

Teacher's Guide

Jim Crow Laws in AK and Reading Strategies

Enduring Understandings

Alaska Natives were impacted by Jim Crow laws, and the elimination of these laws with the 1945 Alaska equal rights bill required a struggle that drew in Native leaders, ordinary citizens and state officials.

Estimated Time:

1-2 Hours

Materials needed:

"Superior Race Theory Hit in Hearing."

Teacher Background Information: Terrence M. Cole's article titled "Jim Crow in Alaska."

Lesson Plan:

Introduction: It is a simple fact of life that our classrooms are filled with students at varying levels of reading competency. High school teachers have sometimes taught high school students who read at a 4th grade level or below. The strategies listed below will help you accommodate these struggling students while still incorporating respectable, content-rich sources in your Alaska

History classes. It is important to distinguish between readers who have decoding problems, i.e. those that have great difficulty pronouncing words correctly, and comprehension problems. The techniques listed below will help you with students who have comprehension problems, but not decoding difficulties. If you suspect your student has decoding problems, contact your special education teacher for help.

If you have a group of struggling readers, consider limiting the size of a reading to two pages. Longer readings can seem overwhelming to students, and they will shut down from the start if the assignment appears too intimidating. For this lesson, the reading "Superior Race Theory Hit in Hearing" is used as a primary source for a lesson on Jim Crow laws in Alaska. This is a primary source to use after students have gained a basic understanding of the Jim Crow laws in particular and how they were applied to Alaska Natives. Before moving ahead with this reading, the teacher should read Terrence M. Cole's article titled "Jim Crow in Alaska" and visit <http://www.alaskool.org/projects/JimCrow/Jimcrow.htm>. This site contains articles related to the specifics and the extent of Jim Crow laws in Alaska.

Please note: The reading techniques listed below will work for a wide variety of readings. To begin working with a reading selection, you must highlight the entire section and paste it into a Microsoft Word format. Click your cursor in the document and hit "Ctrl A" for IBM users, or "Command A" for Macintosh. Hit "Ctrl C" for IBM, or "Command C" for Macintosh users. Go to your Microsoft Word document, place the cursor in the text and hit "Ctrl V" for IBM users or "Command V" for Macintosh Users.

If you suspect a reading is too difficult, here is one quick way to determine the reading level. First go to your Microsoft Word document and click on the Tools tab. Go to Options and click on the tab that says "Spelling and Grammar." At the bottom of the screen click the box that says "Show Readability statistics." Return to your document and go to Tools>Spelling and Grammar. Run the spelling and grammar check, and when you get to the end of the document, you will receive a Flesh-Kincaid Reading Level. You should keep your reading at the grade level of your students or slightly above.

Another method that will help you as well as your struggling readers is to put

your reading into a "legal" format. This format will place numbers besides all of the lines in your reading. This can help students find a location in the reading quickly, and also allows you and your students to basically be on "the same page." Highlight the entire text from Vilda titled "Superior Race Theory Hit in Hearing." Paste this text onto a Microsoft Word document. Adjust the spacing. Next go to File > Page Setup and click the Layout tab. Where it says "Apply to" click on "Whole document." Click Line Numbers. Next select the "Add Line" numbering check box, and then select the options you want. As you progress through a reading with your students, it will be very easy for you to pinpoint your exact location in the event a student loses his or her place.

Often times vocabulary words can trip up students while they are reading a text. If a student has difficulty understanding the vocabulary in a reading, that will limit his or her ability to understand the gist of the story. One technique that helps students learn vocabulary was developed by Jim MacDiarmid in his book *Replacing the Thing-a-ma-jig: The Developmental Language Process*. Many students are visual thinkers, and here is one approach to help students understand difficult vocabulary. This technique should be used prior to handing out the reading.

Assign each student one of the difficult vocabulary words in the reading, i.e. condemnation, rebuttal, discrimination, assailed, allay, civilization, contention, terminate, eliminate, political capital. Give a brief, clear definition of each word and ask the student to draw a situation or object that captures a visual representation of the word. The visuals should be clearly visible from 10-15 feet. They should not use words on the illustration. After the students have created visuals, tape them to the board in the front of your room. Say the word while pointing to each visual and have the students repeat the word. Once students are familiar with the pictures, invite two students to come up to the front. Have them face forward with their backs to the board. Re-arrange two pictures on your board. Tell the students to turn around quickly. The first student to correctly identify the vocabulary words wins another chance at the game. After the students are fairly fluent in identifying the vocabulary word that matches each picture, have the students match the vocabulary with the correct definition. You might then teach them the derivatives of each word, and ask them to use the words correctly in sentences and cloze passage exercises.

Before reading a selection with struggling readers use the PASS approach. PASS is a mnemonic device that will help you cover a reading thoroughly and systematically. PASS stands for the following:

P: Preview
A: Ask Questions
S: Summarize
S: Synthesize

P: Preview the reading with the students. Describe the practice of Jim Crow laws in the South, and how they were adopted in Alaska. Go over the sub headings in the story and explain their meaning.

A: Have the students write down some questions they hope to answer while reading the story.

S: After each paragraph, have a student summarize in his own words the statements delivered and what took place. At the end of the story, have the students identify the key points in the story and its significance in Alaska History.

S: Synthesize: After the reading, you might also describe other racial discrimination laws in history such as the Jim Crow laws of the South, the Nuremberg Laws in Germany, South African Apartheid, etc. You might describe how America's battle against Nazi Germany in World War II helped push the issue of racial discrimination in Alaska to center stage.

Using the sticky notes in Microsoft word. If you believe your readers can understand a piece of text with a little added help, here is one method that will make the text accessible to your students. Highlight difficult passages in Microsoft Word and go to Insert > Comment. Either paraphrase the difficult section or define the vocabulary word. When the students call this reading up on their computers, all they will have to do is put their cursor over the selected section and they will see a "virtual sticky note" with your explanation. This Microsoft function also works well when you are editing writing and want to insert comments that can be removed later.

One technique that will help students understand the "gist" of a story is to

equip them with real sticky notes. Read the article through and ask basic comprehension questions. If the students cannot answer one of the questions, have them write the question on a sticky note. Go through the article paragraph by paragraph. After each paragraph ask the student if the answer to the question is contained in the paragraph. Once you do hit the correct paragraph have the student write the correct answer on the sticky note. Students can also use sticky notes to help them summarize a reading paragraph by paragraph. After they have finished the reading, they can then summarize each paragraph on a sticky note, boiling the passage down to the basic, important details before moving on to the next paragraph.

Alaska Standards:

History: A B, C, D

Alaska History: AH. ICGP 8, AH. ICGP 10, AH. ICGP 11

Guided Questions:

How did Elizabeth Peratrovich rebut the argument that a racial discrimination law in Alaska would not eliminate discrimination?

Find an example of someone who believes the anti-discrimination bill would only make matters worse between Alaska Natives and whites. Explain their reasoning.

Which statement by Elizabeth Peratrovich do you find most compelling?

What does Senator Tolbert Scott's opinion that supporters of the anti-discrimination bill were hoping to raise "political capital" mean?

What do you suppose Senator Grenold Collins is talking about when he mentions "pure Eskimos"?

Assessment:

Exceeds

Meets

In Progress

Not Started

Content

Body of work shows a deep understanding of the Jim Crow period in Alaska history, its impact on Alaska Natives and Alaska history, and the ability to analyze and interpret primary documents. Can draw information from the primary source to support opinions.

Work shows an understanding of Jim Crow period in Alaska and some ability to interpret primary documents. Attempts to draw information from the primary source to support opinions.

Work shows minimal understanding of the historical period and of the primary document reviewed. No initial attempt to draw information from the primary source to support opinions.

No research has been completed or understanding has been demonstrated.