



Lesson 4: Fifty Years Later

Students Handouts and Supporting Materials for Teachers

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Fifty Years After *Brown*: Are We Living the Dream?

*DIRECTIONS: Over fifty years after the historic Brown v. Board of Education decision, how successful do you think U.S. schools have been in achieving integration? Read the following statements and indicate whether you think the statement is **true** or **false** by placing a “T” for true or an “F” for false on the line before each statement.*

- _____ 1. Among the states in the U.S., California is the most segregated state for black and Latina/o students.

- _____ 2. Although black, Latina/o, Asian and Native American students make up only two-fifths of the total U.S. school population, they typically attend schools where the vast majority of students are from their own racial groups.

- _____ 3. The most segregated group in the nation’s public schools is white students.

- _____ 4. Despite the growth of people of color communities, whites still make up the majority of public school students in each of the U.S. states.

- _____ 5. Segregation of Asian students is increasing more rapidly than for any other group.

- _____ 6. Due to the history of slavery and segregation in the South, southern states are the most segregated states for black students.

- _____ 7. The three states whose schools have the largest Latina/o enrollments — California, New Mexico, and Texas — are the most segregated states for Latina/os.

- _____ 8. The majority of segregated schools with mostly students of color face conditions of poverty.

- _____ 9. Desegregation efforts in U.S. schools have not worked and have only led to increased racial separation.

- _____ 10. Research has shown that desegregation has a positive impact on student achievement.

- _____ 11. Fifty years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, most people no longer support the original goals of school desegregation.

Fifty Years After *Brown*: Are We Living the Dream?

ANSWER KEY

1. **Among the states in the U.S., California is the most segregated state for black and Latina/o students.**

TRUE. In 2005-2006, California was ranked the most segregated state for both black and Latina/o students: 88% of African-American students attend schools that enroll 50% or more students of color; 90% of Latina/o students attend schools that enroll 50% or more students of color. (Table 1, Table 2).

2. **Although black, Latina/o, Asian and Native American students make up only two-fifths of the total U.S. school population, they typically attend schools where the vast majority of students are from their own racial groups.**

TRUE AND FALSE. In 2005-2006, black, Latina/o, Asian and Native American students accounted for 43% of all public school students. Yet the average or typical black student attended a school that was majority black (52%), and the average or typical Latina/o student attended a school that was majority Latina/o (55%). In both cases, the percentage of white students at their schools was 30% and 27%, respectively. Native American and Asian students are less likely to be segregated with their own group, except in reservation schools and some areas of low-income Asian refugee communities. (Table 3, Table 6).

3. **The most segregated group in the nation's public schools is white students.**

TRUE. While white students are attending schools with slightly more students of color than in the past, they remain the most isolated of all racial groups. The average white student attends a school where 77% of the student enrollment is white. (Table 3).

4. **Despite the growth of people of color communities, whites still make up the majority of public school students in each of the U.S. states.**

FALSE. According to 2005-2006 data, nine U.S. states currently have majority (over 50%) student-of-color populations: Arizona (53%), California (70%), Georgia (51%), Hawaii (81%), Maryland (51%), Mississippi (53%), Nevada (54%), New Mexico (69%) and Texas (63%). (Table 4).

5. **Segregation of Asian students is increasing more rapidly than for any other group.**

FALSE. Asian students, on average, are the most integrated group, attending schools where their own ethnicity is least represented. Although Asians make up only 5% of the total school enrollment, on average, Asian students attend schools that are 23% Asian, 44% white, 21% Latina/o, 12% black and 1% Native American. Researchers attribute this lower level of segregation to Asian's high residential integration and relatively small

numbers outside the western U.S. Great educational and socioeconomic disparity exists the group, however. Statistically, Asians have higher incomes and levels of educational attainment than whites (partly due to U.S. immigration policies which produced a highly educated immigration from Asia), there are significant numbers of Southeast Asians (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians) who entered the U.S. after the Vietnam War who experience patterns of education and income similar to poorer Latina/o immigrants (Table 3).

6. Due to the history of slavery and segregation in the South, southern states are the most segregated states for black students.

FALSE. In 2006, the top five segregated states where black students attended “majority minority” schools (where greater than 50% of students are of color) are (in order): California, New York, Illinois, Maryland and Texas. The first southern state in this ranking is Texas, in fifth place. The top five segregated states where black students attend school where 90-100% of the students are of color are (in order): Illinois, New York, Michigan, Maryland and New Jersey. The first southern state in this ranking is Alabama, in seventh place (Table 1).

7. The three states whose schools have the largest Latina/o enrollments — California, New Mexico, and Texas — are the most segregated states for Latina/os.

TRUE and FALSE. In “majority minority” schools (where greater than 50% of students are of color) these states are the three most segregated states for Latino/as. However, in schools where 90-100% of the student population is made up of students of color, the top three segregated states are those which happen to have the largest Latina/o populations (in order): New York Texas and California. On average, Latina/o students are the most segregated group by race and poverty, and there are increasing patterns of the “triple segregation” of ethnicity, poverty and linguistic isolation (Table 2).

8. The majority of segregated schools with mostly students of color face conditions of poverty.

TRUE. In 2006, 16% of schools reported that they had 80-100% Black and Latina/o students. Out of that number, 85% of these schools report that 50-100% of their students were considered poor. In contrast, 38% of schools reported that they had 0-10% Black and Latina/o students. Out of that number, only 18% of these schools are in majority poor (50-100%) schools. Poverty contributes to many challenging factors for students and families, including insufficient prenatal care, inadequate early childhood and preschool care, untreated medical problems, exposure to neighborhood violence, and attendance at schools with fewer trained and experienced teachers (Table 5).

8. Desegregation efforts in U.S. schools have not worked and have only led to increased racial separation.

FALSE. During the years that it was enforced, desegregation plans were successful in bringing students from different racial groups together. By 1981 every U.S. school system was less segregated than before desegregation was ordered. In addition, districts with the most extensive desegregation orders have shown the highest levels of long-term desegregation and some of the lowest levels of “white flight.” However, there have been significant increases in segregation as states have discontinued their plans in the past ten to fifteen years due to the Supreme Court authorizing termination of desegregation plans.

10. Research has shown that desegregation has a positive impact on student achievement.

TRUE. Studies have shown that desegregation is associated with enhanced learning, higher educational and career goals and positive social interaction among members of different races. During the era of desegregation, the graduation rate for students of color increased and the gap between white and “minority” test scores grew smaller, even as poverty and unemployment worsened during the same period. The achievement gap has widened again throughout the 1990s, however, as segregation has increased.

11. Fifty years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, most people no longer support the original goals of school desegregation.

TRUE and FALSE. Polls show a high level of acceptance and approval for integrated education and the desire for diverse schools. According to a 1999 survey, 68% of Americans believe that integration has “improved the quality of education” for African Americans, and 50% believe it has made education better for Whites. In a 2004 poll by *Education Week*, Americans believe in racially integrated education. A 2003 Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation reported over half (57%) of the adults surveyed believed that racially integrated schools are better for kids, while only 7% believed the opposite. A survey done by Kurlaender and Yun (2001) reported that high school juniors in cities across the country show very positive responses to interracial educational experiences among all groups of students, who feel well prepared to live and work in a multiracial society.

The following resources were used for this quiz:

“Historic Reversals, Accelerating Resegregation, and the Need for New Integration Strategies” (August 2006) by Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee of the Civil Rights Project, UCLA.

http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/reversals_reseg_need.pdf.

“Racial Transformation and the Changing Nature of Segregation” (January 2006) by Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee of the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/Racial_Transformation.pdf

School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 1. Most Segregated States for Black Students on Three Measures of Segregation, 2005–06

Rank	% of Black Students Attending					
	>50% Minority Schools		>90% Minority Schools		Black/White Exposure	
1	California	88	Illinois	62	New York	18
2	New York	86	New York	62	Illinois	18
3	Illinois	83	Michigan	58	California	21
4	Maryland	81	Maryland	52	Maryland	22
5	Texas	81	New Jersey	48	Michigan	23
6	Michigan	77	Pennsylvania	47	New Jersey	25
7	Mississippi	77	Alabama	45	Mississippi	26
8	New Jersey	77	Mississippi	45	Texas	26
9	Georgia	76	Tennessee	44	Georgia	28
10	New Mexico	75	Missouri	42	Tennessee	29
11	Connecticut	73	Wisconsin	41	Pennsylvania	29
12	Nevada	73	California	40	Alabama	30
13	Louisiana	72	Georgia	40	Louisiana	31
14	Pennsylvania	72	Ohio	39	Wisconsin	31
15	Tennessee	72	Texas	38	Ohio	32
16	Wisconsin	72	Louisiana	33	Connecticut	32
17	Ohio	71	Florida	32	Florida	32
18	Florida	70	Connecticut	31	Missouri	33
19	Alabama	69	Massachusetts	27	Nevada	35
20	Arkansas	68	Indiana	24	Arkansas	36

Source: 2005–6 NCES Common Core of Data

Reprinted with permission from “Historic Reversals, Accelerating Resegregation, and the Need for New Integration Strategies” by Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee. Los Angeles: The Civil Rights Project, UCLA, 2007.
www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu.

School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 2. Most Segregated States for Latino Students on Three Measures of Segregation, 2005–06

Rank	% Latino in		% Latino in		Latino/White Exposure	
	50% Minority Schools		90% Minority Schools			
1	California	90	New York	59	California	18
2	New Mexico	88	Texas	51	New York	19
3	Texas	86	California	50	Texas	20
4	New York	85	Illinois	44	New Mexico	24
5	Rhode Island	78	New Jersey	41	Illinois	28
6	Arizona	76	Arizona	34	New Jersey	28
7	New Jersey	76	Rhode Island	31	Rhode Island	28
8	Maryland	75	New Mexico	31	Arizona	29
9	Illinois	75	Maryland	29	Maryland	31
10	Nevada	75	Florida	28	Florida	32
11	Florida	73	Pennsylvania	28	Nevada	33
12	Connecticut	71	Connecticut	26	Connecticut	35
13	Massachusetts	64	Georgia	23	Georgia	39
14	Pennsylvania	63	Massachusetts	22	Pennsylvania	39
15	Georgia	62	Colorado	18	Massachusetts	39
16	Delaware	62	Wisconsin	17	Colorado	41
17	Colorado	61	Nevada	15	Delaware	45
18	Virginia	59	Michigan	12	Virginia	46
19	North Carolina	55	North Carolina	11	North Carolina	46
20	Kansas	53	Washington	10	Oklahoma	47

Source: 2005–6 NCES Common Core of Data

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School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 3. Racial Composition of Schools Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2005–06

Percent Race in Each School	White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	American Indian Student
% White	77	30	27	44	44
% Black	9	52	12	12	7
% Latino	9	14	55	21	12
% Asian	4	3	5	23	3
% American Indian	1	1	1	1	35
Total	100	100	100	100	100

**Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Source: 2005-06 NCES Common Core of Data*

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School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 4. Public School Enrollments in Majority Non-White States by Race/Ethnicity, 2005–06

State	Total Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian	% American Indian
Arizona	1,094,454	47	5	39	3	6
California	6,187,782	31	8	49	12	1
Florida	2,675,024	50	24	24	2	0
Georgia	1,559,378	49	39	9	3	0
Hawaii	184,925	20	2	5	73	1
Maryland	860,020	49	38	8	5	0
Mississippi	494,954	47	51	1	1	0
Nevada	412,407	46	11	34	7	2
New Mexico	326,758	31	3	54	1	11
Texas	4,523,873	37	15	45	3	0
% of U.S. Total	38	26	37	69	54	30

Source: 2005–6 NCES Common Core of Data

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School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 5. Relationship Between Segregation by Race and Poverty, 2005–06

		Percent Black and Latino Students in Schools									
% Poor in Schools		0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100%
0-10%		24	20	10	7	7	6	8	6	5	9
10-25%		23	26	24	13	8	4	3	2	1	2
25-50%		35	34	38	42	34	27	19	11	8	6
50-100%		18	20	28	37	51	63	70	81	85	84
% of Schools (Column Totals)		38	12	8	6	6	5	4	4	5	11

**Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Source: 2005-06 NCES Common Core of Data*

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School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 6. Public School Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Region, 2005–06

<i>Region</i>	<i>% White</i>	<i>% Black</i>	<i>% Latino</i>	<i>% Asian</i>	<i>% American Indian</i>	<i>Total Enrollment (by Region)</i>
West	45	7	38	8	2	11,356,210
Border	68	21	5	2	4	3,530,810
Midwest	73	15	8	3	1	9,756,674
South	50	27	21	3	0	15,382,983
Northeast	65	16	14	5	0	8,240,086
Alaska	58	5	4	7	27	133,292
Hawaii	20	2	5	73	1	184,925
Bureau of Indian Affairs	0	0	0	0	100	50,155
<i>U.S. Total (by Race)</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>48,635,135</i>

Source: 2005–6 NCES Common Core of Data

Reprinted with permission from “Historic Reversals, Accelerating Resegregation, and the Need for New Integration Strategies” by Gary Orfield and Chungmei Lee. Los Angeles: The Civil Rights Project, UCLA, 2007.
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Case Study: Lamron County School District

Lamron County is a suburb of a medium sized Mid-Western city. In the 1800s, Lamron was a prosperous town due to the many grain and lumber mills built along its Central River. However, the development of new technologies and the Great Depression of the 1930s left the mill town depressed throughout the mid-1900s. Over the past thirty years, due to overcrowding in the neighboring city, many businesses and residents have gradually moved out to Lamron and a successful computer technology industry has taken hold. Today the county is a mixture of working class and professional people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Most recently, a small but growing community of Pakistani immigrants has made Lamron their home.

The 15,000-student Lamron school district has fifteen elementary schools, six middle schools, and three high schools. Roughly 70% of the district's students are White, 13% are African American, 11% are Latina/o, 4% are Asian, and the remaining 2% are multiracial or Native American. In the 1970s and 1980s, Lamron schools were part of a court-ordered desegregation plan, which required black and Latina/o students from the city to be bused into town. Many Lamron students (mostly white) were transferred out of their neighborhood schools in order to accommodate the new students and create racial balance. Though most of the community expressed their approval for diverse schools, they responded negatively to forced busing. Protests and school boycotts led eventually to a lawsuit, and in 1992 court-ordered desegregation in Lamron was ended.

Despite the opposition to forced busing and transfers, Lamron was successful in desegregating its schools. By 1988 no school was more than 60% White, and the few mostly minority (and mostly poor) schools that once existed were multiracial. Between 1975 and 1990, the achievement gap—or difference in test scores between white students and black and Latina/o students—became smaller and graduation rates for all students increased. However, following the end of mandatory desegregation, these trends slowed down and even started to reverse. Once city residents were no longer required to bus their children to the suburbs, most chose to return to local schools. The majority of Lamron families also went back to neighborhood schools rather than remaining in more diverse schools that were farther from their homes.

Today, Lamron schools are quickly resegregating. Two of the district's three high schools are more than 80 percent White. The third high school, in addition to being mostly Black and Latina/o, has more than twice the number of poor students. In addition, the shrinking achievement gap of the 1980s has started to grow again and there have been several racially motivated incidents involving local teenagers. The most recent clash occurred after several Pakistani students found graffiti on their lockers branding them "terrorists."

In response to these trends, the Lamron District School Board has proposed a new plan. According to the proposal, district lines will be redrawn to create three racially balanced "attendance zones," each with five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. Students will be guaranteed a spot at a school in their attendance zone, but not necessarily their local neighborhood school. Under the plan, students may voluntarily transfer out of their assigned neighborhood schools if the transfers would improve or have a neutral effect on racial balance, but transfers that would worsen racial balance are prohibited. In addition, the long-term

plan calls for creating several new “magnet schools,” which would offer smaller class sizes and special programming that would encourage diverse enrollment. Attendance at these schools will be voluntary and the schools will maintain strict racial ratios of no more than 60 percent white students and no more than 40 percent students of color.

Lamron residents have had strong reactions to the plan. Some families have praised the effort to create inclusive schools and to overcome the barriers that divide local communities. Others have threatened to boycott the schools if their children are forced to leave local neighborhoods. Some residents feel that racially and economically diverse schools are the only way to achieve equal opportunity. Others feel that desegregation doesn’t work and that the answer is to put more resources into schools with minority and poor students. A series of community meetings have been scheduled so that local residents can learn more about the plan and express their concerns to school officials. A vote on the plan is expected before the end of the current school year.

Case Study: Lamron County School District Community Meeting Roles

Student of Color: You are a student of color at Lamron Central High School, which is 90 percent Black and Latina/o and has more than twice the number of poor students as the other two district high schools. If the proposed plan is passed, it is likely that you will be transferred to a school in another part of town that will require you to take a bus. There would be fewer students from your neighborhood in the new school—and fewer students of color overall—but you have heard that the new school has a brand new computer lab, better athletic facilities, and a greater number of students who go on to college.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on remaining in your neighborhood and going to school with friends and peers from your own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require you to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will make a difference in your grades and your opportunities for the future?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences?

White Student: You are a white student at Lamron Community High School, which is over 80% white and mostly middle and upper-middle class. If the proposed plan is passed, it is possible that you will be transferred to a school in another part of town that is not within walking distance. Whether you get transferred or not, your school will have at least twice the number of students of color as it does now, and a greater number of students from working class and poor families.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on remaining in your neighborhood and going to school with friends and peers from your own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require you to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will benefit you in any ways?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences?

Parent/Person of Color: You are a person of color with children at Lamron Central High School, which is 90 percent Black and Latina/o and has more than twice the number of poor students as the other two district high schools. While you like many of the teachers there, you have been frustrated by the overcrowded classes and outdated textbooks. If the proposed plan is passed, it is likely that your children will be transferred to a school in another part of town that will require them to take a bus. There would be fewer students from your neighborhood in the new school—and fewer students of color overall—but you have heard that the new school has a brand new computer lab, better athletic facilities, and a greater number of students who go on to college.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on keeping your children in the neighborhood and sending them to school with people from their own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require your children to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will make a difference in your children's grades and opportunities for the future?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences for your children?
- What are your greatest hopes and fears for your children and how does this new plan affect them?

White Parent: You are White and the parent of students at Lamron Community High School, which is over 80% White and mostly middle and upper-middle class. If the proposed plan is passed, it is possible that your children will be transferred to a school in another part of town that is not within walking distance. Whether or not they get transferred, your children's school will have at least twice the number of students of color as it does now, and a greater number of students from working class and poor families.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on keeping your children in the neighborhood and sending them to school with people from their own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require your children to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will benefit your children in any ways?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences?
- What are your greatest hopes and fears for your children and how does this new plan affect them?

Government Official: You are an official from the local government that represents the interests of Lamron County. You remember the desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s, and all of the protests and violence that came with it. However, you are very concerned about the increasing segregation in Lamron and the racial mistrust that seems to be growing. You want to make sure that all students in Lamron have an equal opportunity to succeed, but you also want to maintain order and ensure that most of the voters approve of your actions.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you think that the proposed plan will ultimately promote increased understanding and better race relations in the community?
- Do you think the plan will lead to violence or increased racial tension?
- Do you think the plan will provide opportunity for Lamron's less privileged students?
- How is this plan different than the desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s? Will it be more successful?
- How will supporting this plan help or hurt your reelection campaign?
- Are integrated schools worth striving for?

School Official: You are a local school official that represents the interests of the superintendent's office. You are concerned about the trend toward resegregation in Lamron schools, the increase in the number of racially motivated bias incidents, and the widening gap in test scores between white students and students of color. You want to put a plan in place that ensures the success of the greatest number of students and the least conflict among local parents.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you think the plan will ultimately reduce racial incidents or increase racial tension?
- Do you think the plan will provide increased opportunity for Lamron's less privileged students?
- In what ways do you think the plan will benefit white, middle-class students?
- How will this plan be more successful than the desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s?
- Is this plan worth the unrest it might stir among local parents and the media?
- Are integrated schools worth striving for?

Community/Youth Group Representative: You represent members of local community groups concerned with youth issues, such as the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. You are troubled by the increase in segregation over the past years and the growing number of racially motivated bias incidents in the community. You are also aware of the greater levels of poverty that exist at most segregated minority schools and the limited opportunity for students at these schools. You want to make sure that all students in Lamron have an equal chance to succeed, and that poor students and students of color are provided with the resources they need to thrive.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you think that the proposed plan will ultimately promote increased understanding and better race relations in the community?
- Do you think the plan will lead to violence or increased racial tension?
- Do you think the plan will provide opportunity for Lamron's less privileged students?
- Are integrated schools worth striving for?