ELECTRONIC FIELD TRIP:

SEPARATE IS NOT EQUAL:

Brown v. Board of Education

Facilitator’s Guide

sponsored by Morgan Stanley
Thank you for registering for the National Museum of American History’s Brown v. Board of Education Electronic Field Trip. The Museum’s new exhibition, Separate Is Not Equal: Brown v. Board of Education, commemorates the 50th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court case, placing it in historical perspective and giving students insight into the enormous impact the decision has had on American society. This live satellite broadcast will bring the exhibition to middle and high school students across the country. The program will feature a guided tour of the exhibition, after which students will have the opportunity to talk with Museum curators about the Brown v. Board case and its legacy.

Making The Most of Your Electronic Field Trip

This booklet is designed to give you useful ideas to maximize the effectiveness of the live electronic field trip broadcast. While you are not required to participate in any supplemental activities, success does depend on providing suitable facilities and equipment, arranging for an appropriate audience, and returning the attached evaluation forms. Thank you in advance for making this event a success.

Note: If you are not the person who regularly works with the students who will attend the broadcast, please share this guide with the appropriate faculty member(s) for their possible use.

Basic checklist

Now that you have registered to participate in the electronic field trip, appoint a facilitator. The essential facilitator responsibilities include the following:

• Invite participants, including students, faculty, and any other appropriate staff members to view the broadcast, either live or on videotape.

• Arrange for a suitable viewing room with as large a television screen as possible connected to the satellite receiving dish, a telephone connected to an outside line and able to make 800-number long distance calls, enough chairs for the audience, a table for handouts, and a box to deposit completed evaluation forms.

• Arrange with your institution’s broadcast technician to tune the receiver prior to the broadcast and check the reception during the half-hour test pattern broadcast from the satellite beginning at 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time for the middle school broadcast, and 12:30 p.m. Eastern Time for the high school broadcast. If you have problems at that point, ask the technician to call 1-800-432-3286. Staff will take your call and try to help you bring in the best possible reception. Ask your technician to stay throughout the program. FOR BEST RESULTS, HAVE THE SATELLITE TECHNICIAN TUNE IN THE CORRECT SATELLITE THE DAY BEFORE THE BROADCAST.

Objectives

At the end of this electronic field trip, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the rise of segregated (Jim Crow) America in the years following the Civil War and its impact into the twentieth century.
2. Identify the purpose and goals of education in American society and explain why African Americans chose to challenge segregated education in their quest for equality.
3. Discuss the historical background leading up to the Brown decision.
4. Discuss some of the ways in which the students’ own lives have been influenced by the Brown decision.

Pre-broadcast preparation

1. **Introduce the Brown v. Board of Education case to students.** Provide a historical overview that will give students general background, discuss the landmark cases that led to desegregation, and the extent to which integration and equality remain issues today.

**Historical Overview:**

Following the Civil War, the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments made strides toward mandating equality for Americans regardless of skin color. When Reconstruction ended in the 1870s, however, most white politicians abandoned the cause of protecting the rights of African Americans in the name of healing the wounds between the North and South. In the former Confederacy and neighboring states, local governments constructed a legal system aimed at reestablishing a society based on white supremacy. This legislation, called Jim Crow laws, prevented black men from voting and created a system of inferior segregated facilities in schools, housing, jobs, and public places, including public transportation. On May 18, 1896, the Supreme Court’s decision in the Plessy v. Ferguson case upheld segregation as constitutional, with only one dissenting vote. In this decision, the Court denied that segregation necessarily produced inequality.

One of the most pressing concerns of African American leaders during this period was the inadequacy of black schools, which were poorly maintained and funded, and often provided only minimal education. Parents and educators worked to raise funds and improve the quality of education, and sometimes turned to the courts, but white judges and officials were generally unsympathetic to their cause.

Beginning in the 1930s, African American attorneys developed a long-range strategic plan to use the legal system to weaken and destroy segregation. Their decades-long campaign demanded a powerful strategy, support from black communities across the country, and extraordinary legal expertise. The Howard University School of Law and the NAACP were two organizations that helped lead this campaign. By gaining victories in court cases that focused on segregation in university education, the NAACP gradually undermined the legal basis for segregation.
In the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* case, African American parents and NAACP activists challenged Topeka’s policy of segregation in public schools. *Brown v. Board of Education* became the collective title for the five cases nationwide that were responsible for ending segregation in public schools. The other four were *Briggs v. Elliott*, in Clarendon County, South Carolina; *Davis v. the School Board of Price Edward County*, Farmville, Virginia; *Bulah v. Gebhart* and *Belton v. Gebhart*, Delaware; and *Bolling v. Sharpe*, Washington, D.C. (For more information, see the *Community Briefing Sheets* on each case, which will be available for download as part of the exhibition Teachers’ Guide at [http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/guide.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/guide.pdf)).

The Supreme Court heard these cases concurrently from 1952 to 1955. One major question was whether the congressmen who framed the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment intended for public schools to be integrated. The Justices asked the attorneys for both sides to research this question, and to present their findings. In 1954, under the leadership of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the court decided unanimously to overturn *Plessy v. Ferguson*. But to achieve unanimity, Warren assured some of the more cautious justices that the decision would not be implemented immediately. In 1955, the court ordered, in what is now known as *Brown II*, that no timetable would be established for school desegregation. States, however, must proceed with “all deliberate speed.” Despite the fact that many civil rights advocates regarded this as a setback, the original 1954 decision was regarded then and now as a shining moment in American history.

2. **Pre-Broadcast Classroom Lesson:** If you have time before the broadcast, we suggest completing a primary-source photographic analysis activity with your students from the *Separate Is Not Equal: Brown v. Board of Education* Teachers’ Guide, which will be available at [http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/guide.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/guide.pdf). The suggested lesson, which takes one or two class periods, can be found under *Unit Two–The Battleground: Separate and Unequal Education*. Through the analysis of several photographs of black and white classrooms before the *Brown* case, students will be able to identify the purpose and goals of education in American society and explain why African Americans chose to challenge segregated education in their quest for equality.

3. **Introduce the concept of a live satellite broadcast to the students** and orient them to what will happen during the broadcast.

4. **Have the students brainstorm questions for the panel of curators.** Develop a list of questions and designate a student (or students) who will call in. As a group, select several questions the students would most like to ask. That way, if another caller asks a question similar to one you chose, there will be “back-up” questions ready. Listen carefully to the broadcast to ensure that your question hasn’t been answered by the tour portion of the program, and to avoid repetition of questions.

5. **Watch the Electronic Field Trip broadcast.** Have students phone in with their pre-prepared questions.
6. **Post Field Trip Group Discussion Questions**

Below are some suggested discussion topics to talk about with your class after the broadcast.

- Identify some of the things necessary to achieve true equality for a group that has been denied access to certain rights.
- What do you think led to the establishment of the Jim Crow laws in the South following the Civil War?
- What would it be like to live in a society where such laws were enforced?
- How do these laws compare to the rights guaranteed in the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments?
- What does the establishment of these laws reveal about the culture of the South at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century? What words would you use to describe it?
- What is a truly “integrated” education? Is it simply having a diverse group of students in the same room, or is it something more than that?
- Why do you think the NAACP chose to target education as one of the key areas of the Civil Rights movement?
- Discuss the relationship between equal access to education and equality. How does this relate to the current debate regarding affirmative action?
- What is courage? Are there different types of courage? What kinds of courage were the people involved in these cases demonstrating? Who do you think is the most courageous individual among these five cases? Why?

7. **Post Field Trip Classroom Lesson:** If you have time after the broadcast, encourage students to examine a civil rights or education issue that has taken place or become prominent in the past 50 years through the creation of a poster, video, play, website presentation, radio broadcast, or essay. Possible topics for study include the Little Rock school desegregation crisis (1957), the sit-in at the Greensboro, N.C., Woolworth’s lunch counter (1960), Martin Luther King Jr.’s March on Washington (1963), the Boston School Busing Controversy (1973), school vouchers, bilingual/multicultural education, and affirmative action (University of Michigan Case, 2003), and the impact of integration in your community. In the *Separate Is Not Equal: Brown v. Board of Education* Teachers’ Guide, which will be available at [http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/guide.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/guide.pdf), you will find a more detailed listing of possible research topics in Unit Six–The Past Half Century: Achieving Equality.

8. **Thank students and other participants for attending the electronic field trip.** Ask everyone to fill out their evaluation forms. Collect the forms and return them to the appropriate address.
Field Trip Evaluation Form for Facilitators

Please take a moment to complete the following program evaluation form, and send it to:
Separate Is Not Equal: Brown v. Board of Education, Department of Education and Public Programs,

Name __________________________________________________________

School/Organization ____________________________________________

Street Address __________________________________________________ City __________________________

State __________________________________________________________ Zip ________ Telephone _________________________

How did you receive the program?
☐ Satellite downlink at your institution ☐ School system distribution network
☐ Community cable/PTV station ☐ Videotape
☐ Internet Stream

Estimate the number from your school/organization who viewed the program:

___ Students  ___ Teachers  ___ Other educators

Grade range of the students who participated from your school/organization:
☐ 5  ☐ 6  ☐ 7  ☐ 8
☐ 9  ☐ 10  ☐ 11  ☐ 12

Which portion of the program was the most useful?
☐ Guided tour ☐ Question and answer

Indicate the overall quality of the following production elements by circling the appropriate number:

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Comments and Suggestions: __________________________________________________________
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Field Trip Evaluation Form for Students

Name_________________________ School/Organization_________________________

Teacher’s name_________________________ Grade level_________________________

As part of what class did you attend the Electronic Field Trip? (i.e. social studies, history, government).

After attending the field trip, rate on a scale of 5 to 1 your understanding of Brown v. Board of Education and its importance in American history (with 5 being a thorough understanding).

☐ 1  ☐ 2  ☐ 3  ☐ 4  ☐ 5

What do you remember most from the Field Trip?

____________________________________________________________________________

Identify one new thing you learned.

____________________________________________________________________________

What segment did you find the most interesting?

____________________________________________________________________________

The least interesting?

____________________________________________________________________________

Did you find the field trip too long? Too short?

____________________________________________________________________________

Was the question and answer period too long? Too short?

____________________________________________________________________________

Did the question/answer process flow smoothly?

____________________________________________________________________________

Did you find students’ questions useful/interesting? Not useful/uninteresting?

____________________________________________________________________________

What improvements could be made so that future field trips are more fun, informative and effective?

____________________________________________________________________________

Did you find the post-field trip discussion/group activities added to your understanding of Brown v. Board of Education?

____________________________________________________________________________

On a scale of 1 to 10, rate the experience of the field trip as a whole, with 10 being the highest score:

____________________________________________________________________________
**Videotaping Rights**

Licensee (subscribing institution) shall have the right to videotape the proceedings of the electronic field trip and, after the completion of the original broadcast, may present that videotape without restriction in perpetuity for the purpose of furthering the educational objectives of Licensee except: Licensee may not charge admission to view the videotape, nor broadcast, sell, lease, display for monetary gain, duplicate, edit, alter, modify or adapt the videotape program(s). Licensee further agrees it will not distribute copies of the videotape to any agency, organization or individual for any purpose whatsoever including other schools. Licensee is restricted from broadcasting the proceedings through any distance learning network during the actual broadcast or afterwards without specific arrangements with the Smithsonian Institution.

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