purpose of education, particularly formal schooling. Remind them that they have been in school for years and have much experience. Ask students to write at least five sentences in five minutes answering the question, "What is the purpose of education?" Walk around keeping students on track and answering questions.
2. Next, ask students to partner up to share their answers with one another. As they share, ask them to make a combined list of at least five purposes of education.
3. Once complete, have several pairs share their ideas and compile these up front. Identify areas of agreement and areas of difference. After a compiled list is created, teachers may want to see if students can agree on the most important reason(s) for an education (or the top few reasons.) One way to visualize this is to provide each student with a sticker; they should vote for what they believe to be the most important purpose of education by placing their sticker beside that category on the list up front. Review the results together once all students vote.

### Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute

4. Next, provide each pair of students with one of the attached quotes by Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown to layer into their considerations regarding the purpose of education. Tell students to review their quote, then answer:
  - What message is Dr. Brown trying to convey?
  - Based on this quote and the reading ([A Rich, Disappearing Legacy Remembering Black boarding schools: A tradition obscured by desegregation's impact](#) should have been completed prior to this lesson), how do you think Dr. Brown views the purpose of education?
  - Do you see her view represented in our class list of what you all said regarding the purpose of education? What are the similarities and differences between our class's thoughts and Dr. Brown's?

“**Laurence C. Jones, Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Rachel Crane Mather may not be household names, but as founders of Black boarding schools they are held in high esteem in Black education history for establishing schools under difficult circumstances.**”

A RICH, DISAPPEARING LEGACY REMEMBERING BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS: A TRADITION OBSCURED BY DESEGREGATION'S IMPACT. AUG. 13, 2003 | BY RONALD ROACH



# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## PROCEDURE

### Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute

5. After students have discussed in pairs, have them share their quotes out loud and report out their thoughts to the class. Tell students that today's lesson is going to focus on the incredible Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute, the Black boarding school that she founded in Sedalia, NC, and that was in operation from 1902 - 1971. Students should have already read [A Rich, Disappearing Legacy Remembering Black boarding schools: A tradition obscured by desegregation's impact](#) and will thus be coming into the lesson with some basic knowledge. It might be helpful at this point to have a conversation about the reading:

- Why were Black boarding schools created, and why were they so critical to Black education?
- What challenges do you think Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown faced when opening Palmer, given what you know about the time period?
- What can we infer about Dr. Brown given that she was so successful in leading Palmer to rise to national prominence? What insight do former students give regarding Dr. Brown?
- What was Palmer's purpose when it opened? How did its purpose evolve?
- What did Black boarding schools mean to the students who attended them, especially during the years of segregation and Jim Crow? Why do you think Black alumni note having such an enriching experience at Palmer?
- What brought about the decline of Black boarding schools?
- Approximately how many Black boarding schools existed, and how many remain? Why do you think there is an effort to preserve those remaining and uncover the history of those closed?

6. Layer in additional information by showing this 4:53 minute video on Dr. [Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#). Afterwards discuss:

- The video states that Dr. Brown's life "was a balancing act." How so?
- The video states that Dr. Brown "... fought fights that people didn't usually fight in those days, they just went along with the system. But if she could go against the system at any time, that's what Dr. Brown did." What examples does the video cite that illustrate this spirit of resistance?
- In what ways did Dr. Brown fight to give her students "something superior to Jim Crowism?"
- Based on everything you have learned thus far, what words would you use to describe Dr. Brown and why?

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## PROCEDURE

### Analyzing Primary Sources

7. Tell students that they are going to examine some primary sources related to Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute. (If the class is not already familiar with the [difference in primary and secondary sources](#), discuss this before moving forward.)

8. Begin the analyzation together by providing [this excerpt](#) from Brown's 1943 speech, "The Importance of Overcoming Discrimination." Have a student volunteer read the excerpt aloud for the class and discuss together, or have students examine the speech excerpt with their partners.

- What is Dr. Brown asking for?
- What, according to her, is the "Second Emancipation?"
- Dr. Brown specifically notes that Black people are not bitter, but they are what?
- How do you imagine this speech would have been received in 1943?
- How is this excerpt an example of what was mentioned in the previous video of her "going against the system?"

9. Explain to students that Dr. Brown was a **civil rights activist** and pioneer in many ways. Despite the Jim Crow laws and expectations that surrounded her, she often spoke out against and actively resisted such oppression, even at great risk. Tell students that one such example was in her refusal to accommodate **Jim Crow segregation** in transportation. Long before the well-known actions of Rosa Parks, Dr. Brown was several times removed from railway cars and filed several lawsuits for the violation of her rights. She also frequently won small settlements. One example to share with students:

- In 1920, Dr. Brown was traveling by rail to the Woman's Missionary Convention in Memphis, TN, as one of four Black people invited to speak to the all-white audience. On her way she was forced out of her Pullman car and given the choice of moving to the Jim Crow car or being thrown off the train. Humiliated, she was forced to pass through three cars filled with whites, some of whom (as Brown wrote) were "southern white women passing for Christians," who did nothing to assist her. Ironically, they were also on their way to the same conference, "where they declared their purpose was to make the Negro woman unashamed and unafraid." Dr. Brown's white southern lawyer, Frank P. Hobgood, Jr., of Greensboro, filed suit against the Pullman Company, requesting \$3,000 in damages. A year later the suit had not been settled.
- The company countered with an offer of \$200. Wanting to avoid the courtroom, Hobgood advised Brown to accept a small settlement, based on his belief that "half a loaf is better than no bread at all." He advised Brown to remember the example of Booker T. Washington, who pursued a strategy of accommodation rather than confrontation. He suggested asking for \$1,000 in hopes of actually collecting \$500. Brown did not agree. She thought that even \$1,500 would only be "partial justice" for the "nervous shock" she had suffered, and she was ready to test "absolute justice for Negroes" in court. She declared herself willing to sacrifice his friendship for the sake of her cause. She wrote: "As for me, a Negro woman, I feel so intently the insults that are heaped upon me by the railroad company that I am willing to become a martyr for Negro womanhood in this instance and give up my chance of holding, as friends, people who would withdraw because of my attitude . . . conditions have changed considerably for both races and a few of us must be sacrificed perhaps in order to get a step further."

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## PROCEDURE

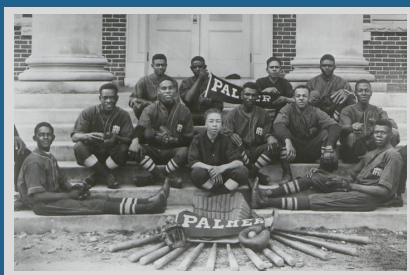
### Analyzing Primary Sources

**9. CONTINUED** Explain to students that Dr. Brown was a civil rights activist and pioneer in many ways.

- Allow students to weigh in on how this story informs their understanding of Dr. Brown, her personality, and her convictions. What does it say about her that she not only challenged her mistreatment in court, but also stood up to her lawyer and refused to settle?

**10.** Next, allow students to hear about Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown's work in this oral history interview excerpt with another North Carolina great, [Viola Turner](#). In [this 3.30 min. excerpt \(play from 02:04:10 to 02:07:47\)](#), Turner briefly describes Charlotte Hawkins Brown as an important African American woman role model. (To get to 2:04:10, scroll down the page and under the bold heading of Tape 3, Side A, you will find this section already segmented and hyperlinked. The transcript is also available.) Discuss:

- How does Ms. Turner describe Dr. Brown and her educational philosophy?
- She mentions the "Mutual" children. Does anyone know who this may be referring to?
  - As Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown exemplifies herself, in the midst of Jim Crow racism and injustice, Black people created their own opportunities. During the same time that Palmer Memorial Institute was providing a quality education to Black children, a Black business district was flourishing in Durham, NC. This included **NC Mutual Life Insurance Company**, the oldest and largest Black-owned life insurance company in the United States. It was founded in 1898 and was a key part of what became known as Durham, NC's "**Black Wall Street.**"
  - To explore this topic in detail, which provides additional context for the ways Black communities, through their own agency and entrepreneurship, resisted Jim Crow, see the lesson [Surviving and Thriving Despite Jim Crow: Durham's Black Wall Street](#).
- Who was able to attend Palmer Memorial Institute? While this was a wonderful opportunity for Black children whose families could fund it, what about those who could not?
- Ms. Turner says of Dr. Brown, "She was not satisfied to just give the ABCs." What does she mean? What examples does she provide?
- How would you describe Dr. Brown's overall educational philosophy based on what you've learned thus far? What do you think was influencing her philosophy?



PALMER BASEBALL TEAM, 1920



PALMER GIRLS TENNIS CLASS, 1927



PALMER FRENCH CLUB, 1955

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## PROCEDURE

### Analyzing Primary Sources

**11.** Tell students that they are now going to engage in independent examination of additional primary sources. (This can be done individually or in partners/small groups.) Teachers will want to determine whether to print the sources or have students examine them electronically. The primary source packet is available via [this PowerPoint](#). A student worksheet for evaluating the sources is available [here](#). Teachers should edit the packet as they see fit. (The packet does include two weblinks, one for reviewing [yearbooks from Palmer Memorial Institute](#) and the other for accessing an excerpt from Dr. Brown's [The Correct Thing to Do, to Say, to Wear](#). Students will need devices connected to the internet if they are to access these sources.) After students have had time to examine their packets, allow them to report back on what they discovered and learned.

**12.** To close out the review of primary sources, ask students to focus on the excerpt from [The Correct Thing to Do, to Say, to Wear](#), written by Dr. Brown. Remind students that rules and the teaching of **etiquette** were a part of Dr. Brown's educational philosophy and model. She knew that, for African Americans surviving in the Jim Crow South, etiquette wasn't just about knowing how to dress or which fork to use. It was about survival. She believed that proper etiquette and behavior also allowed Black people to function in rooms where important decisions were made. (Dr. Brown herself was fiercely devoted to political advocacy and civil rights and regularly spoke out against racial and social inequities.) After reviewing the rules, discuss:

- How do these rules compare to your own school rules? How would you describe these rules?
- What do you think Dr. Hawkins Brown's overall goal was with these rules?
- What does this reveal about how Black children were educated and expected to behave in school and in society?
- As these rules are a historical document, what do they reveal about the time?
- How might these rules evidence the "balancing act" that the earlier video noted Dr. Brown had to always conduct?
- Earlier, I asked how you would describe Dr. Brown's overall educational philosophy - does this further inform how you think about her philosophy towards Black education?
- Even though they were created in 1941, are these relevant rules for today? Why or why not? Would you be in favor of your school adopting this set of rules? Why or why not?
- Does the addition of this document change your answer to the last question on your primary source worksheet about how you would describe Dr. Brown? Why or why not?

# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## PROCEDURE

### Culminating Activity: Art Installation Concept

**13.** In closing, have students think about all of the things they have learned about the importance of Black boarding schools in general, and Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown and Palmer Memorial Institute in particular. Allow them to share some of their worksheet responses to how they would describe her and why. Have them also think back to the quotes from Dr. Brown they discussed at the beginning of the lesson. As a culminating activity, tell students that they are to design a meaningful and thought provoking art installation which educates the public about the contributions of Black boarding schools, Dr. Brown, and Palmer Memorial Institute. Depending on the amount of class time teachers can devote to this, students can either create a written design concept, a sketch of what the design would look like, or both.

- Prior to class, teachers should determine how they will structure this activity (i.e., this can be done individually, in partners or in small groups) as well as how much class time and homework time students will be provided for engaging in the assignment. This can be done as a brief in class processing activity, in which students plan and render simple 2-D design sketches/diagrams, or it can be more in depth and last over several days/weeks, with students even creating 3-D models. This can make for an excellent collaborative project in the school as well (i.e., partner with the art department) and/or an open house event, where families and the community are invited to view student work.) Teachers should let students know the due date, as well as how their final work will be shared
- As an example of actual work happening in this regard, share the [Be Great Foundation's proposal for an art installation](#) in Greensboro that celebrates Dr. Hawkins Brown and her founding of Palmer. A description and an image of what the installation will look like are included.)

“**I know that nobody can segregate my soul ... We are going to listen to the music, feed our souls and then walk out of the auditorium just as fine in body and soul as we would have had not the laws of North Carolina segregated us.**”

**A 1937 LETTER EXCERPT FROM DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN TO DR. W.C. JACKSON, PRESIDENT OF WOMAN'S COLLEGE (NOW UNCG), AFTER HE STATED HE COULD PROVIDE ONLY SEGREGATED SEATING TO HER STUDENTS AT AYCOCK AUDITORIUM**



# THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION, BLACK BOARDING SCHOOLS, AND DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN

## Optional Extensions

- Conduct a website audit for the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum & Historic Site: In teams, have students 1.) conduct a website audit of the Museum and Historic Site and 2.) make recommendations on how it can be improved. (While this activity is presented to students as a website audit, the ultimate goal is to have them engage further with readings about and by Dr. Brown and Palmer, as well as the primary sources contained throughout the site.) Provide students with the [Conduct a Web Audit worksheet](#) and the article [Lessons from the Past at Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum](#), which will provide additional background information. Explain to students that the site of Palmer Memorial Institute is incredibly important for many reasons. Not only do we now understand how critically important Dr. Brown and her school were, but the site was the first North Carolina State Historic Site honoring its African American heritage. It is also the only one honoring a Black woman. Go over the activity with students. Teachers will want to predetermine how in depth to make Step V, as this portion can be as simple as instructing students to list out their recommendations for website improvements, to having students actually design a mock website in a technical platform of your choosing. Teachers will also want to provide class time for students to share their recommendations and/or website mock-ups with one another.
- While Palmer Memorial Institute is a prominent example of the role of Black boarding schools in North Carolina, additional schools existed across the state. Students can independently research one of the schools and report their findings to the class. Samples include:
  - [The Brick School](#)
  - [Scotia Seminary \(Boarding School\)](#) (became Barber Scotia College, an unaccredited HBCU today)
  - [Mary Potter Academy](#)
  - [Laurinburg Institute](#)
  - [The Allen School](#) (North Carolina great Nina Simone attended!)
  - [Kittrell College](#)
  - [Effland Home for Wayward Girls](#) (also operated by Dr. Brown)
  - Visit the State Library of North Carolina's website, the [History of African American Education in North Carolina](#), for additional information and school options.

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## OVERVIEW

In the early 1900s, segregation was entrenched across North Carolina, and educational opportunities for Black children were limited. However, a community-based movement, ignited by a collaboration between Black education leader and reformer Booker T. Washington and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, enacted with the support and contributions of local Black communities, provided the opportunity to overcome the systemic barriers to Black rural education across the state. In this lesson plan, students will explore the history of Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina, where more Rosenwald Schools were erected than any other state. Students will engage in reading, discussion, and primary source review to explore the ingenuity, collaborations, challenges, and legacy of the Rosenwald Fund and Rosenwald Schools. Students will also explore Black artistry that was cultivated via another program, the Rosenwald Fellowship. Since over 800 Rosenwald Schools existed in 93 of North Carolina's counties, this lesson culminates with students researching a Rosenwald School site in their local area.

**“ African American giving is grounded in a collective sense of responsibility and obligation towards the community and the continuing larger struggle for liberation. It is based on a generosity of spirit as an expression of dignity, humanity, and identity. ”**

TYRONE FREEMAN  
(AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORIAN OF PHILANTHROPY)

## TEACHER PREPARATION & BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- For an overview of Rosenwald School history around the state, teachers can reference [The Rosenwald Schools & Black Education in North Carolina](#)
- The [Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School](#) website provides an exceptional look at one particular school's history. The site offers general history regarding Rosenwald Schools and compelling primary sources
- Teachers should also familiarize themselves with the debate on the purpose of education from Black leaders Booker T. Washington and W.E.B DuBois (see [W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington Had Clashing Ideologies During the Civil Rights Movement](#)), as well as [Booker T. Washington's vision](#) that influenced Julius Rosenwald and informed the creation of the schools

## DURATION

## GRADES

- 60-90 minutes over one or more class periods
- 8-12
- Duration varies based on how much time is provided for student research and for class discussion; classes who implement the culminating project will likely need additional time

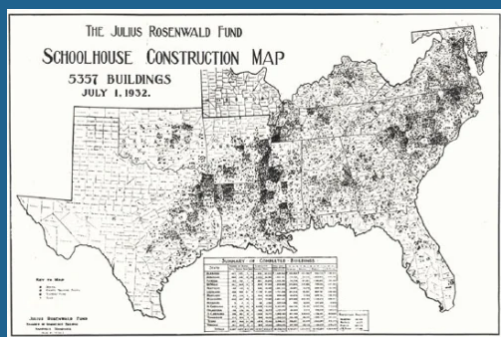
## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## WHERE DOES THIS FIT IN THE CURRICULUM?

For NC Standards Alignment, [click here](#). The Rosenwald Fund and the concept of Rosenwald Schools were born around 1910, with school construction taking place until 1932. Many of the schools operated until the process of school desegregation was implemented, with the last NC school closing in the [1960s](#). This lesson thus works well during:

- **North Carolina History & American History:** This material can fit within a unit on Jim Crow and segregation, the [“Long”](#) Civil Rights Movement, as well as the post-Brown decision period of desegregation when Rosenwald Schools were closed
- **Civics & Economics:** A beneficial focus for C & E teachers is exploring the role of philanthropy in an economy, including the role of [Black philanthropy](#), which is often overlooked. An examination of the fundraising model of Rosenwald Schools, in which Black communities (many of whom were farmers, sharecroppers, and economically disadvantaged) raised matching funds for building the schools, also integrates perfectly. Finally, a conversation about the role of a school and education in regards to a community's economic success, both in terms of Rosenwald Schools and in today's society, is also well placed in a C & E course
- **English Language Arts/Media Center:** There are many opportunities to integrate literature with a study of North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools. There are numerous authors who were Rosenwald Fellows to pull from ([“Theme for English B”](#) by **Langston Hughes** is an excellent example; the poem is from the perspective of a North Carolinian.) There are also great choices for integrating books about the history of Rosenwald Schools:
  - [Dear Mr. Rosenwald](#), by Carol Boston Weatherford
  - [A Better Life for Their Children: Julius Rosenwald, Booker T. Washington, and the 4,978 Schools That Changed America](#)
  - [Schools of Hope: How Julius Rosenwald Helped Change African American Education](#)
- **Art & STEAM:** The exploration of Rosenwald Fellows makes for an excellent thematic unit in arts and humanities courses, as numerous Black artists, musicians, writers, etc., were part of this program. The closing activity in this lesson has students examine the designs, primary source blueprints, and physical characteristics of Rosenwald Schools, then work to create their own modernized design for a classroom. This project offers an excellent tie-in to art, design, and/or STEAM courses



There were more than 2,500  
Rosenwald Schools built in North  
Carolina—the most in any state.  
[See the full list here.](#)

Source and Photo Credit:  
[www.cbweatherford.com/resources/rosenwald](http://www.cbweatherford.com/resources/rosenwald)

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## MATERIALS

- [State Leads in Negro Schools](#), primary source news article ([original source](#))
- [Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina](#), student overview reading & questions
  - Teachers should assign the reading prior to implementing this lesson; teachers should ensure students have a general understanding of the concept of **philanthropy** prior to assigning the reading
- [The Rosenwald Schools](#), a 9-minute video overview
  - This video was created by high school students and is the 2014 National History Day documentary winner. Click here for more information about [National History Day in NC](#)
- Primary Source packet for North Carolina Rosenwald Schools; images are available in [this PowerPoint](#)
  - A student worksheet for evaluating the sources is [available here](#); teachers can copy the form double-sided or have students recreate the chart on notebook paper
  - Teachers can print the packet for students to review or can have them examine the sources electronically
  - Teachers can also edit the packet as they see fit, omitting sources for a quicker activity, and/or supplementing in any sources for local Rosenwald history. (The websites below can be utilized to search for sources by county.)
- Primary source images from [The G.C. and Frances Hawley Museum Facebook page](#) or the [G.C. and Frances Hawley Museum website](#) (select one or two of your choice)
- Recording of "Lift Every Voice & Sing;" a performance of the song and its lyrics are available via the NAACP [here](#). Another modern acapella adaptation is available [here](#)
- Image of "The Harp" by Augusta Savage; numerous images can be found via an internet search; one example is available in [this article](#)
- [Researching Local Rosenwald Schools](#), student worksheet; students will also need web access to utilize the following sites:
  - <http://rosenwald.fisk.edu/>
  - [NCDNCR's Rosenwald Collection](#)
  - <https://www.historysouth.org/rosenwaldhome/>
  - <https://www.ncdcr.gov/media/1725/download>
  - <https://www.ncdcr.gov/media/749/download>
- [Community School Plans](#)

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Rosenwald Schools of North Carolina](#) (30-minute documentary)
- [History South, Rosenwald Schools](#) (includes history, school plans, a list of NC schools, etc.)
- [North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools](#) (includes information and primary sources)
- [Agricultural Education and The Rosenwald School Building Program](#) (PowerPoint overview)
- [A Survey of North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools](#) (resources from NCDNCR)
- [North Carolina Collection Julius Rosenwald Fund](#) (primary sources related to Rosenwald Schools across North Carolina; can be filtered by county)
- [The Significance & Integrity of North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools](#) (this lengthy document provides excellent primary source documents and images, quotes, and detailed information regarding Rosenwald Schools around the state - with a specific focus on Edgecombe, Halifax, Johnston, Nash, Wayne, & Wilson counties.)



Julius Rosenwald, left, and Berry O'Kelly, right, at dedication of 4,000th Rosenwald school in Method community of Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1928; school was named for banker and philanthropist O'Kelly (source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Record Group, Division of Negro Education, North Carolina State Archives and [www.ncdcr.gov](http://www.ncdcr.gov))



Plate 4. Ione Vinson teaching at Short Journey School in Johnston County, c.1945 (Dorothy Hooks photograph in Henry Burwell Marrow Collection, Johnston County Heritage Center. Source: [www.ncdcr.gov](http://www.ncdcr.gov))

“ There were fundraising dinners for the development of the school and folks made quilts that were raffled off. We knew they were interested in us having a better education. ”

VALERIE COLEMAN & MARIAN COLEMAN  
[WWW.SMITHSONIANMAG.COM](http://WWW.SMITHSONIANMAG.COM)



# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina

1. As a warm-up, provide students with the primary source news article from 1925, [State Leads in Negro Schools](#). Have student analyze the article and answer/discuss:

- What information is highlighted by the headline?
- What does the text explain? What details are provided about North Carolina's Rosenwald Schools?
- What details are provided regarding North Carolina and Black education?
- What did you learn from examining this article? Does any new information you learned contradict or support your prior knowledge of Black education in the state? Explain.

2. Next, play the 9-minute video, [The Rosenwald Schools](#). (Students may be interested to know that the film creators were a group of high school students who won [National History Day](#) with the project.) After viewing, discuss:

- What inequities in education did the video identify? What was happening in 1900s society that made Rosenwald Schools necessary?
- How did **Booker T. Washington** choose to respond to the inequities and adversity faced in society, and within education?
  - Teachers should take a moment to discuss the fact that while African Americans had placed a high value on education during slavery and Reconstruction, like with any social issue, there was not total agreement regarding the purpose of education. During the Jim Crow era, the debate peaked between Black leaders Booker T. Washington and **W. E. B. Du Bois**, two of the most prominent African American intellectuals and activists at the turn of the century. Washington advocated for self-help and hard work to earn the respect of whites. He believed economic independence and the ability to show themselves as productive members of society were what would eventually lead Black people to true equality and that they should temporarily set aside any demands for civil rights. On the other hand, Du Bois advocated political action and a civil rights agenda. Although they had starkly different upbringings and strategies, they both worked tenaciously for the advancement of Black people. (Read more [here](#).)
- Why do you think the Rosenwald Fund only provided “**seed money**” to communities rather than funding an entire school? (For related reading, see [Beyond Hegemony: Reappraising the History of Philanthropy and African-American Higher Education in the Nineteenth Century](#).)
- The video mentions the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child.” How does this philosophy apply to Rosenwald Schools?
- In what ways were Rosenwald School designs very purposeful? Do you think schools today are designed with such considerations in mind? Why or why not?
- When discussing racism and racial violence, one of the interviewees discusses how the mental anguish was in many ways worse than the physical harm. What do you think she means? (Discuss the concept of [racial trauma](#) with students and the long-term impact of such experiences.)

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina

2. *CONTINUED* Next, play the 9-minute video, [The Rosenwald Schools](#). (Students may be interested to know that the film creators were a group of high school students who won [National History Day](#) with the project.) After viewing, discuss:

- How did W.E.B. DuBois view Rosenwald Schools?
  - Discuss with students that despite their different educational philosophies, DuBois “applauded the Rosenwald initiative. DuBois focused his own energies on college education to produce Black leaders, but when Julius Rosenwald died in 1932, DuBois penned a lengthy appreciation of the philanthropist’s impact on pre-college opportunities.” ([Source](#))
- According to NC education leader [Dr. Dudley Flood](#), why is it important to preserve Rosenwald School buildings and the legacy of these schools?

“ Despite support from the Rosenwald Fund, black schools across the South were rarely the equal of their white counterparts. Nevertheless, the Rosenwald school building program enabled many blacks to acquire an education that might otherwise have been unobtainable. ”

TOM BELTON, CURATOR OF MILITARY HISTORY  
WWW.NCMUSEUMOFHISTORY.ORG

3. At this point, review student thoughts on their previously assigned reading, [Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina](#). (Questions that have been covered in the discussion of the video can be skipped.)

- What was Booker T. Washington’s view regarding education?
- What systemic inequities made Rosenwald Schools necessary?
- Why do you think the Rosenwald Fund required the communities in which the schools would be built to raise matching funds?
- What challenges did Black communities face in fundraising? What did it take on their part to be successful, despite the challenges?
- What role did **Jeanes’ Teachers** fill?
- Why did the Rosenwald Fund provide school blueprints and building plan options?
- What positive impact did Rosenwald Schools make?
- Despite the ingenuity of Black communities and their partnership with the Rosenwald Fund, what systemic barriers still existed to equitable education?
- Why do you think North Carolina had so many Rosenwald Schools, the largest of any other state?
  - Explain to students that this was largely due to a combination of active leadership in the state Department of Public Instruction and enthusiastic fundraising by Blacks at the grassroots level all across the state.
- How much money did North Carolina Black residents raise to contribute to Rosenwald buildings? Why is this amount so significant?

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina

#### 4. Also, discuss:

- Rosenwald Schools were specifically conceived for placement in **rural** communities around the South. What differences would have existed between North Carolina's rural and urban communities during the late 1900s?
  - Ensure students consider both the challenges to rural life as well as the positive aspects. [This article](#) notes the isolation and hard work that faced rural residents, but there was also often a strong sense of resilience and community
- Why do you think education for Black children in rural areas in particular was so important?
- It was well known that Julius Rosenwald wanted to help Black people "go to school and live the American Dream." How do you think Black people may have defined the American dream in the early 1900s? How could education help them achieve it? (Or could it?)
- What tools could education offer to help Black people resist the oppression they faced in the Jim Crow South? What tools could education likewise provide for white people to support the fight for social justice?

### A Discussion Regarding Philanthropy

5. Before moving on, it would be worthwhile to host a discussion regarding the concept of **philanthropy**, a term which students have now encountered in considering Julius Rosenwald. Share the following quote by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary." (*Strength to Love*, 1963) Ask students to discuss:

- What message was Dr. King conveying? How does this concept apply to Rosenwald Schools?
- While philanthropy and giving are typically considered admirable and impactful, some people believe it is complicated and (similar to Dr. King's message) not always beneficial. Can you think of any arguments as to why philanthropy could be problematic?
  - While this is a higher-level conversation to have, it can lead to an invigorating debate for students to weigh the benefit of philanthropy with its potential problems. [This interview](#) with a Stanford professor, for instance, highlights issues such as power dynamics and how charitable giving often doesn't solve the root cause of the issues it seeks to improve.) Students can then apply this debate to the Rosenwald model
- Philanthropy has long been embedded in the legacy of African Americans, but Black communities are often forgotten in conversations about donors and giving. Why do you think this is the case?
  - There are a variety of factors that play into this. "Black families were subjected to years of slavery, segregation, and discrimination. Not only did slavery and Jim Crow put Black families' ability to accumulate wealth centuries behind that of white families, but discrimination entrenched in public policies shaping housing, education and financial systems have led to a situation where many Black families are just now building their wealth. In spite of this, African Americans are still giving at higher rates, often through vehicles outside of the traditional foundation model." (Source: [A Generosity of Spirit: The Legacy of Black Philanthropy](#))

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### A Discussion Regarding Philanthropy

**5. CONTINUED** Before moving on, it would be worthwhile to host a discussion regarding the concept of **philanthropy**, a term which students have now encountered in considering Julius Rosenwald. Share the following quote by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary." (*Strength to Love*, 1963) Ask students to discuss:

- While the Rosenwald Schools carry the namesake of Julius Rosenwald, remember that they were also funded by the philanthropic giving of local (usually impoverished) Black communities. Some argue that given the amount of work Black communities contributed, it's unfair to even call the school's "Rosenwald Schools." In what other ways have Black people been participating in philanthropy throughout history, even if in ways outside of a "foundation" or "fund" model?
  - "In order to survive segregation and the Jim Crow era, Black Americans gave through community churches, social organizations, fraternal organizations, educational institutions, and mutual aid societies. Black philanthropy was integral to the development of Black schools, banks, and businesses. Black people often gave directly to family members and loved ones just to provide basic human necessities." (Source: [A Generosity of Spirit: The Legacy of Black Philanthropy](#))

### Primary Source Analysis

**6.** Tell students that they are going to take some time to dive deeper into Rosenwald Schools across North Carolina by examining additional primary sources in small groups. Teachers will want to determine whether to print the sources or have students examine them electronically. The primary source packet is available via [this PowerPoint](#). A student worksheet for evaluating the sources is [available here](#). **Teachers should edit the packet as they see fit, omitting sources for a quicker activity and/or supplementing in any sources for local Rosenwald history.** After students have had time to examine their packets, allow them to report back on what they discovered and learned.

- What insights did you gain from reviewing these sources? What about Rosenwald Schools have you already learned that these sources supported? Based on these sources, what new understandings did you develop regarding the history of Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina?
- Who was responsible for the success of Rosenwald Schools?
  - Make sure students understand that while the Rosenwald Fund may have provided some of the resources, local Black communities were equally - if not more so - responsible for the success of the schools. This was an active collaboration. Not only did Black communities fundraise and contribute financially, it was the Black community who would support the schools and keep them running
  - Given the effort and contributions of Black communities, do you think the schools should be called "Rosenwald Schools," or would another title be more accurate? Explain
- What is the story of Rosenwald Schools and Black education in North Carolina? What do we most need to know and tell others about?

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### In Addition to Rosenwald Schools...

7. While the story of Rosenwald Schools is an important one to know, it is also important that students understand the other efforts to educate Black students (of all ages and levels) in North Carolina throughout Jim Crow and segregation. (Detailed lesson plans are available on initiatives such as [The Purpose of Education, Black Boarding Schools, and Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown](#), as well as [North Carolina's Historical Black Colleges and Universities](#).) Additionally, due to the effort of independent educational leaders and Black communities, single schools were often built from scratch, without the support of a broad network such as that of the Rosenwald Fund. One example to share with students is that of [Reverend Grover Cleveland Hawley](#) and **The Hawley School** in Creedmoor (Granville County.)

8. Select and project a few primary source images from The Hawley School. (Numerous images are available on [The G.C. and Frances Hawley Museum Facebook page](#) and the [G.C. and Frances Hawley Museum website](#).) While projecting the images, share with students:

- "The Hawley School" began as a one-teacher elementary school for Black students in Granville County in the early 1920s. It was an old tobacco barn with a dirt floor, no heat, no bathroom, and no running water. In 1933, two teachers were hired and in the fall of 1936, Reverend Grover Cleveland Hawley, a 1931 graduate of the college and theological departments of Lincoln University (in Pennsylvania) was selected to serve as principal of the then named Creedmoor Negro Elementary School. During this same year, Principal Hawley established a high school department
- From 1936-1938, children either walked to school or were transported by their parents that were able to do so. By the Spring of 1938, a school bus was purchased with contributions made by the parents, teachers, and the county, which resulted in rapid student growth for the school. The first class graduated in 1939, and at that time the school was named the G. C. Hawley School, in honor of Rev. Hawley
- The progress made in the following years was tremendous, with land being donated to expand the school into a modern, spacious environment for learning for the Black students. The parents volunteered to clear the land by hand and Principal Hawley lead the determined group to Butner, NC to salvage wood from Camp Butner that the military structures no longer needed. In September 1952, the doors of a new facility opened for grades 7th-12th, with 44 teachers and 1380 students. Under the leadership of Rev. Hawley, the school advanced from its beginning 3teachers to 44; from 100 students to 1380; from one small room to five educational buildings; and from no buses to 15 school buses
- The G.C. Hawley School remained a segregated union school for Black students in Creedmoor until 1969, when the high school department was closed and its students were sent to the all-white South Granville High School. Then, on a cold January night in 1970 a fire destroyed the predominantly white Creedmoor Elementary school. Four days later, the faculty and students of Creedmoor Elementary School were transitioned and housed with the faculty and students of The G. C. Hawley School. The fire brought a change from segregation to integration in Granville County, NC
- In 1975, Hawley became a middle school serving grades 5th – 8th and today remains a middle school that continues to serve all students, Black and white, in the district. The vision of Rev. G. C. Hawley, continues to do what he set out to do, provide an equal and proper education. ([Source](#))
- Ask students to discuss what they think it took for a school like The Hawley School to be successful. What obstacles were faced and how did Rev. Hawley and the Black community work to overcome these obstacles? In comparing independent initiatives like this one to the Rosenwald School program, what would be the pros and cons of doing this separate from a larger network of philanthropy?



# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Exploring Local History: NC Rosenwald Schools by County

9. Tell students they are going to take some time to research whether their own county is one of the 93 North Carolina counties that had at least one Rosenwald School. (If they find their county did not have a school, they should select a nearby county to research.) Provide students with the [Researching Local Rosenwald Schools](#) worksheet, and go over the instructions. Students can do the research activity individually or in pairs, depending on the amount of computers available. Once students have had time to do some independent research, come together for a class discussion and allow students to report out on what they discovered:

- What did you discover that you found most interesting? Is there anything you would like to know more about?
- Only around 60 Rosenwald Schools are still standing in North Carolina out of the over 800 that were built across 93 counties. Why do you think so few remain?
- Why is it important for North Carolina, and all states, to work to preserve and/or restore these sites? What were some of your ideas for your local government officials?
  - [Here is a 2022 article](#) about the restoration of a Wake County Rosenwald School, the Panther Branch Rosenwald School
  - The [Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School](#) is a recently renovated site, and the furthest western Rosenwald School in the state

### Optional Culminating Art/STEAM Project: Design Your Own Rosenwald School

10. As a culminating project (or as a coordinating project for the art teacher to implement), have students examine the designs of Rosenwald Schools, then work to create their own modernized design for a classroom. Begin the project with a discussion of space:

- How does where you learn affect how you learn?
- How can the design of schools and classrooms enhance learning? How can poor design inhibit learning? What design elements in your school or classroom affect your learning?
- What do you think an ideal school looks like? What would you want in your perfect school?

11. Remind students that Rosenwald Schools were designed with very specific elements in mind and the Rosenwald Fund provided each site with state-of-the-art architectural plans. Two black architecture professors at Tuskegee, [Robert R. Taylor](#) (a Wilmington, NC native born in 1868, who attended [Williston School](#) and later the [Gregory Normal Institute](#), a school for blacks operated and maintained by the American Missionary Association) and **W.A. Hazel**, drew the first set for a 1915 pamphlet *The Negro Rural School and Its Relation to the Community*. In 1920 Rosenwald official Samuel L. Smith assumed the task. His *Community School Plans* pattern books were eventually distributed by the Interstate School Building Service and reached thousands of communities far beyond the South. ([Source](#))

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Optional Culminating Art/STEAM Project: Design Your Own Rosenwald School

**12.** Provide students with some time to independently visit sites such as <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/digital/collection/p16062coll13/id/4554> and/or <https://www.historysouth.org/schoolplans/>. Tell them to browse the designs, and as they do, to make a list of the characteristics of a Rosenwald School that they notice and what they have learned throughout the lesson thus far, including design, construction, philosophy, community involvement, and staffing. (Teachers can also opt to project a few designs up front and create a list as an entire class.) Afterwards, discuss:

- What characteristics did you notice/place on your list? What particular elements in Rosenwald Schools increased the quality of education for students?
  - Share a bit more regarding the purposeful design of Rosenwald Schools. According to [Architect Magazine](#): "The Rosenwald Schools may have looked traditional, but they incorporated many design innovations. The classrooms were often separated by movable partitions so they could be combined into one large space. Classrooms had tall ceilings and exceptionally large double-hung windows, typically arranged in batteries for maximum daylighting, which was crucial since many of the sites lacked electricity. East and west light was favored and building orientation was emphasized. "It is better to have proper lighting within the schoolroom, however, than to yield to the temptation to make a good show by having the long side face the road," instructed the Tuskegee handbook. Cross-ventilation was facilitated by "breeze windows"—internal openings—and the buildings were raised off the ground on piers to facilitate cooling. This was green architecture by necessity."
- Why do you think new school buildings were important for Black children's education in North Carolina? How is attending school in a building built for it different from attending school in a church or someone's home? (Remind students to reflect back on the "before and after" images they viewed in their primary source packet.)
- How do you think the Rosenwald school buildings across North Carolina changed students' school experience and learning?
- Are there any qualities you identified in Rosenwald Schools that you think should be implemented in your school? How might changes to the space improve your learning?

**13.** Tell students that for their culminating project, they are going to design their own classroom or school blueprint that they believe provides an ideal setting where every student has the best opportunity to learn. This can be done individually or in groups. Teachers should decide what medium students should use for their design (i.e., will this be done via sketch on paper, using design software, or an online program such as [Classroom Planner](#)) as well as how students will share their work with each other.

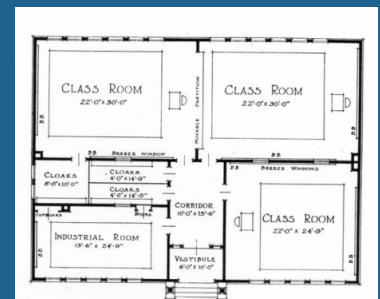
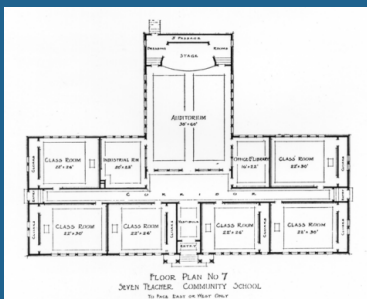


Photo credit and source: [www.historysouth.org](http://www.historysouth.org)

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Extension Activity: Exploring Black Musicians & Artists/The Rosenwald Fellows

**14.** Allow students to take some time to explore another less known Rosenwald program: **The Rosenwald Fellowship**. Play the audio for “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” originally written as a poem in 1900 by **James Weldon Johnson**, and provide students with a copy of the lyrics. (A performance of the song and its lyrics are available via the NAACP [here](#). Another modern acapella adaptation is available [here](#).) As they listen and follow along, tell students to identify and note the words and phrases that create an image in their mind, and/or the parts that conjure a particular feeling or mood. Afterwards, discuss:

- What did you see in your mind while listening? How did Johnson create imagery in his words?
- How does the music/performance affect the mood and emotion of the words? Consider the words as a poem with the words set to music. Which has more of an effect on you and why?
- What message do you think James Weldon Johnson is trying to convey? What is the spirit of this piece? Can you make any connections to our exploration of Black education?
  - Remind students that Johnson wrote this in 1900. Ask them to review what they know about this time period (i.e., Jim Crow Era) and how might the song be a response to 1900s society?

**15.** Explain that while “[Lift Every Voice and Sing](#)” was originally written as a poem in 1900 by Johnson, later that year, it was set to music by his brother, John Rosamond Johnson. A choir of 500 schoolchildren at the segregated Stanton School in Florida, where Johnson was principal, first performed the song in public to celebrate President Abraham Lincoln's birthday. It has gone on to be considered the **Black National Anthem** and is characterized as a “masterpiece born out of the Black experience that has served as a beacon of hope, perseverance, and strength for those disenfranchised folks.” Further discuss:

- What themes related to the Black experience do you identify in the poem/song?
- Why do you think this is considered the Black National Anthem?
- What role might the anthem's message have played in unifying Black people in their fight for equal rights in this country?

**16.** Next, layer in an image for them to consider by projecting **Augusta Savage's** 1939 sculpture “The Harp,” originally titled “Lift Every Voice & Sing,” which was a response to the song. (Numerous images can be found via an internet search; one is available in [this article](#) about Augusta Savage.) Allow students to comment on what they see and what they consider Savage's interpretation of “Lift Every Voice & Sing” to be. Finally, share some information about both James Weldon Johnson and Augusta Savage with students, who were both part of the [Harlem Renaissance](#) and Rosenwald Fellows.

“**Lift every voice and sing. Till earth and heaven ring...**”

# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Extension Activity: Exploring Black Musicians & Artists/The Rosenwald Fellows

**16. CONTINUED** Finally, share some information about both James Weldon Johnson and Augusta Savage with students, who were both part of the [Harlem Renaissance](#) and Rosenwald Fellows.

- **James Weldon Johnson (1871 – 1938)** was an American writer and civil rights activist. He started working for the NAACP in 1917 and in 1920 and was the first African American to be chosen as executive secretary of the organization. He was an established writer, known during the Harlem Renaissance for his poems, novels, and anthologies. Johnson was appointed under President [Theodore Roosevelt](#) as U.S. consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua for most of the period from 1906 to 1913. In 1934, he was the first African-American professor to be hired at New York University. Later in life, he was a professor of creative literature and writing at Fisk University, a historically black university. **James Weldon Johnson was a 1928, 1930, and 1931 Rosenwald Fellow.**
- **Augusta Savage (1892 - 1962)** was a sculptor also associated with the Harlem Renaissance. She was also a teacher who devoted her life to teaching other black artists how to sculpt, draw and paint. Her most famous artwork is the Harp. The Harp had a central location at the 1939 World's Fair, and at the time, Savage was the only black woman to be commissioned at the fair. **Augusta Savage was a 1929-1931 Rosenwald Fellow.**

**17.** Tell students that in addition to Rosenwald Schools, an equally important but even less known project was the **Rosenwald Fellowship Program**. Provide a quick overview for students:

- Another avenue by which the Julius Rosenwald Fund supported the important work of Black people was through the less spotlighted Rosenwald Fellowship program. The fellowship program was created in 1928 and implemented the following year. Proposed by Rosenwald foundation manager Edwin Embree, the grandson of a prominent abolitionist, the program would offer financial assistance to "individuals of exceptional promise." The fellowship program was active until 1948, awarding 588 fellowships to African Americans and 222 to "white Southerners," most of whom are remembered today as talented leaders in fields from the arts to international diplomacy. The recipient list included James Weldon Johnson and Augusta Savage and other popular names such as acclaimed opera singer **Marian Anderson**; authors **James Baldwin**, **Ralph Ellison**, and **Zora Neale Hurston**; painter **Jacob Lawrence**; and civil rights activist, politician, and educator **Julian Bond**.
- In 1944 a Rosenwald fellowship enabled North Carolina-born **Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray**, who had just graduated as valedictorian of her class at Howard University Law School, to continue her legal studies at the University of California at Berkeley. Durham's **Dr. John Hope Franklin's** two fellowships, in 1937 and 1938, enabled him to receive his PhD in history from Harvard. He went on to become the foremost African American historian of his generation.
  - Read about how recipients of Rosenwald fellowships provided much of the insight and scholarly research that led to the 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* [here](#).
  - A relevant poem to share with students while studying Black education is "[Theme for English B](#)" by **Langston Hughes**, another Rosenwald Fellow. (The voice Hughes uses in the poem is from North Carolina.)



# NORTH CAROLINA'S ROSENWALD SCHOOLS

## PROCEDURE

### Extension Activity: Exploring Black Musicians & Artists/The Rosenwald Fellows

18. Take a moment to discuss with students:

- Think about the role of art in your life (be it visual art, music, theater, film, literature and poetry, etc.) In what ways is art important to you? Have various art forms ever offered you encouragement, inspiration, hope in a difficult time, etc.? Explain.
- What is the role of the arts in calling attention to and/or advancing social justice?
- What obstacles did talented African American intellectuals, artists, writers, and musicians face throughout the 1900s? Why was the Rosenwald Fellowship important?
- The Rosenwald Fellowship had the stated goal of supporting “individuals of exceptional promise.” Who got to define who/what was “exceptional?” What power dynamic was thus at play?
  - For reference, teachers may want to consult [“Patronage or Patronizing? The ‘White’ Role in the Renaissance](#) and/or [“Eric Walrond and the Varying Dynamics of White Patronage During the Harlem Renaissance”](#) (p. 103-111)
- What role do you think art (such as the variety of incredible works created by Rosenwald Fellows) could play in the lives of Black people facing adversity such as racism, educational inequities, and/or hoping to organize and fight back against such challenges?

19. Teachers with time can have students research specific Rosenwald Fellows and their body of work as an extension activity.

“Go home and write  
a page tonight.  
And let that page come out of you—  
Then, it will be true...”

FROM *THEME FOR ENGLISH B*  
BY LANGSTON HUGHES

PHOTO CREDIT AND SOURCE: [WWW.BRITANNICA.COM/](http://WWW.BRITANNICA.COM/)

A poet, novelist, fiction writer, and playwright, Langston Hughes is known for his insightful, colorful portrayals of black life in America from the twenties through the sixties and was important in shaping the artistic contributions of the Harlem Renaissance.





## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## OVERVIEW

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are institutions of higher education that were established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the primary intention of providing educational access to the African American community. Today, North Carolina is home to twelve such institutions, ranking as the second state in the nation with the highest number of HBCUs. From the stories of their founding and each institution's rich history, to their dedication to the struggle for civil rights, to their graduates who are changing the world each day, this lesson will provide students with an understanding of North Carolina's HBCU landscape, why they were created, and how these institutions are integral to the state's system of education, past and present. Students will culminate the lesson with a "deep dive" into one of North Carolina's HBCUs and create a brochure for the school (highlighting information such as its history, civil rights activity, and prominent graduates) based on their research.

“We who believe in freedom cannot rest.”

ELLA BAKER, 1964  
SHAW UNIVERSITY, CLASS OF 1927

## TEACHER PREPARATION & BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- Teachers in need of a foundation on the history of NC's HBCUs should read the report [Fertile Ground: The Stories of North Carolina's HBCUs](#) prior to implementing this lesson
- Watch the NC Museum of History's [Community Class Series](#) on [HBCUs and Black Leadership](#)
- The documentary [Shaw Rising](#) depicts the history of the South's first HBCU, Shaw University, and its impact on the course of education and social justice in the United States
- The documentary [Tell Them We Are Rising](#) provides ample engaging information on HBCUs. While the film does not have a NC focus, in particular, it is very informative. (The site also contains activities for using film clips in class.)

## DURATION

- 60 minutes for the lesson; additional time will be needed for brochure creation

## GRADES

- 8-12
- This content can also be used in younger grades by modifying the background reading.

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## WHERE DOES THIS FIT IN THE CURRICULUM?

For NC Standards Alignment, [click here](#). The history of NC's HBCUs spans from 1865, when Raleigh's Shaw University was founded, to North Carolina's newest HBCU, North Carolina Central University, founded in 1910. (The nation's very first HBCU, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, was founded in 1837.) The majority of HBCUs originated between 1865-1900, with the greatest number of HBCUs started in 1867, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. Thus, this entire lesson, or components of the lesson, can be integrated into:

- **North Carolina History & American History:** The study of HBCUs fits well into units on Reconstruction and the "[Long](#)" Civil Rights Movement, as well as Current Events
- **Civics & Economics:** Teachers seeking to add more of an economic focus when implementing this lesson should consult [HBCUs Make America Strong: The Positive Economic Impact of Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#)
- **English Language Arts/Media Center:** HBCUs have long been considered a refuge and place of cultivation for Black intellectuals and writers. English teachers and librarians can find numerous examples of [famous Black poets](#), [children's book authors](#), [contemporary authors](#), and others who are HBCU graduates with excellent work to integrate with the activities in this lesson. Two titles that specifically related to the portion of this lesson on Ernie Barnes include:
  - [Between the Lines: How Ernie Barnes Went from the Football Field to the Art Gallery](#) by Sandra Neil Wallace (Author), Bryan Collier (Illustrator)
  - [Pigskins to Paintbrushes: The Story of Football-Playing Artist Ernie Barnes](#)
- **Humanities Courses:** HBCUs have served as a critical nexus for Black cultural production for more than 150 years, and there are numerous connections to make to the study of visual art, music, dance, literature, etc., in all humanities courses. This article, [School Spirit: Art & HBCUs](#), addresses this in more detail. The lesson includes an exploration of artist Ernie Barnes's "Homecoming" and discussion of the cultural and artistic components of HBCU homecomings
- **Science/Math:** The increasing number of African Americans studying and working in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields is largely [due to the efforts of HBCUs](#). (For instance, the United States' EPA Administrator, Michael Regan, is a native North Carolinian and an NC A&T State University graduate.) This lesson can be easily integrated into science and math courses, with teachers focusing on the impact HBCU graduates are having in the STEM field

“ HBCUs Strengthen Our Nation. In total, the nation's HBCUs generate \$14.8 billion in economic impact annually; that's equivalent to a ranking in the top 200 on the Fortune 500 list of America's largest corporations. ”

UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND, INC.  
[WWW.UNCF.ORG/PROGRAMS/HBCU-IMPACT](http://WWW.UNCF.ORG/PROGRAMS/HBCU-IMPACT)

## LESSON PLAN

# THE HISTORY OF BLACK EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## MATERIALS

- [Oral history excerpt](#) from Dr. Pauli Murray (Make sure to pause the clip at 7:06 or the next clip will play.)
- [Tell Them We Are Rising trailer](#)
- [Student Reading - Fertile Ground: North Carolina's Historical Black Colleges and Universities](#), student reading
  - This student handout is a direct excerpt from the Center for Racial Equity in Education's (CREED) Fertile Ground report. The full report is available [here](#)
- [Oral history excerpt](#) from Ella Baker (pause at 12:07)
- [News story on Dr. David Forbes](#) and the Raleigh Sit-Ins
- [Homecoming](#), by artist Ernie Barnes (to be projected for class analyzation)
- Sounds from HBCU marching band, such as [this one](#)
  - If you utilize this sample or another from YouTube, check whether your school blocks streaming from YouTube. Instructions on how to download a YouTube video can be found via a [quick internet search](#)
- Video from an HBCU homecoming; [This example](#) is from A & T University (start around 3:10 minute mark), but a YouTube search offers numerous options
- [Create a Brochure](#), student research project
  - Teachers may want to provide a brochure template for students. Free templates are available in programs such as [Google](#), [Canva](#) or [Adobe](#). Other online formats can also be considered, such as [Interactive PDF](#)
- Access to computers with internet; it is recommended students begin their research at:
  - <https://www.creed-nc.org/thenc10> (This site's "Fertile Ground" report contains a segment on each NC HBCU in order of founding on pages 4-23. This PDF can also be printed and provided in hardcopy if needed.)
  - <https://www.ncpedia.org/education/hbcu>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The NC 10](#)
- [History of African American Education in North Carolina](#)
- [Deep Rooted: A Brief History of Race & Education in North Carolina](#)
- [The Way Out is Back Through](#)\_podcast
- [More Than Just A Game: The NC A&T vs NC Central Football Rivalry](#) (25-minute documentary)

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### An Introduction to Historically Black Colleges and Universities in North Carolina

1. Open class by asking what the students can tell you about **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**, both in general and in North Carolina specifically. Teachers can pose probing questions based on what students share:

- What is an HBCU?
- Can anyone name any HBCUs?
- Does anyone know why HBCUs were created and what their purposes were/are?

2. Ensure students understand that **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)** are institutions of higher education that were established before the [Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) (which finally ended the application of "Jim Crow" laws) with the intention of serving the African-American community. This was necessary since the overwhelming majority of **predominantly white institutions of higher-learning ("PWIs")** banned qualified African Americans from enrollment throughout **Jim Crow** and **segregation**.

3. Tell students that you are going to play a 7-minute [clip](#) from **Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray**, a champion for civil and human rights who grew up in Durham, in which Dr. Murray discusses her application to UNC-Chapel Hill in November of 1938. Explain to students that the clip will address some of the realities of the challenges African Americans faced in the 1900s in terms of education, and will thus highlight the important role of HBCUs, why they were created, and why they were so critical. Tell students to write down any challenges/injustices that they hear addressed in the clip as they listen. (Make sure to pause the clip at 7:06 or the next clip will play.) Afterwards discuss:

- What does Pauli Murray notice about the application sent to her from UNC-CH and how does Pauli Murray respond?
- How did Dr. Frank Porter Graham respond to Pauli Murray's application? Did Pauli Murray accept this rejection?
- Murray mentions the **Lloyd Gaines** case as one that should change Murray's rejection to UNC. Have you ever heard about Lloyd Gaines? Do you know anything about him and/or [Gaines v. Canada \(1938\)](#)?
  - Share with students that after being denied admission to the University of Missouri School of Law in 1935 because he was Black and refusing the university's offer to pay for him to attend another neighboring state's law school with no racial restriction, he filed suit. His case, *Gaines v. Canada (1938)*, became one of the most important court cases in the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1930s. The U.S. Supreme Court ultimately ruled in his favor, holding that the separate but equal doctrine required that Missouri either admit him or set up a separate law school for Black students.
- What did Frank Graham do after Murray challenged her rejection, citing the Gaines case?
- Why does Murray's application to UNC become national news?
- Why does Murray contact Thurgood Marshall at the NAACP? Why does she think her case is so strong?

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### An Introduction to Historically Black Colleges and Universities in North Carolina

3. *CONTINUED* Tell students to write down any challenges/injustices that they hear addressed in the clip as they listen. (Make sure to pause the clip at 7:06 or the next clip will play.) Afterwards discuss:

- Why did the NAACP reject Pauli Murray's case? What about Pauli Murray, based on what you've learned or on your own inferences, might have led the NAACP to determine the case wasn't a sure win? Why is Pauli Murray surprised by this
  - Although the Supreme Court ruled that year in *Gaines v. Canada* (1938) that state schools were required to provide graduate education to Black as well as white students, Murray was rejected from admission to UNC-CH on the basis of Pauli Murray's race. Largely working alone, Murray corresponded with the university's president, Frank Porter Graham and sent copies of their letters to the African-American press, imploring Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP to take the case. Murray's fight for admittance made national news. The university still denied Pauli Murray admission, and the NAACP refused to take the case—a decision that was likely based on Pauli Murray's "maverick" tendencies as well as questions about Murray's gender and sexual identity. ([Source](#))
- While this excerpt highlights the importance of fighting for equal access to all educational institutions, how does Pauli Murray's struggle also highlight the importance of HBCUs?

4. There is so much more to Pauli Murray's life and career (for a lesson plan exploring Pauli Murray's incredible life and accomplishments in detail, click [here](#)), but for now let students know that Pauli Murray would go on to attend HBCU Howard University, where Murray would write a paper that proposed challenging the "separate" part of the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896) Supreme Court decision as a violation of the 13th and 14th Amendments; this argument eventually formed the basis for the *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) case.

### The Purpose of HBCUs

5. Provide a bit more context regarding the founding and necessity of HBCUs for students to peak their interest, and let students know that they are going to be learning about the rich history and modern-day impact of HBCUs in North Carolina in this lesson.

- Remind students that prior to the conclusion of the Civil War in 1865, education for enslaved people, as well as free Black people, was sparse, especially in the South where laws prohibited teaching enslaved persons to read and write. For the Black people who became literate, it was due to their incredible agency and done at great risk. While there were a few schools dedicated to African American education in the North prior to the Civil War, the first college available to African Americans in the South was Raleigh, NC's **Shaw University**, an HBCU which opened its doors in 1865. Given the priority Black communities placed on education, many institutions dedicated specifically for the education of African Americans were founded in the era immediately following the Civil War. (This time period is covered in detail in [The History of Black Education in North Carolina: Enslavement to Reconstruction](#).) Others followed when Jim Crow and segregation continued to limit equal access to education. (See [The History of Black Education in North Carolina: Jim Crow & Desegregation](#).) These schools included what we now refer to as "HBCUs"



# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### The Purpose of HBCUs

**5. CONTINUED** Provide a bit more context regarding the founding and necessity of HBCUs for students to peak their interest, and let students know that they are going to be learning about the rich history and modern-day impact of HBCUs in North Carolina in this lesson.

- The classification of HBCU was created as part of the **Higher Education Act of 1965**, when Congress officially defined a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) as a school of higher learning that was accredited and established before the [Civil Rights Act of 1964](#), and whose principal mission was the education of Black Americans
- There are now 107 HBCUs in the United States, including public and private institutions. North Carolina ranks as the second state in the nation with the highest number of HBCUs, with twelve currently operating to enrich the minds of future engineers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, scientists, artists, journalists, authors, and more. ([Source](#))

**6.** Next, play the 2:30 minute [Tell Them We Are Rising trailer](#). Before playing the trailer, it is important to provide students with warning that there are some disturbing historical images included in the trailer (i.e., images of violence during slavery, a racial slur, etc.) After viewing, discuss:

- What most stands out to you from what you heard and saw regarding HBCUs? Why were (and are) these schools so important? What did and do HBCUs offer to African Americans that they may not be able to find elsewhere?
- A commentator poses the question, "What is education's purpose?" How would you answer, both for yourself, and also within the context of what you saw? How might your views on the purpose of education differ based on who you are (including your background/race/culture/etc.)?
- The same commentator goes on to ask "Who controls it [education]" - how would you answer this question? Based on what you've learned in previous lessons, what is your answer to her next question of "What is the relationship between education and the broader aspirations of Black people?"
- One person interviewed commented that "an educated population could not be an enslaved population." What do you think she means?
- Based on what you saw and/or know already, what is the connection between HBCUs and the Civil Rights Movement? Why do you think this connection is so strong?
- Based on what we've already learned/discussed in previous lessons, what is so incredible about the creation and success of HBCUs, especially considering the society in which they were created and the adversity Black people were facing?
- Why do you think this documentary was titled "Tell Them We Are Rising?" What message is inherent in the phrase? What specific examples from the trailer, or from what you already know about HBCUs, evidence your thoughts?

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### Fertile Ground: North Carolina's HBCUs

7. Tell students they will be learning more about the rich history and impact over time of NC's HBCUs by reading [Fertile Ground: North Carolina's Historical Black Colleges and Universities](#) (this excerpt is taken from CREED's [full report](#) of the same name.) Students should read and answer the questions provided. Afterwards, go over their thoughts as a class:

- Why do you think education was so important to enslaved people, as well as newly freed people after the Civil War?
- How do our experiences shape our identity? Considering this, what important void did/do HBCUs fill for Black people, often otherwise excluded from educational opportunities or learning in environments in which they were underrepresented?
- The article states that the story of black education in North Carolina is a story of "self determination, black agency and advancement." What do you think the author means and what examples can you cite that evidence this statement?
- What impact did the young people at North Carolina HBCUs have on the **Civil Rights Movement** around the state and nation?

The article mentioned the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**. What do you already know about this group and why was it so important to the Civil Rights Movement?

### HBCUs and the Civil Rights Movement

8. Extend student discussion regarding HBCUs and the Civil Rights Movement. Share with students that it's not an exaggeration to say that the Civil Rights Movement of the twentieth century would not have happened or been as successful without the participation of HBCUs. Not only did HBCUs produce some of the most well known leaders of the movement - including **Ella Baker** (Shaw University), **Diane Nash** (Fisk University), **Medgar Evers** (Alcorn State), **Rosa Parks** (Alabama State), **Stokely Carmichael** (Howard University), and **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** (Morehouse College) - they were also indispensable centers of the fight for equality, with thousands of students fighting for justice. According to Dr. Brian McClure "HBCUs served as institutions of solidarity. Dorm rooms were transformed into meeting locations; quads became rallying centers, chapel basements transformed into training grounds for non-violent protests, and campuses banded together creating an intricate system of social networks." ([Source](#))

9. Allow students to explore this important connection further by exposing them to clips from and about HBCU civil rights leaders **Ella Baker** and **Reverend Dr. David Forbes**.

- *Oral History clip with Ella Baker:* In this clip, [Ella Baker](#), Shaw alumna and [Southern Christian Leadership Conference](#) founding member and field secretary, and [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee](#) co-founder, discusses the movement. She specifically references conflicts within the leadership and participants of the civil rights movement, highlighting the often overlooked complexities within the movement. (As is true with any movement, not everyone involved always agreed on the best way to bring about change and end segregation.) [Listen to the excerpt here \(stop at 12:07\)](#). Discuss:

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### HBCUs and the Civil Rights Movement

**9. CONTINUED** Allow students to explore this important connection further by exposing them to clips from and about HBCU civil rights leaders **Ella Baker** and **Reverend Dr. David Forbes**.

- [Listen to the excerpt here \(stop at 12:07\)](#). Discuss:
  - What conflict does Ella Baker describe that existed within the leaders and participants of the Civil Rights Movement? Does it surprise you to hear that there were inner conflicts such as this within the Movement leaders?
  - What does Ella Baker ultimately argue regarding whether you could register Black voters without confrontation? What is your opinion regarding the debate of whether you can remain non-violent while conducting voter registration for African Americans during this time period?
  - How was Ella Baker able to encourage compromise? Why do you think young people were in a better position to deal with differences in the movement and work together?
  - Similar to **Diane Nash**, what challenges do you imagine Ella Baker faced by being a young African American woman in a role of leadership during this time?
  - What issues did NAACP and SCLC have with SNCC? Why do you think SNCC wanted to remain independent? How might this illustrate the differences in the way young people and adults often see the world?
  - What was Move on Mississippi and how did this highlight the divisions and differences between SNCC and other groups?
- *News story featuring Shaw student sit-ins:* This 2017 segment features coverage of the 57th anniversary of the Raleigh sit-ins and includes an interview with Shaw student at the time, [Reverend Dr. David Forbes](#). In 1960, Ella Baker, Shaw alumna and Southern Christian Leadership Conference founding member and field secretary came back to campus to organize the first meeting of her new group, the [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee](#). At 19, Forbes was elected to represent the students in North Carolina. [Play the first news story on this page, starting at :32 seconds to the end \(2:32.\)](#)
  - According to Dr. Forbes, what impact did Shaw students have on the Civil Rights Movement, historically and today?
  - For more on Dr. Forbes and his work co-founding SNCC, see [this interview](#) from NPR.

### The Black Campus Movement (1965 - 1972)

**10.** While discussing the connection between HBCUs and the Civil Rights Movement, further highlight how this transitioned into what became known as the [Black Campus Movement \(1965-1972\)](#). During this time, thousands of Black student activists, aided on some campuses by white and Latino students, initiated a range of campus reforms including: the addition of more Black students, faculty, administrators, and coaches; the establishment of Black cultural centers; the creation of Black Studies courses and programs; and more. Their ultimate aim was to diversify and thus transform higher education.

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### The Black Campus Movement (1965 - 1972)

11. Share [this 1 minute excerpt](#) of North Carolinian [Dr. James Edward Cheek](#), president emeritus of Howard University.

- Dr. Cheek was born in Roanoke Rapids, NC, in 1932, served as a member of the United States Air Force in Korea in 1951 and went on to earn a B.A. in sociology and history from **Shaw University** in 1955. He became a professor and was named president of Shaw University in 1963, at the age of thirty. In 1968, he was appointed president of Howard University. When Dr. Cheek arrived at Howard, students had been protesting living conditions and educational policies for the preceding two years as part of the Black Campus Movement. In this clip, he is speaking to the press after HBCU Presidents met with President Nixon. Discuss with students:
  - Dr. Cheek references “outrage and anger.” What was occurring in 1970 and the years prior that resulted in these feelings?
  - How does Dr. Cheek regard HBCUs?
  - How do you think Dr. Cheek views activism on HBCU campuses and by HBCU students?

Dr. Cheek himself had shown no reluctance to assert his own views as a young man, when, according to The Washington Post magazine, he argued with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. about a policy of strict nonviolence in the face of brutality during civil rights demonstrations. He also spoke plainly when he testified before a presidential commission in 1970 investigating campus unrest. “Students are determined they are not going to be fired upon and not be prepared to fire back,” he said at a hearing, “and I think that is a dangerous kind of situation where students are confronted with officers who overreact.” ([Source](#))

### Art, Culture, and Community at HBCUs

12. Another rich legacy and contribution of HBCUs is that of art, culture, and community. In addition to the quality arts and humanities programs that HBCUs offer, their museums, galleries, art, and art-history programs have been critical for Black cultural production for more than 150 years, and should be seen as integral to any assessment of the arts ([Source](#)). Provide some time for students to explore these concepts in activities such as:

A. Examine the painting [Homecoming](#), by artist Ernie Barnes.

- Project the piece and tell students to take a few independent minutes to jot down their first impressions. Teachers can pose guiding questions such as:
  - What do you first see/notice about this painting? What stands out to you and why?
  - What adjectives and verbs would you use to describe the image?
  - What emotions do you see represented?
  - What sounds do you imagine hearing if you were to be present in the moment painted?
  - What’s happening in this painting?
  - What was your first reaction to this artwork? Why do you think you had the reaction?

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### Art, Culture, and Community at HBCUs

**12. CONTINUED** Project the piece and tell students to take a few independent minutes to jot down their first impressions. Teachers can pose guiding questions such as:

- What do you notice about the composition of this piece of art? The lines? The colors? The movement? Space? Balance? What choices did the artist make to make your eye move through the artwork, and/or focus on?
  - If you close your eyes, what aspects of the art do you most remember? Why do you think that is?
  - What do you think this painting is representing and what evidence makes you think this? What is the story? z
  - What are you left wondering about the painting? What questions do you have about it that are left unanswered?
- Let students know that the piece they are looking at is titled **"Homecoming,"** and allow them to weigh in on whether the title changes their interpretation. Explain that the artist is **Ernest ("Ernie") Barnes, Jr.** He was born in Durham, NC in 1938, during the **Jim Crow** era. He lived near the vibrant (and now historic) **Hayti District** of the city. (For a lesson plan exploring Hayti, [click here](#).) As was the case in the 1950s, Barnes attended racially segregated schools. In 1956 he graduated from the then all-Black Hillside High School with 26 athletic scholarship offers, but segregation prevented him from attending nearby Duke University or the University of North Carolina. Instead, he chose to attend the HBCU North Carolina College at Durham (formerly North Carolina College for Negroes, which is today North Carolina Central University). At college, he majored in art on a full athletic scholarship. At age 18, on a college art class field trip to the newly desegregated North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, Barnes inquired where he could find "paintings by Negro artists". The museum guide responded, "Your people don't express themselves that way". Barnes went on to become a successful artist, and 23 years later, in 1979, when he returned to the museum for a solo exhibition of his work, North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt attended. In 1999 Barnes was bestowed "The University Award", the highest honor by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors.
  - Teachers may also want to have the book, [Pigskins to Paintbrushes: The Story of Football-Playing Artist Ernie Barnes](#) by Don Tate, or [Between the Lines: How Ernie Barnes Went from the Football Field to the Art Gallery](#), on hand, which can supplement these activities nicely, regardless of student age/reading level.

**12.** Another rich legacy and contribution of HBCUs is that of art, culture, and community. In addition to the quality arts and humanities programs that HBCUs offer, their museums, galleries, art, and art-history programs have been critical for Black cultural production for more than 150 years, and should be seen as integral to any assessment of the arts ([Source](#)). Provide some time for students to explore these concepts in activities such as:

**B.** Expose students to some of the music and cultural celebrations associated with HBCU Homecomings.

- Barnes' painting Homecoming represents an important tradition and annual highlight for HBCU campuses and communities. [HBCU homecomings](#) celebrate Black joy and culture. The festivities (which include music, drumlines, food, athletics, and more) allow HBCUs to connect with their communities and to forge relationships between different generations of students and alumni



# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## PROCEDURE

### Art, Culture, and Community at HBCUs

**12.B. CONTINUED** Expose students to some of the music and cultural celebrations associated with HBCU Homecomings.

- Show students footage from an actual HBCU homecoming. [This example](#) is from A & T University (start around 3:10), but a YouTube search offers numerous options
- Allow students to comment on what they see and hear, and discuss their sense of the spirit of the events. Why are HBCU Homecomings so important to their students and alum? While all universities host homecomings, why might those hosted by an HBCU be even more significant?
  - “And there is the bridge between HBCU Homecoming and Black culture: these institutions are symbols of progress and the achievements of Black people when they were disenfranchised and barred from traditional means of post-secondary education. Alumni then and now are legacies and testaments to Black resiliency. Some of these alumni travel thousands of miles to participate in the culture on the yard and celebrate how far their alma mater has come.” ([Source](#))

### Deep Dive: Design a Brochure for a North Carolina HBCU

**13.** Tell students that they will enrich their foundational knowledge of NC's HBCUs by doing a “deep dive” into one institution of their choice. Go over the [assignment sheet](#), which provides an outline of how students will research an HBCU and create a teen-friendly brochure. Final brochures must share the general history of the school and its founding, connections to the Civil Rights Movement, and elevate the story of at least one prominent graduate. (For instance, the United States' EPA Administrator, Michael Regan, is a native North Carolinian and an NC A&T State University graduate!)

**14.** Teachers should decide whether to provide any specific design specifications for students (i.e., computer designed v. created by hand; 3-fold or otherwise; etc.) For example, teachers with technology access may want to have students create this using [Interactive PDF](#). Teachers may also want to supply students with some examples of professional brochures, and/or provide design recommendations, such as those provided [here](#).

**15.** On the brochure due date, provide class time for students to view each other's work and hold a culminating discussion:

- Based on your review of these brochures, which of NC's HBCUs do you find most interesting, inspiring, etc. and why?
- Why are HBCUs so important, to both Black students but also the entirety of American society?
- What is so incredible about the creation, and longevity of HBCUs, especially considering the adversity Black people have faced?
- How would you characterize HBCUs in terms of their role in the overall story of Black education in North Carolina?

# NORTH CAROLINA'S HISTORICAL BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

## Optional Extension Activities

- [CREED's Fertile Ground report](#) (pages 30-31) highlights a pattern of inequitable funding between HBCUs and other universities that are predominantly white ("PWIs") both in North Carolina and around the nation. Discuss the historic theme of inequitable funding for Black education, as well as the ways that Black communities have rallied in spite of such inequities
  - Explore the creation of the [United Negro College Fund \(UNCF.\)](#) In 1943, Frederick D. Patterson (president of what is today known as Tuskegee University) wrote a [historic letter](#) to The Pittsburgh Courier proposing the creation of an alliance of black colleges that would work together to raise money for their mutual benefit. The result was UNCF, founded in 1944 on the belief that there is strength in numbers—that HBCUs ought to make a joint effort to appeal for funds—as well as the belief that education was crucial to Black mobility
- Have students consider why access to equitable funding and resources is critical for HBCUs. (As the UNCF website states, HBCU "institutions and students are key components to national economic growth that enables better futures for *all* Americans.") In practice of the [Taking Informed Action](#) standard, students can then write an OpEd with the reasons for and ideas of how to ensure equitable funding
- Conduct a school wide survey to find out what percentage of family members are college graduates, specifically asking what percentage are HBCU graduates. Students should be responsible for creating the questions for the survey. Students could follow up and do oral history interviews with community members who attended an HBCU
- Have students do a virtual reading of the picture books of Ernie Barnes to local elementary schools
- Take students on a historical tour of the nearest HBCU to you. This would ideally be done onsite, but many HBCUs also offer virtual tours. Have students document their tour with video or photographs
- Host an HBCU [college fair](#) at your school, either in person or virtual
- Show an age-appropriate film. Recommendations are available at [7 Movies About Black College Life You Need to Stream](#) (Note: Teachers should always check the ratings on films and pre-screen to ensure the film compliments classroom learning goals and is age appropriate.)

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# WEEKLY PLANNER

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

NOTES

NOTES

# WEEKLY PLANNER

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY



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