

## TEACHING GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS AND PARENTS

READING LEVEL: GRADES 4-5 • INTEREST LEVEL: GRADES 4-8 • 32 PAGES

# READ WOKE™ BOOKS

Developed in partnership with **Cicely Lewis** the Read Woke Librarian



I created **Read Woke Books** because I want our students to be knowledgeable, compassionate citizens. They need to be equipped with knowledge so they can treat others with the dignity and respect they deserve. And in return, they will be treated with respect.

When students learn how history impacts our lives today, they can take part in changes to make our world a better place for all.

*Cicely Lewis*

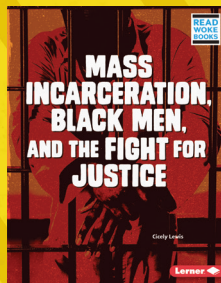
—Cicely Lewis, Executive Editor

## FIVE PILLARS OF READ WOKE BOOKS

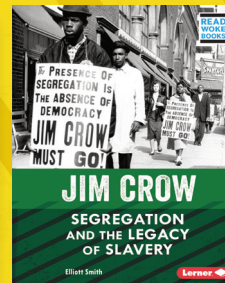
Inspired by the belief that knowledge is power, Read Woke Books are grounded by five pillars. Read Woke Books seek to:

1. Amplify the voices of people of the global majority\*
2. Provide information about groups that have been disenfranchised
3. Share perspectives of people who have been underrepresented or oppressed
4. Challenge social norms and disrupt the status quo
5. Encourage readers to take action in their community

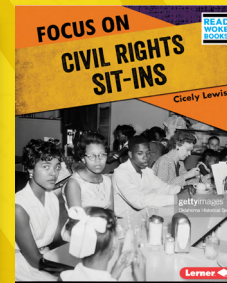
\*People of the global majority is an affirming and empowering term that has been embraced by many people to describe the majority of the world who are people of African, Arab, Asian, and Latin American descent and identify as not white. Read more: I'm Embracing the Term "People of the Global Majority" (<https://regenerative.medium.com/im-embracing-the-term-people-of-the-global-majority-abd1c1251241>)



**Issues in Action**  
(6 Book Series)  
Released August 2021



**American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom**  
(6 Book Series)  
Released January 2022



**History in Pictures**  
(6 Book Series)  
Coming August 2022

This guide was created by **Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul**, educator, author, founder of Red Clay Educators, host of the Black Creators Series, and cofounder of the Institute for Racial Equity in Literacy.

Visit [lernerbooks.com/readwoke](https://lernerbooks.com/readwoke) for book lists and resources

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**Lerner™**



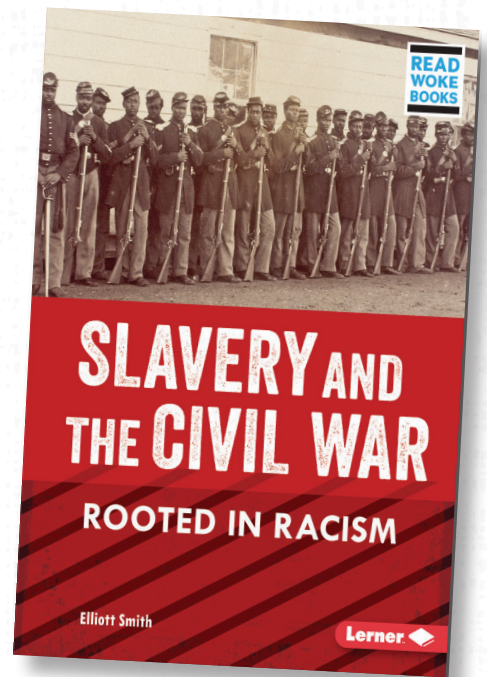
# PREPARATION

## NOTES TO EDUCATORS

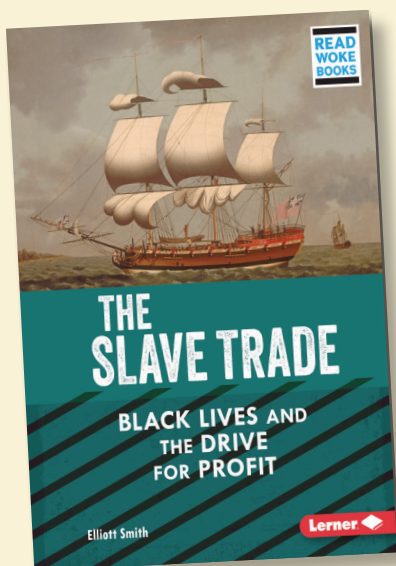
Read Woke Books inform students about some of the most challenging topics and issues in United States history and society. When these texts are read and discussed in classrooms, a powerful learning experience is created for students to develop their sociopolitical consciousness. Students will be able to identify larger sociocultural factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, religion, and their complex intersections operating within systems that create and uphold these issues and that impact their lives. As students read books from any of the Read Woke™ Books series, they will learn to analyze the world around them. Classroom instruction and discussions will further help students to recognize systems that perpetuate inequities and to become well-positioned to confront and disrupt them.

**AN IMPORTANT WAY to begin is through careful reflection of instructional practices. CONSIDER:**

- What knowledge and tools do I need in order to further my own racial consciousness?
- What opportunities have I created for conversations about challenging topics?
- How have I helped students to develop skills for analyzing and interrogating systems of oppression?



It is essential for educators to interrogate their own biases and to continually develop their own sociopolitical consciousness. And it is critical that this intentional, parallel work occurs while providing students with language and lenses to discuss pressing societal issues in America.



## LEAN INTO THE FIVE PILLARS OF READ WOKE

As educators read and discuss Read Woke Books with students, they might create a chart that is displayed and/or made accessible to all students. The following essential questions can be added to the chart to support further inquiry of each pillar as students read about and discuss the topics in each text. A sample chart is included on page 3 of this guide.

- Who is centered in this text?
- What has been the impact of this issue on groups of people who have been historically oppressed?
- In what ways does it matter to learn about and from those who are underrepresented and/or most impacted by an issue?
- Who (or what) benefits from maintaining social norms and the status quo?
- What actions have been and can be taken by individuals and communities to create change? How might you take action in your community?

# FIVE PILLARS OF READ WOKE

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Read Woke Books Seek to:	Ask Yourself:	Responses:
Amplify the voices of people of the global majority*	Who is centered in this text?	
Provide information about groups that have been disenfranchised	What has been the impact of this issue on groups of people who have been historically oppressed?	
Share perspectives of people who have been underrepresented or oppressed	Why is it important to learn <i>about</i> and to learn <i>from</i> people who are most affected by an issue?	
Challenge social norms and disrupt the status quo	Who (or what) benefits from maintaining social norms and the status quo?	
Encourage readers to take action in their community	What actions have been and can be taken by individuals and communities to create change? How might you take action in your community?	

\*People of the global majority is an affirming and empowering term that has been embraced by many people to describe the majority of the world who are people of African, Arab, Asian, and Latin American descent and identify as not white. Read more: I'm Embracing the Term "People of the Global Majority" (<https://regenerative.medium.com/im-embracing-the-term-people-of-the-global-majority-abd1c1251241>).

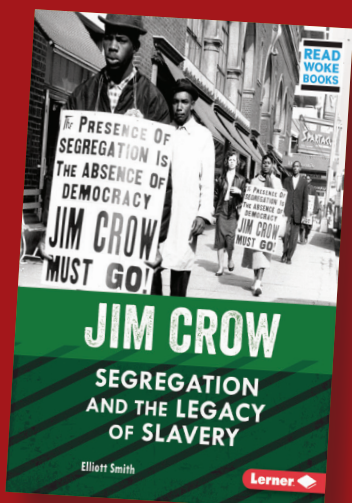


# PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Silences around challenging topics and issues can occur not only in schools, but at home as well. It is important to know that children want opportunities to ask questions about pressing issues and to learn more about them. It's also important to realize that children are perceptive. They are aware and have knowledge about the world around them.

**REFUSING TO HELP them develop deeper understandings can cause them to INSTEAD DEVELOP MISUNDERSTANDINGS.**

Parents and caregivers can read the **American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom** series themselves to recognize strategies for discussing hard topics with children. Then, read these books together with children and use the resources in this guide to support further conversations and learning.



## ESTABLISH COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Too often certain topics, like race and racism, have been silenced in classrooms when in fact, students *want* spaces to learn and discuss issues that impact their daily lives. If we truly believe in our students as changemakers who will transform our society, providing opportunities for such work is critical.

Work with students to create conditions for brave and safe discussions about tough topics. Establishing community agreements can help nurture classroom environments where powerful and productive discussions can thrive.

**There are several free resources that can support educators in this work.**

- **Learning for Justice** (<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/publications/lets-talk>) offers support for facilitating critical conversations with students.
- **Facing History Facing Ourselves** (<https://www.facinghistory.org/back-to-school-2019/teaching-toolkit/classroom-contracts/>) provides guidance for creating a classroom contract that supports students as they grapple with challenging ideas during discussions.
- **Mindful Schools** (<https://www.mindfulschools.org/inspiration/creating-a-safe-container-student-community-agreements/>) provides prompts and guidance for co-constructing agreements with students with the goal of maintaining caring connections within a class community.

Establishing community agreements can contribute to *all students* feeling supported in conversations about challenging issues.

## ACKNOWLEDGE AND ADDRESS TRAUMA

Consider how conversations about issues and inequities can affect students and work to mitigate harm. Work with school counselors to learn about students in your classroom that may particularly be impacted by the topics addressed in Read Woke Books series. You may want to speak with some students in advance to let them know when a specific topic will be discussed in your classroom. Discuss ways a student may prefer to participate, including the choice not to engage in discussions. Giving advance notice and respecting students' wishes is vital to building trust and creating an environment where all students can thrive.

When using additional resources with Read Woke Books, avoid images and videos that are trauma-inducing. Additionally, learn the signs of trauma, its impact on students, and teaching practices that support students.

- **Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative** (<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/>) provides resources, and best practices for cultivating trauma-sensitive classrooms and schools.
- **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network** ([https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/addressing\\_race\\_and\\_trauma\\_in\\_the\\_classroom\\_educators.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/addressing_race_and_trauma_in_the_classroom_educators.pdf)) helps educators address the intersection of race and trauma in the classroom.



# AFFIRMING STUDENTS' IDENTITIES

Conversations about identities are powerful. They help educators to truly know their students and encourage classroom communities to develop strong bonds. Solidifying these relationships will create ideal conditions for having challenging and courageous conversations. Prior to reading any of the Read Woke™ Books series, reflect on whether your classroom has been an identity-inspiring or identity-silencing space.

**CONSIDER:** *Are students able to bring their full selves to the classroom? How are identities such as race, ethnicity, and gender discussed? In what ways are the dynamic lives of students centered and affirmed?*

To create an entry point to discussions about race and to help make conversations about identities commonplace, invite students to create identity maps or webs.

*In Being the Change: Lessons and Strategies to Teach Social Comprehension*, educator and author Sara K. Ahmed describes identity webs as “personal graphic tools that help us consider the many factors that shape who we are.”

Modeling this is key. Sharing your own identity map can be an invitation for students to include both their personal identifiers (such as favorite music, food, sports, etc.) as well as social identities (race, ethnicity, religion, etc.).

For example, you might show your identity map and say, “Some of my identities are that I am . . .” and intentionally name race, gender, occupation, familial relationships, and more. Then explain, “We bring each of our identities to every text we read, and our identities influence our understandings of a text.”

“They can help us to perceive more in a text, particularly when we share identities and experiences with the characters and people being written about. And our identities can help us to recognize our limited understandings about the lived experiences of others. We’ll want to remain alert to this as we read all texts.”

It is important to note that inviting students to share and discuss their identities is truly an invitation, not a requirement. When students feel safe and comfortable to do so, they will. Also, this work is fluid. Returning to identity maps regularly can inspire students to make additions and revisions as they see fit, and students can be guided to think about which of their identities they are more alert to as they read a text and to consider why that is.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PREPARING TO TEACH READ WOKE™ BOOKS

**Talking about Race: Whiteness | National Museum of African American History & Culture**  
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/whiteness>

**Racial Equity and Literacy with Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul and Tricia Ebarvia**  
<https://blog.heinemann.com/podcast-racial-equity-literacy-with-dr-sonja-cherry-paul-and-tricia-ebarvia>

**Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul: Using ‘Stamped (For Kids)’ to Have Age-Appropriate Discussions About Race**  
<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/57757/dr-sonja-cherry-paul-using-stamped-for-kids-to-have-age-appropriate-discussions-about-race>

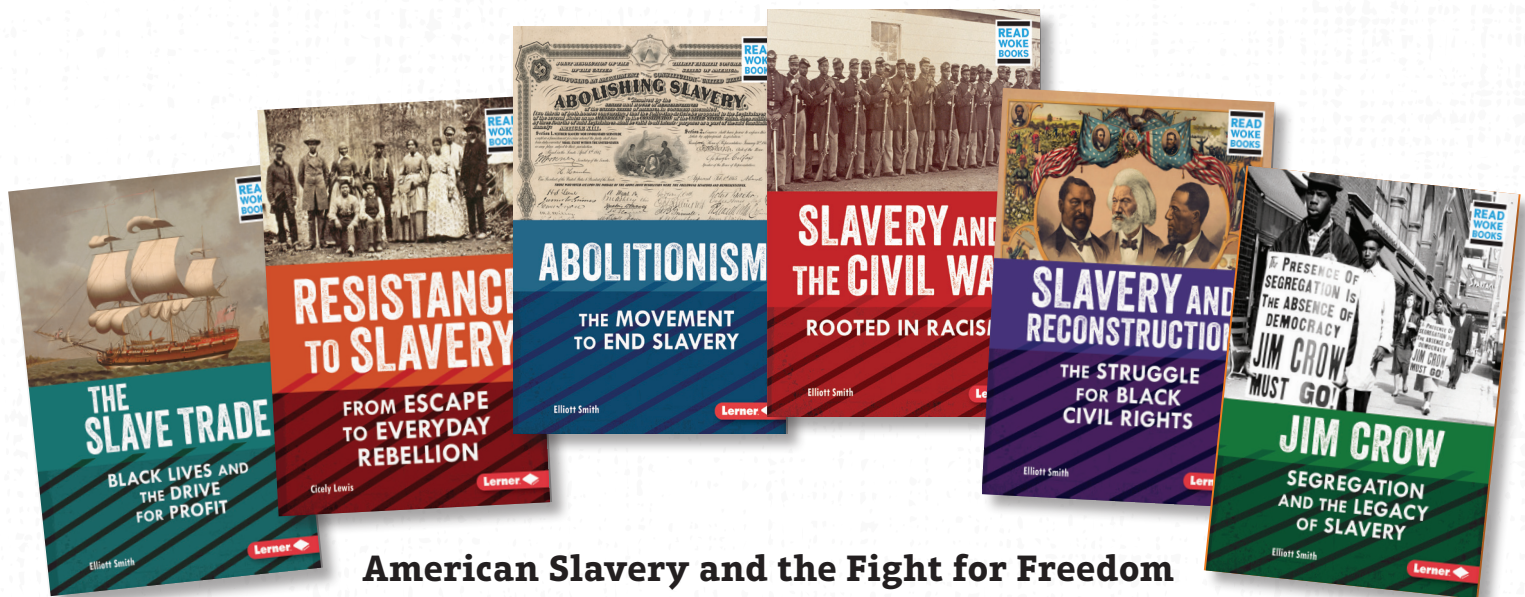
**Dismantling Racism in Education Podcast**  
<https://blog.heinemann.com/the-heinemann-podcast-dismantling-racism-in-education>

**Beyond Quick Fixes to Racial Injustice in Education Podcast**  
<https://blog.heinemann.com/podcast-dismantling-racism-in-education-preview-social-justice-saturday-2018>

**What Is Read Woke™?**  
<http://www.readwoke.com>

**Read Woke NONFICTION Webinar: A Panel Discussion with Carole Boston Weatherford, Cicely Lewis, Elliott Smith, and Dr. Artika Tyner**  
<https://www.slj.com/?event=read-woke-nonfiction-a-panel-discussion-with-carole-boston-weatherford-cicely-lewis-elliott-smith-and-dr-artika-tyner>

# ABOUT THE **AMERICAN SLAVERY AND THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM** SERIES



## American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom (Read Woke™ Books)

This examination of slavery in America balances accounts of oppression with true stories of resistance and resilience, centering on the voices of enslaved people.

Page Plus QR codes link readers to primary source recordings from the Voices Remembering Slavery collection at the Library of Congress. Reflection questions and an activism spread offer ways to understand and address the modern legacy of slavery.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



### CICELY LEWIS

is the librarian at Meadowcreek High School in Norcross, GA; the founder of the Read Woke movement; and the author and executive editor for the new Read Woke Books program from Lerner Publishing Group. Cicely received starred reviews from *Booklist* for her

books *Resistance to Slavery* in the *American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom* series and *Mass Incarceration, Black Men, and the Fight for Justice* from the *Issues in Action* series.



### ELLIOTT SMITH

is a freelance writer and author of children's books, adult books, and numerous articles on sports, entertainment, travel, and history topics. He wrote five titles in the inaugural *Issues in Action* series in the

*Read Woke Books* brand. He's also written five titles in the *American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom* series and additional titles in the *History in Pictures* series coming in August 2022.



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## AMERICAN SLAVERY AND THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM SERIES

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### USING THIS GUIDE IN CLASSROOMS

This guide provides pathways for teaching the **American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom** series. Educators can decide to teach these books in any order that best fits the needs of their students and curriculum. The order presented in this guide is chronological.

Educators should consider the needs of their students as well as factors such as access to materials and time as they decide on an instructional approach, such as reading aloud, doing shared reading, reading excerpts, or reading with partners/groups/clubs.

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### DISCUSSION PROMPTS

The discussion prompts support and deepen students' understandings. Educators may invite students to respond to these prompts in writing first, as a way of processing their learning and developing their ideas, and then share their thinking with peers. Discussion prompts may spark thinking and conversations that branch into multiple directions. Be sure to encourage this as these topics are complex and multilayered.

### LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

Learning explorations invite students to explore a topic and issue further, making connections to other events in the past as well as events present in their lives today. Educators might provide time for students to engage in this work in the classroom or invite students to do so at home. Providing students with a choice in which learning exploration to try can increase their engagement. This work can be done individually, in partnerships, as a small group, or even as part of a whole-class experience.

It is important to review digital resources in advance of assigning them to students to make sure they work for the particular students in the classroom in terms of level and content.

### RACIAL TERMINOLOGY

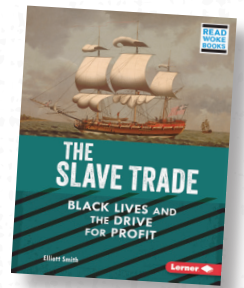
As students read the books in the **American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom** series, they will encounter racial terminology they might question and be confused about. It is important to explain that labels play an important role in defining groups and individuals who identify as belonging to a particular group, and that labels can change over time. This has been especially true for racial/cultural groups that have been oppressed, and particularly for Black people.

Students will encounter words such as "colored" and "Negro." While these words are part of names of important organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the United Negro College Fund that have chosen to keep their historical names, these words are now considered dated and offensive in any other context.

Teach students that across the past century, the term for Black people has shifted from "colored" and "Negro" to "Black" and "African American." As Black people continue to resist white supremacy and a society that attempts to subordinate them, these changes in labels are an important way that Black people work to redefine themselves. It is also important for students to know that although the terms "Black" and "African American" are used interchangeably at times, Black people exist all over the world, and therefore Black does not always mean African American. A person can be Black and not African American. Identity is personal and nuanced. For a variety of complex reasons, some people prefer one term over another or identify as both.

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE SLAVE TRADE: BLACK LIVES AND THE DRIVE FOR PROFIT BY ELLIOTT SMITH



Racism and profit were driving forces in the growth of slavery. During the transatlantic trade of enslaved people, millions of kidnapped Africans were sent around the world, many of them to the Americas. Even after the importation of enslaved people was banned in 1808, slavery did not end in the US. Read this book to learn about the Middle Passage, the triangular trade, and the people who continued fighting for change after the importation of enslaved people was banned.

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Letter from Cicely Lewis

Read and discuss the Letter from Cicely Lewis at the beginning of this text. Lewis writes: **"I want you to know:**

- Black history didn't begin with slavery
- Neither Abraham Lincoln nor the Civil Rights Movement ended racism
- Black people have always fought back."
- When you think about Black history, what words, names, and events come to mind?
- What have you noticed about what is taught about Black history in schools and what is left out?
- How might you use "strength, power, joy, complexity, and beauty" as powerful lenses to study and learn about Black history, not only during the month of February, but all year?

### Erasing History

Smith describes how racism and profit were "driving forces in the growth of slavery" in the American colonies. He writes, "Hundreds of thousands of enslaved people were brought to these ports during the slave trade. Many of these places have been stripped of any reference to slavery. There is no mention of what happened there. Only a few markers exist to preserve history and to remember the lives and families affected by auctions and markets" (p. 4).

- How do the silences and lack of tangible markers or references to slavery across cities of the US contribute to the dehumanization of Black people?
- Reconciliation is the process of acknowledging and working to repair harm that has been caused to an individual or group of people. Discuss what reconciliation means with regard to the history of slavery in the US.
- Do you think reconciliation is possible when the lived experiences of people and their histories are erased?
- Reflect: "What steps do you think should be taken to remember slave markets?"



## Chapter 1: What Was the Slave Trade?

Smith writes, “The slave trade was the capturing of free Africans, bringing them to the Americas, and selling them into slavery” (p. 8). There are some people who minimize the magnitude of this and the ways the legacy of slavery continues to impact the lives of Black people today.

- Prior to the transatlantic slave trade, different forms of slavery existed throughout the world. Discuss what you’ve learned about these various forms of slavery, including indentured servants. In what ways was the transatlantic chattel slavery system different from these other forms you may have learned about?
- Reflect: “How do you think greed played a part in the slave trade?”
- Why is it important to know about Queen Nzinga and other resistance narratives about slavery?
- In what ways is capitalism in the United States directly tied to slavery?

## Chapter 2: The Middle Passage

- Smith writes, “Being captured was just the first event in the horrible fate for many enslaved Africans. The next steps proved to be equally difficult” (p. 12). Discuss what you are learning about these next steps. In what ways was slavery a particularly cruel and inhumane system?
- Often, children are told reassuring narratives about slavery that minimize the cruelty and brutality of slavery. Who and what benefits from these untruths? Why is it important that children learn the truth about slavery?
- Although missing from many history books, the story of the *Amistad* is one of rebellion and resilience. The word “amistad” in Spanish means friendship. Consider the purpose of this ship, the revolt that occurred on it, and the subsequent Supreme Court ruling. Discuss the ship’s name, *Amistad*, as both a cruel misnomer and a symbol for the abolition of slavery.

## Chapter 3: Marketplace

- A system entails coordinated efforts and methods with parts and procedures organized to work together and function smoothly as a unified whole. Discuss what you are learning about slavery as an organized system and institution and its impact on the lives of Black people socially, economically, and politically.
- Smith writes, “On March 2 to 3, 1859, the enslaver Pierce Mease Butler held an auction in Georgia. The auction became the largest in US history, with 436 enslaved people sold. Butler made more than \$300,000 (more than \$9 million today) from the sale” (p.18). What are you learning about the ways that racism and slavery were not just tied to land (for example, needing enslaved people to plant and harvest), but also to money?
- What connections between racism and generational wealth can be made past and present?

## Chapter 4: Stopping the Ships

- Discuss the various systems that helped slavery continue and thrive in the US.
- How does this chapter help you understand what systemic racism and institutional racism means? What examples of this can be noticed today?

## Primary Source Voices

- Smith writes, “While you listen, consider the use of the term *slaves*. This book uses the term *enslaved* people. What is the difference between these terms?” (p. 24). Words matter. Discuss this question. What difference does it make to use enslaved vs. slave; enslaver vs. slaveholder, owner, or master?

## Take Action

- Review pages 26 and 27 and discuss the various ways you can take action to learn about slavery and current racial issues. Which actions are those you plan to take? What actions might you add to this list?

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# LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

## The National Museum of African American History & Culture

The National Museum of African American History & Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington, DC, is the Smithsonian's nineteenth museum, and it took 100 years to build. Learn about the intentionality around the design of the NMAAHC as well as the exhibits inside of it through the following links: **Timeline: It took over 100 years for the African American Museum to become a reality—The Washington Post** ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/timeline-it-took-over-100-years-for-the-african-american-museum-to-become-a-reality/2016/09/20/dc080c54-5a8c-11e6-831d-0324760ca856\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/timeline-it-took-over-100-years-for-the-african-american-museum-to-become-a-reality/2016/09/20/dc080c54-5a8c-11e6-831d-0324760ca856_story.html)); **Inside the National Museum of African American History and Culture—CBS This Morning** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch/uH-tAj4WA2Y>); **National Museum of African American History & Culture** (<https://nmaahc.si.edu/>)

- Why do you think it took 100 years to build the NMAAHC?
- What is the purpose of this museum?
- Learn about some of the exhibits at the NMAAHC. Which would you most like to see and why?

## The *Amistad* and Joseph Cinqué

Discuss the section on the *Amistad* Mutiny on page 15 of the book. Explore the following Encyclopaedia Britannica article and video, and the detailed timeline from the National Park Service website: **Amistad—Kids | Britannica Kids** (<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Amistad/384640#>); **The Amistad: A Detailed Timeline** ([https://www.nps.gov/subjects/travelamistad/upload/Timeline\\_Detailed.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/travelamistad/upload/Timeline_Detailed.pdf))

- What do you notice and wonder about this rebellion and the legal events that followed?

## The *Clotilda* and Africatown

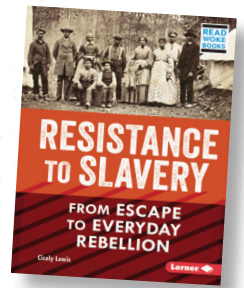
Smith writes that the *Clotilda* was “the last known (and illegal) ship to enter the US with enslaved people, in 1860” (p. 23). Learn more about the remnants of this ship found in southern Alabama and descendants of the enslaved Africans who, despite their oppression, built not only a town, but a community. **Finding the Last Slave Ship | National Geographic Society** (<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/video/finding-last-slave-ship/>)

- Why is the discovery of remnants of the *Clotilda* important to know about?
- In what ways did the people of Africatown work to create a self-sustaining community?
- How does Africatown demonstrate the resilience of Black people?
- Apply your knowledge about systemic racism to discuss the challenges residents in Africatown are experiencing today. Consider housing/land policies and laws, economic opportunities, working conditions, healthcare, etc.



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY: FROM ESCAPE TO EVERYDAY REBELLION BY CICELY LEWIS



In addition to slave uprisings and escapes on the Underground Railroad, enslaved people also resisted their mistreatment through small acts in their everyday lives. Discover the many forms of resistance to slavery.

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Letter from Cicely Lewis

Read and discuss the Letter from Cicely Lewis at the beginning of this text. Lewis writes: “I want you to know:

- Black history didn’t begin with slavery
- Neither Abraham Lincoln nor the Civil Rights Movement ended racism
- Black people have always fought back.”
- When you think about Black history, what words, names, and events come to mind?
- What have you noticed about what is taught about Black history in schools and what is left out?
- How might you use “strength, power, joy, complexity, and beauty” as powerful lenses to study and learn about Black history, not only during the month of February, but all year?

### Resistance and Rebellion

- What stories of resistance have you learned about in teachings about slavery?
- How does it affect your understandings about slavery and Black people to know, or not know, about stories of resistance and rebellion?
- Lewis writes, “Slavery was rooted in white supremacy, the belief that white people are a superior race” (p. 5). Discuss examples from your life today that demonstrate the ways white supremacy continues to thrive in the United States.

### Chapter 1: Everyday Resistance

- Resistance to oppression does not only involve protests and marches. Keep track of the everyday acts of resistance you are reading about.
- What other small but mighty ways do you imagine Black people resisted oppression during slavery?

### Chapter 2: Rebellions

- What surprises you about the rebellions you are learning about? Why do you think this information isn’t typically included in history textbooks?
- Reflect: “How can resistance lead to change, and what does resistance mean to you?”

## Chapter 3: The Journey to Freedom

- What ideas did Black people have about the meaning of freedom?
- In what ways did Black people resist to benefit not only themselves, but also the collective?
- Some Americans deny that the Civil War was about slavery. Why do you think there is denial of the truth about this war?
- What connections between racism and generational wealth can be made past and present?

## Chapter 4: Just the Beginning

- How was the press and published writings used to advance antislavery ideas and the abolitionist movement?
- Discuss what you are learning about Frederick Douglass, Solomon Northup, and Sojourner Truth. Why is it important to learn about slavery through the voices of those who experienced it?
- Reflect: “Why do you think the written accounts of slavery are so important?”

## Primary Source Voices

- As you access the primary sources provided, consider the voices you are listening to. What difference does it make to learn this history through the voices and lived-experience of those most impacted by slavery, as well as the racism and oppression that has continued beyond slavery?

## Take Action

- Review pages 26 and 27. Discuss the various ways you can take action to resist mistreatment and racism and fight for freedom. Which actions are those you plan to take? What actions might you add to this list?
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# LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

## Phillis Wheatley

Phillis Wheatley was a poet who, despite being enslaved, was the first African American woman in the United States to publish a book of poems. Learn more about Phillis Wheatley from the Academy of American Poets website: **Phillis Wheatley** (<https://poets.org/poet/phillis-wheatley>)

- Read some of Wheatley's poetry.
- What observations did Wheatley make about life? What stands out to you about her use of imagery and personification?

## The Stono Rebellion

On September 9, 1739, a large uprising of enslaved people occurred in South Carolina. Learn more about Stono Rebellion, also known as Hutchinson's Rebellion, at this PBS website: **Hutchinson's Rebellion | The African Americans\*** (<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/mr13.socst.us.hutchinson/hutchinsons-rebellion/>)

- Which factors contributed to the success and the eventual failure of the rebellion?

\* Educators, preview this video first. Consider whether this video, which includes violent descriptions, is right for your learners.

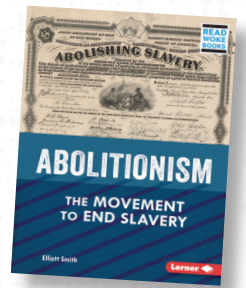
## The Amistad and Joseph Cinqué

Lewis writes, "In 1839 the Spanish ship *Amistad* left Cuba carrying enslaved Africans. While at sea, the fifty-three Africans on board were led by Joseph Cinqué and rebelled, took control of the ship, and demanded to be brought back to Africa" (p. 15). Learn more about the Amistad and Joseph Cinqué, also known as Sengbe Pieh, at this *Encyclopedia Britannica* website: **Amistad—Kids | Britannica Kids** (<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Amistad/384640#>). View a timeline at the National Park Service website: **The Amistad: A Detailed Timeline** ([https://www.nps.gov/subjects/travelamistad/upload/Timeline\\_Detailed.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/travelamistad/upload/Timeline_Detailed.pdf))

- Explore the article, video, and detailed timeline.
- What do you notice and wonder about this rebellion and the legal events that followed?

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

ABOLITIONISM: THE MOVEMENT TO END SLAVERY BY ELLIOTT SMITH



The abolitionist movement fought to end slavery long before the Civil War. Abolitionists campaigned for freedom for enslaved people. Abolitionists used printed materials, passionate speeches, and direct action to disrupt the racist system of slavery. Learn about abolitionist leaders such as Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass, setbacks and victories for the movement, and the work abolitionists continue to inspire.

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Letter from Cicely Lewis

Read and discuss the Letter from Cicely Lewis at the beginning of this text. Lewis writes: **“I want you to know:**

- Black history didn’t begin with slavery
- Neither Abraham Lincoln nor the Civil Rights Movement ended racism
- Black people have always fought back.”
- When you think about Black history, what words, names, and events come to mind?
- What have you noticed about what is taught about Black history in schools and what is left out?
- How might you use “strength, power, joy, complexity, and beauty” as powerful lenses to study and learn about Black history, not only during the month of February, but all year?

### Telling the Truth

- Discuss what you are learning about Sojourner Truth. How does learning about Sojourner Truth help you to develop a more nuanced understanding of the word “resistance”?
- Reflect: “Why was it important for Sojourner Truth to fight for women’s rights as well as Black rights?”
- In what ways did Sojourner Truth leverage religion to humanize Black people to their oppressors and speak out against injustice?

### Chapter 1: What Was Abolitionism?

- Discuss the following sentence: “Quakers and other religious groups expressed moral disapproval of slavery” (p. 9). In what ways did these groups work to name the institution of slavery as a moral dilemma?
- What do you notice about the intersection of religion and race in abolitionism?
- Why do you think some religious leaders felt a moral obligation to help abolish slavery while others did not?
- What do you notice and wonder about the power of laws compared to the power of racism? What examples of this tension can you notice today? What are the implications of this for people who live in the United States?



## Chapter 2: Making the Case

- Words matter. Discuss the ways words and writings were used to advance abolitionism.
- Who were some of the people who were essential to the abolitionist movement? What were their motivations and tactics?
- Abolitionists and civil right movements are not above critique. Discuss some of the tensions between the key people who fought for abolition.
- How might the social identities (race, gender, class) have contributed to the beliefs, perspectives, and stances of the abolitionists you are learning about?
- Discuss the connection between mass incarceration and voting. Consider how systems of oppression are created.

## Chapter 3: Disrupting the System

- Discuss the risks Black people have been willing to take to free themselves and others.
- In what ways did Black abolitionists such as Harriett Tubman, Nate Turner, John Brown, and Dred Scott demonstrate that a commitment to liberation and equity is a commitment to action?
- Although they weren't always successful, discuss the various ways the actions of Black abolitionists were organized and strategic.
- How are laws in the US used to oppress Black people? Discuss what you know about ways laws today work to oppress rather than liberate.

## Chapter 4: Unfinished Work

- Smith writes that the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution, “abolished all slavery in the US except as punishment for a crime” (p. 21). What do you think are the implications of the 13th amendment and the US criminal justice system related to race?
- Reflect: “What do you think are the benefits of and the problems with the different tactics used by abolitionists?”
- Consider again, the word resistance and its meaning. Even as the nation began to change, what do you notice about the ways the country resisted such changes?

## Primary Source Voices

- As you access the primary sources provided, consider the voices you are listening to. What difference does it make to learn this history through the voices and lived-experience of those most impacted by slavery, as well as the racism and oppression that has continued beyond slavery?

## Take Action

- Review pages 26 and 27. Discuss the various ways you can take action to learn more about abolitionism and fight for social justice in your community. Which actions are those you plan to take? What actions might you add to this list?
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# LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

## Richard Allen

Richard Allen was born into slavery. He became the founder of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. Learn more about Richard Allen from the National Museum of African American History & Culture website: **Richard Allen's Money Box** (<https://www.searchablemuseum.com/richard-allens-money-box>)

- Discuss Allen's work and the role of Black churches and religion in the abolitionist and antislavery movements.

## William Lloyd Garrison

William Lloyd Garrison was the owner of the antiracist newspaper, the *Liberator*. Review the image of the paper on page 13 or from the National Museum of African American History & Culture website: **The Liberator, Vol. XXVII, No. 23** ([https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc\\_2016.166.41.13](https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2016.166.41.13)) Study the illustrations depicted along with the title of the newspaper.

- "A picture is worth a thousand words" is a familiar saying. Magnify and examine the top part of the *Liberator*. Discuss what the images on the left and the right side of the title show. What purpose and message do these images serve?
- How does Garrison use Christianity in the *Liberator* to advance abolition?

## Frederick Douglass

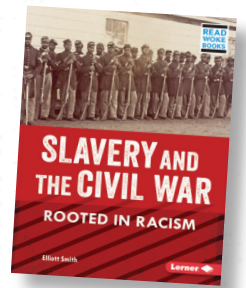
Frederick Douglass escaped enslavement and was a leader in the abolitionist movement. Although the United States is capable of change, the legacies of slavery continues to be a tremendous struggle. Listen to the descendants of Frederick Douglass deliver his speech in this video: **'What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?': Descendants Read Frederick Douglass' Speech | NPR** <https://www.youtube.com/watch/NBe5qbnkqoM>)

- What lessons can be learned from this speech given by Douglass on July 5, 1852, that can still be applied today?
- Why might some Americans hesitate to celebrate on July 4 while others celebrate proudly?



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

SLAVERY AND THE CIVIL WAR: ROOTED IN RACISM BY ELLIOTT SMITH



The Civil War began after eleven southern states seceded in order to keep slavery. Discover how enslaved people experienced the war, from serving on the front lines to glimpsing and winning freedom.

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Letter from Cicely Lewis

Read and discuss the Letter from Cicely Lewis at the beginning of this text. Lewis writes: **“I want you to know:**

- **Black history didn’t begin with slavery**
- **Neither Abraham Lincoln nor the Civil Rights Movement ended racism**
- **Black people have always fought back.”**
- When you think about Black history, what words, names, and events come to mind?
- What have you noticed about what is taught about Black history in schools and what is left out?
- How might you use “strength, power, joy, complexity, and beauty” as powerful lenses to study and learn about Black history, not only during the month of February, but all year?

### Rebellion Brewing

- Discuss the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* Supreme Court case. How does this case reveal the ways government sanctioned laws work to oppress Black people?
- Smith writes, “Lincoln was not openly opposed to slavery, but he was against the expansion of slavery into new US territories, which angered proslavery forces” (p. 5). Discuss what you have learned about Abraham Lincoln in other texts and in school. How does this compare? Why do you think a different, oversimplistic narrative is told and taught about Lincoln?
- Why is it important to know about rebellions and antislavery solidarity between White and Black people?

### Chapter 1: The Beginning

- Smith writes, “The cause of the Civil War was slavery. Some claim that the war was fought over states’ rights. For the South, that meant states’ rights to keep slavery alive. Even today, the states’ rights argument is sometimes taught in school” (p. 8). Who benefits from the states’ rights narrative? What is lost by denying the truth?
- Discuss your understanding of the secession of the eleven states that formed the Confederate States of America. What then, do you think the confederate flag symbolizes?

## Chapter 2: Life During the War

- Too often narratives about Harriett Tubman are limited to her work as a conductor of the Underground Railroad. What are you learning about how she supported the Union during the Civil War? How does this provide you with a fuller understanding about Harriett Tubman?
- Reflect: "Should governments remove all monuments to the Confederacy?"
- Smith writes, "After the Civil War, communities around the South put up monuments to Confederate leaders. Some statues were put up decades after the war, especially during prominent civil rights movements. Many believe these statues are meant to intimidate Black people and should be removed" (p. 15). What do you think about these statues? Which historical figures deserve to have statues, monuments, and schools named after them?

## Chapter 3: Fight for Freedom

- Discuss the Second Confiscation Act and the Militia Act. What are you learning about government policies and laws that are created seemingly to remove barriers to freedom for Black people? Under what conditions does this seem to occur?
- Reflect: "Why do you think some Black people wanted to fight in the Civil War?"
- Smith writes, "Racism persisted within the ranks, however, and Black and white soldiers experienced unequal treatment" (p. 18). Discuss the environmental conditions Black soldiers experienced, specifically the social, economic, and health factors they were forced to endure.

## Chapter 4: Emancipation

- Smith writes, "And several European nations were considering supporting the confederacy" (p. 20). Why do you think other nations supported the confederacy?
- Discuss the word "resilient." In what ways did Black people continue to demonstrate resilience after slavery was abolished?

## Primary Source Voices

- How do racial identities influence the lived-experiences of people and their interpretations of history?

## Take Action

- Review pages 26 and 27 and discuss the various ways you can take action to learn more about the Civil War, slavery, and how this history impacts your life today. Which actions are those you plan to take? What actions might you add to this list?
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# LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

## Robert Smalls

Robert Smalls was enslaved and gained his freedom by taking control of a Confederate ship. Learn about him through these PBS websites: **The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross | Robert Smalls: A Daring Escape** (<https://www.pbs.org/video/african-americans-many-rivers-cross-robert-smalls-daring-escape/>); **Robert Smalls: From Slavery to Politics** (<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/bf09.socst.us.const.smalls/robert-smalls-from-slavery-to-politics/>)

- Discuss the incredible achievements of Robert Smalls in the face of tremendous obstacles.
- How does learning about people such as Robert Smalls demonstrate the great risks and lengths enslaved people took to gain freedom?
- How does learning this history demonstrate the various ways Black people thought about the collective and worked not only to liberate themselves, but others as well?

## 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment

The 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment is one of the first groups of Black troops formed during the Civil War. Learn about the restoration of the Shaw Memorial in Boston—a monument depicting Black soldiers of the 54th Regiment as they march to battle—in this PBS News Hour video. **Boston restores monument to Black Civil War troops | PBS NewsHour** (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/boston-restores-monument-to-black-civil-war-troops>)

- How does this monument expand the narrative of American history as L'Merchie Frazier, Education Director at the Museum of African American History in Boston Massachusetts suggests?

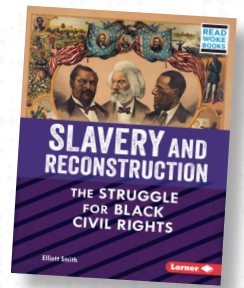
## Juneteenth

Juneteenth marks the actual end of chattel slavery across the United States, occurring in 1865, two and half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. It wasn't until June 19, 1865, when Black people in Galveston, Texas, received the news of their liberation. Learn more about Juneteenth, which became a federal holiday in 2021, at these sites: **155th Anniversary of Juneteenth Google Doodle** ([https://www.youtube.com/watch/bg\\_y1ku-OEY](https://www.youtube.com/watch/bg_y1ku-OEY)); **Behind the Doodle: 155th Anniversary of Juneteenth** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch/ipodBEnW9Hk>); **Juneteenth | National Museum of African American History & Culture** (<https://nmaahc.si.edu/juneteenth>)

- Lead art director Angelica McKinley explains that “freedom is a journey” is the main theme of the Juneteenth Google Doodle. In what ways is this theme demonstrated across the history of the US?
- What are you learning about the ways Juneteenth is more than an acknowledgement of the true end slavery, but also a celebration of Black resilience?

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

SLAVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION: THE STRUGGLE FOR BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS BY ELLIOTT SMITH



With the freeing of four million enslaved people after the Civil War, the Reconstruction period brought new victories and challenges in the fight for Black rights. Learn more about this crucial period in US history.

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Letter from Cicely Lewis

Read and discuss the Letter from Cicely Lewis at the beginning of this text. Lewis writes: **“I want you to know:**

- **Black history didn't begin with slavery**
- **Neither Abraham Lincoln nor the Civil Rights Movement ended racism**
- **Black people have always fought back.”**
- When you think about Black history, what words, names, and events come to mind?
- What have you noticed about what is taught about Black history in schools and what is left out?
- How might you use “strength, power, joy, complexity, and beauty” as powerful lenses to study and learn about Black history, not only during the month of February, but all year?

### Uneasy Freedom

- Look at the photo and caption on page 5. Smith writes, “The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery. But it featured a loophole that allowed slavery to continue as punishment for a crime. White people in power created ridiculous crimes and used them to disproportionately arrest free Black men. White law enforcement officers might issue fines knowing that many of those who had been enslaved could not pay them. In those cases, Black people could be convicted and forced to work to repay their debt” (p. 6). In what ways is convict leasing and the prison system an extension of slavery?

### Chapter 1: What Was Reconstruction?

- Smith writes, “After the Civil War, millions of recently freed people needed help to begin their new lives. They had no resources, jobs, or land. In 1865 the US government ordered that newly free families receive up to 40 acres (16 ha) of land, but the order was soon reversed” (p. 8). Discuss your understanding of the word reparations. What do you believe was owed to Black people who endured the horrors of slavery? What do you believe is owed to their descendants today?
- Reflect: “How do you think newly free people felt about the abolition of slavery and how to move forward?”
- Smith writes, “White people used fear, laws, and access to land to keep control of Black people” (p.10). Although Amendments were passed to abolish slavery and to provide citizenship rights to Black people, what challenges did Black people continue to experience in their daily lives?

### Chapter 2: Making Gains

- What are you learning about the ways Black people, despite continued oppression, committed to working to make the country better for all people?
- In addition to religious practices, what role and purpose did Black churches serve?



## Chapter 3: Pushback

- In what ways did various forms of white rage work to threaten, inflict violence upon, silence Black people, and suppress them from accessing their rights and participating in the democratic process?
- Read the quote on page 18 by prominent Black activist, author, and historian W. E. B. Du Bois: “The slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery.” What are you learning about the various ways that laws and US government officials sanctioned violence, discrimination, and racism? What was the impact on Black people after slavery?
- Why do you think Democrats wanted the federal troops removed? How do you think this decision further endangered Black people?

## Chapter 4: The Aftermath

- After 246 years of slavery, Black people still were not fully free. Smith writes, “Segregation laws affected Black people for nearly one hundred years” (p. 21). Discuss the longevity and magnitude of slavery and oppression in the US. In what ways does this legacy continue to affect Black people today? What examples can you share?
- Reflect: “Why do you think people in the South were afraid of the political power of Black people?”

## Primary Source Voices

- As you access the primary sources provided, consider the voices you are listening to. What difference does it make to learn this history through the voices and lived-experience of those most impacted by slavery, as well as the racism and oppression that has continued beyond slavery?

## Take Action

- Review pages 26 and 27 and discuss what you’ve learned about The Reconstruction era and ways to learn more and make changes where you live. Which actions are those you plan to take? What actions might you add to this list?
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# LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

## The Democratic and Republican Parties

The two major political parties in the United States are the Democratic and Republican parties. However, these parties are not the same now as they were in the past. Learn about the history of these two political parties and their change in position over time in these videos. **The changing history of the Democratic and Republican parties | theSkimm\*** (<https://youtu.be/RJPwGvAb1Fw>); **Why Do We Have Political Parties | PBS** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch/2rFvYISlNts>)

- What is your understanding about the stance and goals of the Democratic and Republican parties today?

*\*The Skimm video is not comprehensive but intended as a starting point to examine the change in ideologies between these political parties.*

## Freedmen's Bureau

The Freedmen's Bureau, also known as the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, was an agency established by President Abraham Lincoln in 1865. Its purpose was to assist those who had been enslaved but were freed ("freedmen") with the Emancipation Proclamation. Learn more in this NBC News Learn video: **Freedmen's Bureau** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch/5B4cpiTYhWk>)

- Consider the enormous challenges Black people experienced to take care of their basic needs after slavery was abolished. Why was the Freedmen's Bureau important?
- What were some of the accomplishments of the Freedmen's Bureau?
- Despite the accomplishments of the Freedmen's Bureau, there were significant obstacles. Discuss the racial and political struggles the agency faced during the Reconstruction Era.

## Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)

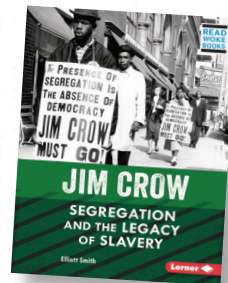
Schools and educational institutions in the US were never built with Black students in mind. As a result, they have been inherently and historically inequitable spaces. In contrast, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were founded to address discrimination against Black students and have been spaces where Black students intentionally and historically have been able to learn and thrive. Explore the videos and timeline at the HBCU First website: **HBCU First** (<https://hbcufirst.com/resources/hbcu-history-timeline>)

- What are you learning about the history of, need, and purpose of HBCUs?
- Why are HBCUs still needed today?



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

**JIM CROW: SEGREGATION AND THE LEGACY OF SLAVERY BY ELLIOTT SMITH**



Even after the institution of slavery became illegal, the legacy of slavery continued through injustices created by the Jim Crow laws. Learn more about these discriminatory laws that have shaped America's past and present.

## DISCUSSION PROMPTS

### Letter from Cicely Lewis

Read and discuss the Letter from Cicely Lewis at the beginning of this text. Lewis writes: **"I want you to know:**

- **Black history didn't begin with slavery**
- **Neither Abraham Lincoln nor the Civil Rights Movement ended racism**
- **Black people have always fought back."**
- When you think about Black history, what words, names, and events come to mind?
- What have you noticed about what is taught about Black history in schools and what is left out?
- How might you use "strength, power, joy, complexity, and beauty" as powerful lenses to study and learn about Black history, not only during the month of February, but all year?

### Living Connection

- How does the connection between the past and the present help you gain an understanding of how racism works systemically?

### Chapter 1: What Was Jim Crow?

- Discuss what you are learning about Jim Crow laws and Black codes. Although the 13th amendment abolished slavery in the US, how powerful is the US Constitution if people in positions of power refuse to follow it?
- Some people argue that slavery happened a long time ago and Americans should stop talking about it and just move on. Discuss the following quote on page 11 by author Ijeoma Oluo: "You can't 'get over' something that is still happening. Which is why black Americans can't 'get over' slavery or Jim Crow." What examples have you observed today that support Oluo's words?

### Chapter 2: Separate But Not Equal

- Discuss the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision. What can you notice about the ways the law was weaponized against Black people to continue to oppress them? What can you observe about society today that makes you wonder about the ways this has continued?
- Reflect: "How would you feel if you weren't allowed to go to school with friends and kids of a different race from you?"
- Segregation is often discussed as a past issue that occurred in the US south. What are you learning about segregation in the north?
- What can you notice about modern-day segregation today?

## Chapter 3: Migration and Motivation

- What are you learning about the ways Black people worked to dismantle the oppression of Black people?
- Discuss reasons why people migrate and the particular challenges of this for Black people.
- Why do you think Democrats wanted the federal troops removed? How do you think this decision further endangered Black people?

## Chapter 4: End of an Era

- Smith writes, “Then, in 1960, Ruby Bridges became one of the first Black children to join an all-white public school in New Orleans, Louisiana.” Smith explains that six-year-old Bridges was “met with resistance from angry white people” each day (p. 21). In 2021, some people have worked to ban books that tell about the life of Ruby Bridges. Why do you think some white parents and politicians are working to remove stories like this from schools? What don’t they want students to know and learn?
- *Brown v. Board of Education* made segregation in schools illegal. What can be noticed about the ways segregation in schools continues today even though the law says it’s illegal? What can you notice about your school? Your neighborhood?
- Reflect: “Why do you think the Jim Crow era lasted so long?”
- Smith writes, “Racism and segregation by personal choice still exist” (p. 22). Discuss the ways racism and segregation still exist, not only by personal choice, but also systemically.
  - What can be noticed about police brutality? Who is disproportionately affected?
  - Consider housing and neighborhoods. What can be noticed about racial demographics?
  - Think about education. Which schools are most resourced? Which schools are under-resourced?
  - Reflect on books and media. What can be noticed about which characters and people dominate in books and film?

## Primary Source Voices

- How have Black people fought for their country while simultaneously fighting for their own liberation?

## Take Action

- Review pages 26 and 27 and discuss what you’ve learned about Jim Crow and slavery’s legacy and the ways you can share this with family and friends.
  - Which actions are those you plan to take? What actions might you add to this list?
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# LEARNING EXPLORATIONS

## Ida B. Wells-Barnett

Ida B. Wells-Barnett was a journalist and activist. She is known as the anti-lynching crusader who worked to expose horrific, violent crimes against Black people. She was also a critical activist of women's rights. As white women activists intentionally overlooked Black women behind in their plight for women's rights, Ida B. Wells-Barnett worked to make sure Black **American Experience | Ida B Wells : The Advocate | Season 32 | Episode 9 | PBS** (<https://www.pbs.org/video/ida-b-wells-advocate/>); **This Ida B. Wells mosaic is also a monument to women's suffrage | PBS NewsHour** (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/this-ida-b-wells-mosaic-is-also-a-monument-to-womens-suffrage>)

- What words might you use to describe the life and work of Ida B. Wells-Barnett?
- Learn about the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. This amendment did not secure the rights of Black women to vote. Why do you think the mosaic in Washington DC's Union Station honoring Ida B. Wells-Barnett is significant?

## The Great Migration

Smith writes, "To escape the racism in the South, many Black people looked to the North" (p. 18) and "About six million Black people left the South for new opportunities" (p. 19). Review the quote from author and journalist Isabel Wilkerson: "[The Great Migration] had such an effect on almost every aspect of our lives. From the music that we listen to, to the politics of our country, to the ways the cities even look and feel, even today" (p. 19). Learn more about The Great Migration and the lasting impact this decision to leave the South has had on the US in this TED Talk. **Isabel Wilkerson: The Great Migration and the power of a single decision | TED Women** ([https://www.ted.com/talks/isabel\\_wilkerson\\_the\\_great\\_migration\\_and\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_decision](https://www.ted.com/talks/isabel_wilkerson_the_great_migration_and_the_power_of_a_single_decision))

- What choices did Black people make when they had the opportunity to choose?
- In what ways have these choices transformed the US?

## The Greensboro Sit-In

Smith writes, "College students also fought segregation. The Greensboro sit-in began in 1960 with four Black college students refusing to leave a lunch counter designated for white people in Greensboro, North Carolina. The movement spread, and thousands of college students across the country protested to desegregate lunch counters" (p. 22). Learn more about this movement in this History Channel video. **Reflections on the Greensboro Lunch Counter | National Museum of American History** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch/uFQ3ZCAgAA0>).

- How did this particular protest inspire others across the country?
- What do you notice about the way non-violent actions were met with violence?
- Civil Rights activist Diane Nash says the Civil Rights Movement was a people's movement. Discuss the meaning and significance of this.
- What are you learning about the power of young people to effect change?

## Fannie Lou Hamer

Fannie Lou Hamer was a courageous Civil Rights activist who led voting drives in the United States South. She was threatened, jailed, beaten, and shot at as a result of her activism, but she refused to give up. In 1964 she co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). Learn more about Fannie Lou Hamer and her testimony in front of the Credentials Committee at the Democratic Party's national convention in this PBS video. **Fannie Lou Hamer's Powerful Testimony | Freedom Summer | American Experience** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch/07PwNVCZCcy>).

- Discuss how President Lyndon Johnson weaponized the media to silence Fannie Lou Hamer.
- How does this further your understanding of systemic racism?



# PRAISE FOR READ WOKE™ BOOKS

★ “Lewis’ Read Woke brand grows with the addition of the *American Slavery and the Fight for Freedom* series (6 titles). This selection, though centered on the enslavement of Africans, is broad in its scope, starting with a nod to the 1619 Project and ending with a look at Black Lives Matter protests. The unifying thread is Black people’s acts of resistance, both small and large, against having their rights and freedoms violated. Approaching the topic of slavery in this way marks a compelling shift in how this period of American history has traditionally been told. Indeed, Lewis tells it like it is (‘Slavery was rooted in white supremacy’) without letting the text become politically charged. A quick history of slavery is given before looking at rebellions, such as Joseph Cinqué’s 1839 uprising aboard the *Amistad*, the Underground Railroad, and the role of antislavery newspapers in achieving abolition. Also incorporated are primary sources (including QR codes to Library of Congress recordings and salient quotes), reflection and activism prompts, and a Read Woke reading list for those who want to learn more. An excellent starting point for researchers.”

—starred, *Booklist for Resistance to Slavery*

★ “Lerner’s new Read Woke Books brand, created with librarian Lewis, ‘seek[s] to challenge social norms, give voice to the voiceless, provide information about [disenfranchised] groups . . . , disrupt the status quo, and share perspectives from underrepresented or oppressed groups.’ Its *Issues in Action* series (6 titles) certainly does this. Here, readers get a frank accounting of mass incarceration in the U.S. today and how it disproportionately affects Black people as Lewis traces its roots to slavery, Jim Crow laws and convict leasing programs, Nixon’s War on Drugs and unjust sentencing practices, and the school-to-prison pipeline. The short chapters pack a punch with sentences that make unflinching statements.... Each page features an illustration or quote by a respected expert, and readers wishing to get involved or learn more will appreciate the ‘Take Action’ suggestions and the ‘Read Woke Reading List.’ ...[A] strong addition to social-justice collections.”

—starred,

*Booklist for Mass Incarceration, Black Men, and the Fight for Justice*



## ABOUT THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

**CICELY LEWIS** is the executive editor of the new Read Woke Books publishing program from

Lerner. A school librarian with a passion for creating lovers of reading, she was named the 2020 National Librarian of the Year by *School Library Journal* and Scholastic, a 2019 *Library Journal* Mover and Shaker and the 2019 National Teacher Award for Lifelong Readers by the National Council of Teachers of English and Penguin Random House. In 2017, she started the Read Woke challenge in response to the shootings of young unarmed black people, the repeal of DACA, and the lack of diversity in young adult literature. She also writes a bi-monthly column in *School Library Journal* where she shares her book recommendations. Connect with her on Twitter @[cicelythegreat](#), Instagram @[cicelythegreat](#), and at [www.readwoke.com](#).



## ABOUT THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPER

**DR. SONJA CHERRY-PAUL** is an educator, author, founder of Red Clay Educators, host of the Black Creators Series,

and cofounder of the Institute for Racial Equity in Literacy. She consults with schools and organizations to advance the work of equity. Sonja writes curriculum that centers the work of antiracism, culturally relevant and sustaining teaching, and racial literacy in K-12 schools. She is a national speaker and leads institutes working with educators around the world providing professional development. Connect with her on Twitter and Instagram @[SonjaCherryPaul](#) and at [SonjaCherryPaul.com](#).