

# The Remedial Herstory Project

## INQUIRY-BASED LESSON PLAN

### STAGING THE INQUIRY

For this inquiry, teachers should consider opening with an intriguing and open ended question, then provide some background on this topic generally in the form of a video, brief lecture, or presentation. Close the introduction by asking students what questions they have, guide them in discussion to the question for the inquiry, highlighted at the top of the next page.

### ACTIVITY TASKS

- Pose a broad open ended question. Provide background information.
- Students respond to questions in this packet independently or with a partner.
- Consider doing one of the following to extend the exercise:
  - Facilitate student discussion of the compelling question.
  - Facilitate a 4-corner debate.
  - Facilitate a structured academic controversy.
  - Students assume the characters involved and discuss the compelling question in character.
- Students craft an argument.

### C3 FRAMEWORK

D1.1.9-12. Explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the field.

D1.2.9-12. Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

**D2.His.4.9-12.** Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

**D2.His.5.9-12.** Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D2.His.10.9-12. Detect possible limitations in various kinds of historical evidence and differing secondary interpretations.

D2.His.11.9-12. Critique

the usefulness of historical sources for a specific historical inquiry based on their maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.

D2.His.14.9-12. Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.

D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

### Document C: Ida B. Wells Barnett

*Ida Wells's life, started in adversity and fueled by controversy, surely had a strong influence on her approach to rhetoric. Ida Bell Wells was born on July 16, 1862, in Holly Springs, Mississippi, the first child of Jim Wells and Lizzie Warrenton Wells. The Emancipation Proclamation, abolishing slavery in all states in rebellion, including Mississippi, was issued some two months later and took effect on January 1, 1863. The Wells family became politically active members of the Holly Springs community and sent all of their children to the local Freedman's Aid school, later named Rust University. In 1878, Ida Wells's parents and one infant brother died of yellow fever, and she found herself at sixteen parenting her five surviving siblings, a responsibility she chose over separating the family. Soon after the fifty-mile move to Memphis from Holly Springs, she sued the Chesapeake, Ohio and Southwestern Railroad for forcibly removing her from the ladies' train car, a process during which she bit the conductor's hand. Although she won the 1884 suit at the Circuit court level, the decision was reversed by the State Supreme Court.<sup>1</sup> She expressed her disappointment and her protective racial instinct in an April 11, 1887, diary entry: "I have firmly believed all along that the law was on our side and would, when we appealed to it, give us justice. I feel shorn of that belief and utterly discouraged, and just now if it were possible would gather my race in my arms and fly far away with them."*

Logan, Shirley Wilson. "Voices of Democracy." University of Maryland. Last modified January 2007. <http://www.voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/>.

*The following pamphlet was first published by her in 1892 but was subsequently reprinted. The misspellings may be original.*

...[My aim is to] give the world a true, unvarnished account of the causes of lynch law in the South.

This statement is not a shield for the despoiler of virtue, nor altogether a defense for the poor blind Afro-American Sampsons [a biblical Israelite leader] who suffer themselves to be betrayed by white Delilahs. It is a contribution to truth, an array of facts, the perusal of which it is hoped will stimulate this great American Republic to demand that justice be done though the heavens fall.

It is with no pleasure I have dipped my hands in the corruption here exposed. Somebody must show that the Afro-American race is more sinned against than sinning, and it seems to have fallen upon me to do so. The awful death-roll that Judge Lynch is calling every week is appalling, not only because of the lives it takes, the rank cruelty and outrage to the victims, but because of the prejudice it fosters and the stain it places against the good name of a weak race.

The Afro-American is not a bestial race. If this work can contribute in any way toward proving this, and at the same time arouse the conscience of the American people to a demand for justice to every citizen, and punishment by law for the lawless, I shall feel I have done my race a service. Other considerations are of minor importance. ...Henry W. Grady in his well-remembered speeches in New England and New York pictured the Afro-American as incapable of self-government. Through him and other leading men the cry of the South to the country has been "Hands off! Leave us to solve our problem." To the Afro-American the South says, "the white man must and will rule." There is little difference between the Antebellum South and the New South.

Her white citizens are wedded to any method however revolting, any measure

however extreme, for the subjugation of the young manhood of the race. They have cheated him out of his ballot, deprived him of civil rights or redress therefor in the civil courts, robbed him of the fruits of his labor, and are still murdering, burning and lynching him.

The result is a growing disregard of human life. Lynch law has spread its insidious influence till men in New York State, Pennsylvania and on the free Western plains feel they can take the law in their own hands with impunity, especially where an Afro-American is concerned. The South is brutalized to a degree not realized by its own inhabitants, and the very foundation of government, law and order, are imperilled. ...efforts brought forth apologies and a short halt, but the lynching mania was raged again through the past three months with unabated fury.

The strong arm of the law must be brought to bear upon lynchers in severe punishment, but this cannot and will not be done unless a healthy public sentiment demands and sustains such action.

The men and women in the South who disapprove of lynching and remain silent on the perpetration of such outrages, are particeps criminis, accomplices, accessories before and after the fact, equally guilty with the actual lawbreakers who would not persist if they did not know that neither the law nor militia would be employed against them.

...Near Vicksburg, Miss., a murder was committed by a gang of burglars. Of course it must have been done by Negroes, and Negroes were arrested for it. It is believed that two men, Smith Tooley and John Adams belonged to a gang controlled by white men and, fearing exposure, on the night of July 4, they were hanged in the Court House yard by those interested in silencing them. Robberies since committed in the same vicinity have been known to be by white men who had their faces blackened. We strongly believe in the innocence of these murdered men, but we have no proof. No other news goes out to the world save that which stamps us as a race of cutthroats, robbers and lustful wild beasts. So great is Southern hate and prejudice, they legally(?) hung poor little thirteen- year-old Mildrey Brown at Columbia, S.C., Oct. 7, on the circumstantial evidence that she poisoned a white infant. If her guilt had been proven unmistakably, had she been white, Mildrey Brown would never have been hung. The country would have been aroused and South Carolina disgraced forever for such a crime. The Afro-American himself did not know as he should have known as his journals should be in a position to have him know and act.

Nothing is more definitely settled than he must act for himself. I have shown how he may employ the boycott, emigration and the press, and I feel that by a combination of all these agencies can be effectually stamped out lynch law, that last relic of barbarism and slavery. "The gods help those who help themselves." --IDA B. WELLS-

*Wells-Barnett, Ida B. "Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases." New York City, Oct. 26, 1892.*

NAACP Leaders

|  | Washington | Dubois | Wells-Barnett |
|--|------------|--------|---------------|
| Historical Context:  |            |        |               |
| Audience:  |            |        |               |
| Purpose:   |            |        |               |
| Point of View:<br><i>Include a line where they are being persuasive, either logic or evidence.</i>   |            |        |               |
| Close Reading: <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> What was DuBois's critique of Washington? Do you think he makes a good point? Why or why not? |            |        |               |
| Close Reading: <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> Did DuBois understand what life was like in the South?  |            |        |               |
| Close Reading: <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> Does Wells-Barnett agree more with Dubois or Washington? Why do you think that?               |            |        |               |
| Significance: <sup>[1]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> Which of these advocates is the better advocate for black rights?                              |            |        |               |