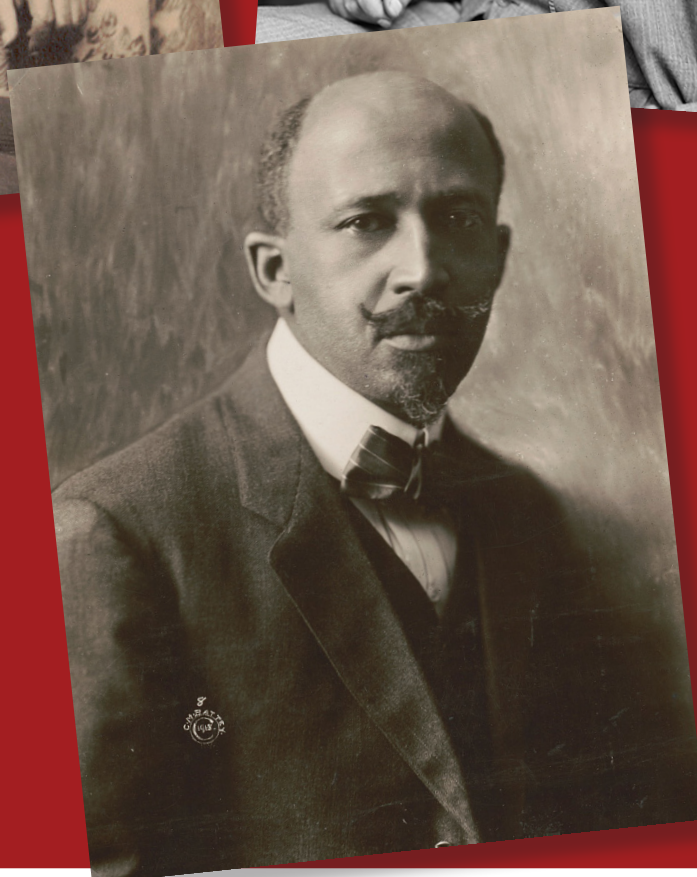
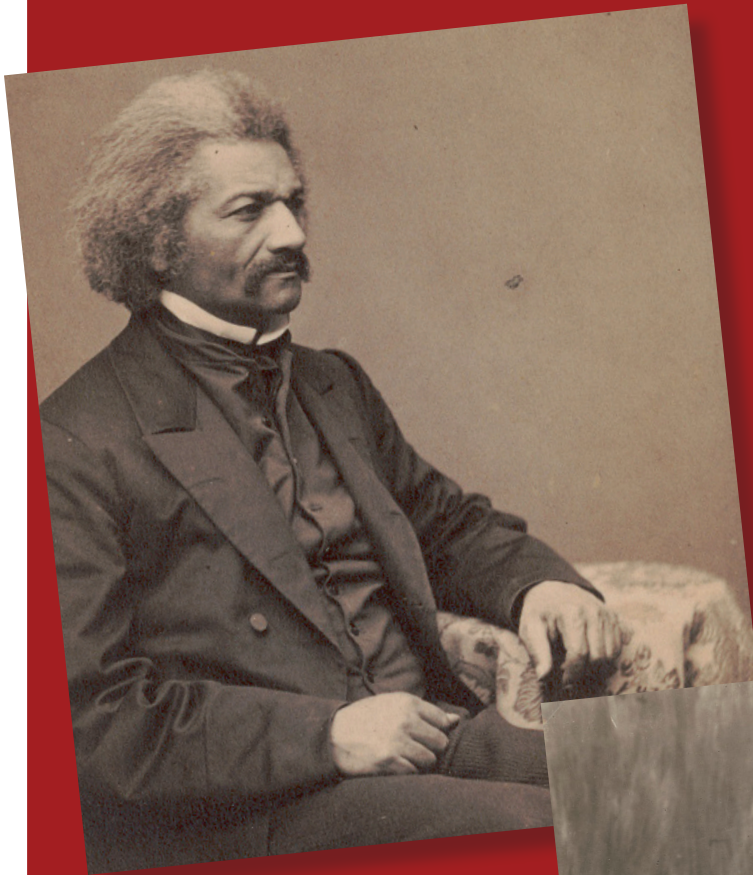


# Fighting Jim Crow: Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois, 1887–1906



*Clockwise from top left: Frederick Douglass,  
Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. Du Bois  
(Library of Congress)*

THE GILDER LEHRMAN  
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

**TL** TEACHING LITERACY  
**TH** THROUGH HISTORY

# Fighting Jim Crow: Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois, 1887–1906

BY ADAM STEVENS (Created in 2020; revised in 2025)

*Adam Stevens is a history teacher and an administrator at the New York City Department of Education.*

**GRADE LEVEL:** 7–12

**RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION:** Four 45-minute periods

## UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. These skills will enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate original documents of historical significance.

In these four lessons, students will read a letter and excerpts from two speeches by leading African American men of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to examine different responses to Jim Crow. They will use share-reading and close-reading strategies to read, understand, and summarize in their own words the main ideas in the texts. They will demonstrate their knowledge by answering critical thinking questions that synthesize ideas from all three texts.

Students will be able to

- Collaborate effectively with classmates to identify keywords
- Demonstrate their knowledge by writing summaries of texts
- Answer discussion questions and summarize understanding of the questions and answers
- Compare and contrast differing points of view (e.g., Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois)

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is “segregation,” and what areas of life were segregated in the Jim Crow era?
- What was the range of Black people’s responses to segregation, as exemplified by Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. Du Bois?

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.RH.9-10.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners [grade-level] on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

## MATERIALS

- Summary Organizer 1: Letter from Frederick Douglass to an unknown correspondent, November 23, 1887, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC08992, [gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc08992](http://gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc08992)
- Summary Organizer 2: Excerpts from a Speech by Booker T. Washington, Atlanta, Georgia, September 18, 1895, printed in *Address of Booker T. Washington, Principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Delivered at the Opening of the Cotton States and International Exposition, at Atlanta, Ga., September 18, 1895, with a Letter of Congratulation from the President of the United States* (Tuskegee, Alabama, 1895) Library of Congress, [loc.gov/item/90898322/](http://loc.gov/item/90898322/)
- Summary Organizer 3: Excerpts from a Speech by W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Second Annual Meeting of the Niagara Movement at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia," *The Broad-Ax* (Chicago), August 25, 1906, p. 1, Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections, University of Illinois, [idnc.library.illinois.edu/?a=d&d=T-BA19060825.1.2](http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/?a=d&d=T-BA19060825.1.2)
- Analyzing the Sources activity sheet

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### **Fighting Jim Crow: Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois**

by Nikki Brown, University of Kentucky

This lesson plan features the writings of three influential voices of the nineteenth century who offered differing solutions to the question of securing citizenship for four million formerly enslaved African Americans. Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. Du Bois were born at three distinct moments and places in the 1800s. Douglass was born in Maryland in 1818 and escaped slavery in 1838. He wrote extensively that, as an enslaved boy, learning to read when he was twelve was the most important element in his eventual flight to freedom. Washington was also born enslaved, in Virginia in the 1850s and learned to read and write when he entered Hampton Institute in 1872. Unlike Douglass, Washington did not champion voting rights and equal education for African Americans, preferring instead to promote industrial education (or vocational education), for the way he thought it taught self-reliance and land-ownership. Du Bois, born in 1868 in Massachusetts, was the best educated of the three men. He graduated from Fisk University in Nashville, Harvard University in Boston, and the Frei University in Berlin, Germany. He authored books covering a range of topics, from a history of African American identity (*The Souls of Black Folk*) to a history of the Reconstruction era (*Black Reconstruction*). He wrote that the best weapon African Americans had against Jim Crow was a liberal arts education, especially at schools that taught literature and history in addition to carpentry and home economics.

Despite their differing backgrounds and philosophies, their writings agree on two key points—slavery was a harmful and immoral institution in the United States, and slavery’s successor, Jim Crow or systemic racism, continued to deny African Americans the rights of equal citizenship. The fourth “person” in this lesson plan, Jim Crow, is also born in the 1800s, as a stock character in the minstrel shows of the 1840s. Yet Jim Crow was more than a theatrical conception. The name is synonymous with a specific form of institutionalized racism, in which a fixed racial caste system placed white Americans permanently on top and African Americans and other races permanently beneath them. Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois all agreed that Jim Crow must be abolished, but they disagreed on the methods and the extent of federal intervention needed to end Jim Crow and establish civil rights for all Americans.

After the Civil War (1861–1865) affirming civil rights for African Americans became the chief priority of the newly re-assembled national government during the Reconstruction era (1865–1877). The establishment of the Freedmen’s Bureau in 1865, and moreover the federal funding of integrated public education across the United States formed part of a national plan to extend full citizenship to African Americans after hundreds of years of enslavement. The Reconstruction Amendments—the 1865 Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, the 1868 Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to all African Americans, and the 1870 Fifteenth Amendment allowing the right to vote for African American men—broadened the quest for racial equality and civil rights. There were also three Civil Rights Acts passed during Reconstruction, in 1866, 1871, and 1875, which prohibited racial discrimination in public accommodations, like schools, public parks, and hospitals. Though the Reconstruction era was a brief period of progressive reform, the attempt to repair American society, including African Americans as fully recognized citizens, transformed the activism of the three men included in this lesson plan.

When the era of Jim Crow dawned in the 1880s, the three men argued that racial segregation could not be accurately defined as the simple and equal separation of the races, such as separate-but-equal schools for white children and African American children. Instead, they pointed out in their writings and speeches that Jim Crow in schools meant that white children would receive all the best resources—schools, books,

teachers, playgrounds, gym equipment—and African American children would receive what white children did not want, had outgrown, or had thrown away. In 1896, when the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that racial segregation was legal in public spaces like schools, the words of Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois became even more relevant.

It took nearly 100 years, between the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of the post–World War II Civil Rights Movement, for local, state, and national legislatures to dismantle the legal structures of Jim Crow. The first Reconstruction blazed a trail for the second Reconstruction of the 1950s and 1960s and the Civil Rights Movement. Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois did not live to see the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But they witnessed and commented on the substantive changes of the post–Civil War era of attempted progress. Their writings, ranging from political liberation (Douglass) to political accommodation (Washington) to political revolution (Du Bois), influenced a century of African American intellectuals and their debates on the absence of citizenship for African Americans during decades of racial oppression and Jim Crow.

*Nikki Brown is associate professor of history at the University of Kentucky. She is the author of Private Politics and Public Voices: Black Women’s Activism from World War I to the New Deal (2007) and co-editor of The Jim Crow Encyclopedia (2008).*



## LESSON 1

### FREDERICK DOUGLASS ON JIM CROW AND EDUCATION, 1887

BY ADAM STEVENS (Created in 2020, revised in 2025)

#### OVERVIEW

Students will be asked to “read like a detective” and examine Frederick Douglass’s views on Jim Crow and the rights of African Americans in the South by understanding what is explicitly stated and drawing logical inferences. They will demonstrate these skills by writing a succinct summary of the text and then restating that summary in their own words. Lesson 1 is a whole-class exercise.

#### MATERIALS

- Summary Organizer 1: A Letter from Frederick Douglass, November 23, 1887, to an unknown correspondent, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC08992, [gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc08992](https://gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc08992)

*Adam Stevens is a history teacher and an administrator at the New York City Department of Education.*

**GRADE LEVELS:** 7–12

**RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION:** One 45-minute period.

**UNIT OVERVIEW:** This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. In these four lessons, students will read a letter and excerpts from two speeches by leading African American men of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to examine different responses to Jim Crow.

#### PROCEDURE

1. Tell the students that they will be learning about the response of Black civil rights leaders to Jim Crow laws, a wide-ranging set of local and state statutes that, collectively, declared the races must be segregated and that rigidly controlled Black lives. The first writer is Frederick Douglass, who escaped slavery and became a great orator, writer, and civil rights advocate. Do not provide additional historical background at this point as the goal is for the students to develop ideas and draw conclusions based solely on the writer’s own words.
2. Some terms that respectful White and Black people historically used to describe Black people are not considered respectful today, and some of those terms appear in Douglass’s letter. For example, the term “colored” was a respectful way of describing African Americans in the 1890s, but today we would describe those people’s descendants as “Black people” or “African Americans.” Moreover, we would say “segregated schools” rather than “colored schools” to emphasize the coercion required to keep Black students and White students apart from each other. You have at least two options: You can inform your students how to navigate this language issue or you can moderate a class discussion about how your class will approach this problem with language when reading the text out loud, and how you will approach this problem when identifying keywords and summarizing the text. Will you re-use historical terms or replace those terms with contemporary equivalents?
3. Distribute copies of Summary Organizer 1 with the text of Frederick Douglass’s letter to an unknown correspondent on November 23, 1887. Display it in a format large enough for the whole class to see and

ask the students to read it silently to themselves.

4. “Share read” the document with the students by having them follow along silently while you begin to read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Then ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud, still serving as the model. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).
5. Explain that the students will learn how to do in-depth analysis for themselves by reading, understanding, and summarizing Frederick Douglass’s words. In this first lesson, the whole class will work together to summarize the text.
6. Describe the process for the class: The first objective is to select keywords from the text and use those words to create a summary sentence that expresses the main point of Douglass’s letter.
7. Guidelines for Selecting the Keywords: Keywords are important contributors to the meaning of the text. They are usually nouns or verbs. Advise students not to pick “connector” words (*are, the, and, so, etc.*). The number of keywords depends on the length of the text. This text is 273 words in length; therefore, students may select 8 to 10 keywords.
8. Students will now select 8 to 10 words from the text that they believe are keywords and write them in their organizers.
9. Survey the class to find out what the most popular choices were. You can write them down and have the class discuss the options and vote on the final choice, based on guidance from you. For example, the class could select the following words: *inequalities, races, teachers, Colored schools [Segregated schools]* (you may occasionally allow two words when together they make up a single idea), *paid, white, progress, hidden practices, Mastery, and dominion*. Now, no matter which words the students had selected previously, have them write the words agreed upon by the class or chosen by you into the Keyword section in the organizers.
10. Explain to the class that they will use these keywords to write one or two sentences that summarize Douglass’s letter. For example, “Inequalities between the races can be seen in what teachers are paid and the lack of white teachers’ concern in Colored schools’ [Segregated schools] progress. These hidden practices show an attitude of Mastery and dominion.” This summary should be developed through a whole-class discussion. The students might decide they don’t need some of the words to make the sentences even more streamlined. They will copy the final negotiated sentence(s) into the organizer.
11. Guide the students in restating the summary sentence in their own words. They do not have to use Douglass’s words. Again, this is a class negotiation process. For example, “Black and white people are not treated the same, but people don’t talk about it, so it won’t change.”
12. Wrap-up: Discuss vocabulary that the students found confusing or difficult. The students can record these words and their meaning on the back of the organizer or on a separate vocabulary form.

## LESSON 2

### BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ON MUTUAL PROGRESS, 1895

BY ADAM STEVENS (Created in 2020, revised in 2025)

#### OVERVIEW

Students will be asked to “read like a detective” and gain a clear understanding of Booker T. Washington’s 1895 Atlanta Compromise Speech. One distinctive claim in Washington’s address is that “in all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.” Through reading and analyzing the excerpts from the speech, the students will know what is explicitly stated, draw logical inferences, and demonstrate these skills by writing a succinct summary and then restating that summary in their own words. In this lesson, the students will work with partners and in small groups.

*Adam Stevens is a history teacher and an administrator at the New York City Department of Education.*

**GRADE LEVELS:** 7–12

**RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION:** One 45-minute period.

**UNIT OVERVIEW:** This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. In these four lessons, students will read a letter and excerpts from two speeches by leading African American men of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to examine different responses to Jim Crow.

#### MATERIALS

- Summary Organizer 2: Excerpts from a Speech by Booker T. Washington, Atlanta, Georgia, September 18, 1895, printed in *Address of Booker T. Washington, Principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Delivered at the Opening of the Cotton States and International Exposition, at Atlanta, Ga., September 18, 1895, with a Letter of Congratulation from the President of the United States* (Tuskegee, Alabama, 1895), Library of Congress, [loc.gov/item/90898322/](https://loc.gov/item/90898322/)

#### PROCEDURE

1. Tell the students that they will explore different aspects of life under Jim Crow described in excerpts from a speech given by Booker T. Washington, an educator, orator, and presidential advisor, in 1895. Inform the students that he was speaking to a White audience and this may have influenced the tone and content of his address; a moderate message would be less likely to anger the audience, and therefore be less dangerous for Washington. Do not provide additional information at this point as the goal is for the students to develop ideas and draw conclusions based solely on the writer’s own words.
2. Distribute Summary Organizer 2 with the excerpts from Washington’s speech and share read the text with the class as described in Lesson 1.
3. Review the procedure from Lesson 1, reminding students that they will select up to 10 keywords from the text, use the author’s words to summarize the text, and then restate the summary in their own words.



4. Divide the class into pairs. Each pair will negotiate to select 10 keywords and write them in their organizer.
5. Now put two pairs together into a group of four. Be strategic in how you form the groups to ensure active participation by all members. These groups should repeat the negotiation process to finalize their selection of 10 keywords. Circulate to ensure that all groups are negotiating successfully and choosing appropriate words.
6. Each group will use the selected words to build a sentence or two summarizing Washington's message. Circulate among the groups to monitor their progress and to make sure that all students are contributing.
7. Ask the groups to share out their summary sentences. This should serve as a catalyst for a discussion that will provide evaluative feedback on how successful the students were in recognizing Washington's main idea and how careful they were to use Washington's keywords in the summary.
8. Each group will now restate the summary sentence in their own words. Again, this is a group negotiation process. After they have decided on a sentence or two, they should write the final version into their organizers.
9. Have the groups share out and discuss the clarity and quality of the restatements.
10. Wrap-up: Discuss vocabulary that the students found confusing or difficult. The students can record these words and their meaning on the back of the organizer or on a separate vocabulary form.

## LESSON 3

### W. E. B. DU BOIS ON THE FIGHT FOR IDEALS, 1906

BY ADAM STEVENS (Created in 2020, revised in 2025)

#### OVERVIEW

Students will be asked to “read like a detective” and gain a clear understanding of W. E. B. Du Bois’s 1906 Niagara Movement Speech. Through reading and analyzing the excerpts from the speech, the students will know what is explicitly stated, draw logical inferences, and demonstrate these skills by writing a succinct summary and then restating that summary in the student’s own words. In this lesson, the students will work independently.

*Adam Stevens is a history teacher and an administrator at the New York City Department of Education.*

**GRADE LEVELS:** 7–12

**RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION:** One 45-minute period.

**UNIT OVERVIEW:** This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. In these four lessons, students will read a letter and excerpts from two speeches by leading African American men of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to examine different responses to Jim Crow.

#### MATERIALS

- Summary Organizer 3: Excerpts from a Speech by W. E. B. Du Bois, “The Second Annual Meeting of the Niagara Movement at Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia,” *The Broad-Ax* (Chicago), August 25, 1906, p. 1, Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections, University of Illinois, [idnc.library.illinois.edu/?a=d&d=TBA19060825.1.2](http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/?a=d&d=TBA19060825.1.2)

#### PROCEDURE

1. Tell the students that they will explore different aspects of life under Jim Crow in excerpts from a speech given by W. E. B. Du Bois in 1906. Do not provide additional information at this point as the goal is for the students to develop ideas and draw conclusions based solely on the writer’s own words.
2. Distribute Summary Organizer 3, which contains brief excerpts from the speech, and share read the text with the students as described in Lesson 1.
3. Review the process of selecting keywords (8–10), writing a summary using those keywords, and then restating the summary in their own words. The students will be working independently on this text.
4. Give the students time to select their keywords and write their summary sentences and their restatements. Have the students share out their restated summaries and discuss the clarity and quality of the different interpretations of Du Bois’s views.
5. Wrap-up: Discuss vocabulary that the students found confusing or difficult; the students can record these words and their meaning on the back of the organizer or a separate vocabulary form.

## LESSON 4

### COMPARING DOUGLASS, WASHINGTON, AND DU BOIS, 1887–1906

BY ADAM STEVENS (Created in 2020, revised in 2025)

#### OVERVIEW

Students will be asked to compare and contrast the opinions and observations of life under Jim Crow as described by Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois in the three documents that they have analyzed. They will demonstrate their synthesis of the three lessons by responding to questions comparing the three writers' views. In this lesson, the students will work independently or with a partner.

#### MATERIALS

- Summary Organizers 1–3
- Analyzing the Sources activity sheet

*Adam Stevens is a history teacher and an administrator at the New York City Department of Education.*

**GRADE LEVELS:** 7–12

**RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION:** One 45-minute period.

**UNIT OVERVIEW:** This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on primary source materials. In these four lessons, students will read a letter and excerpts from two speeches by leading African American men of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to examine different responses to Jim Crow.

#### PROCEDURE

1. Have the students take out their completed summary organizers from the previous three lessons and review their final restatements of each of the authors' main points.
2. Distribute the Analyzing the Sources activity sheet. Students should work independently or with a partner.
3. In their responses, students should cite evidence from the three primary sources.
4. Once the students have completed the activity sheet, guide a class discussion of what life was like for African Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries based on the work of three leading Black orators and educators. What would the three men agree on? Where did their views differ?

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

## Summary Organizer 1: A Letter from Frederick Douglass, 1887

### *Original Text:*

My dear sir: Pardon delay – answer to your letter made careful enquiry necessary. From all I can learn colored Lawyers are admitted to practice in Southern Courts, and I am very glad to admit the fact, for it implies a wonderful revolution in the public Sentiment of the Southern States. I have not yet learned what are the inequalities between the races as to school privileges at the South. In some of the States the time allotted to Colored schools is less than that allowed to whites. And I have heard and believe that in none of the States are the teachers of Colored Schools as well paid as the teachers of White schools. My own observation has been that white teachers of Colored Schools in the southern states, show but little interest in their pupils. This is not strange, since they have been selected as teachers more because of their necessities, than from any interests they have shown in the progress and elevation of the colored race. I Say this not of all, but of those in Virginia for instance who have come under my observation.

In Kentucky I believe so far as the law is concerned equal advantages are extended to colored children for Education, and the Same may be true of other States. I think the Bureau of Education will give you all the information you may require on this branch of the subject of your enquiries. Our wrongs are not so much now in written laws which all may see – but the hidden practices of a people who have not yet abandoned the idea of Mastery and dominion over their fellow man.

Frederick Douglass to an unknown correspondent, November 23, 1887 (The Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC08992).

### *Keywords:*

### *Summary:*

### *In Your Own Words:*

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

## Summary Organizer 2: Excerpts from a Speech by Booker T. Washington, 1895

### *Original Text:*

One-third of the population of the South is of the Negro race. No enterprise seeking the material, civil, or moral welfare of this section can disregard this element of our population and reach the highest success. . . .

To those of the white race who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits for the prosperity of the South. . . . I would repeat what I say to my own race, "Cast down your bucket where you are." Cast it down among the 8,000,000 Negroes whose habits you know, . . . these people who have, without strikes and labor wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, builded your railroads and cities, and brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth, and helped make possible this magnificent representation of the progress of the South. . . . You will find that they will buy your surplus land, make blossom the waste places in your fields, and run your factories. . . . In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.

There is no defense or security for any of us except in the highest intelligence and development of all. If anywhere there are efforts tending to curtail the fullest growth of the Negro, let these efforts be turned into stimulating, encouraging, and making him the most useful and intelligent citizen. Effort or means so invested will pay a thousand per cent interest. . . .

Nearly sixteen millions of hands will aid you in pulling the load upwards, or they will pull against you the load downwards. We shall constitute one third and more of the ignorance and crime of the South, or one third its intelligence and progress; we shall contribute one third to the business and industrial prosperity of the South, or we shall prove a veritable body of death, stagnating, depressing, retarding every effort to advance the body politic. . . .

*Address of Booker T. Washington, Principal of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Delivered at the Opening of the Cotton States and International Exposition, at Atlanta, Ga., September 18, 1895, with a Letter of Congratulation from the President of the United States (Tuskegee, Alabama, 1895).*

### *Keywords:*

### *Summary:*

### *In Your Own Words:*



NAME

PERIOD

DATE

### Summary Organizer 3: Excerpts from a Speech by W. E. B. Du Bois, 1906

#### *Original Text:*

... In the past year the work of the Negro hater has flourished in the land. Step by step the defenders of the rights of American citizens have retreated. The work of stealing the black man's ballot has progressed. ...

We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America. ... It is a fight for ideals, lest this, our common fatherland, false to its founding, become in truth the land of the thief and the home of the Slave. ...

First, we would vote; with the right to vote goes everything. ...

Second. We want discrimination in public accommodation to cease. ...

Third. We claim the right of free men to walk, talk, and be with them that wish to be with us. No man has a right to choose another man's friends. ...

Fourth. We want the laws enforced against rich as well as poor; against Capitalist as well as Laborer; against white as well as Black. We are not more lawless than the white race, we are more often arrested, convicted and mobbed. ...

Fifth. We want our children educated. The school system in the country districts of the South is a disgrace and in a few towns and cities are the Negro schools what they ought to be. ... Either the United States will destroy ignorance or ignorance will destroy the United States.

"The Second Annual Meeting of the Niagara Movement at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia," *The Broad-Ax* (Chicago), August 25, 1906, p. 1 (Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections, University of Illinois).

#### *Keywords:*

#### *Summary:*

#### *In Your Own Words:*

