

TEACHING & ACTIVITY GUIDE

For the Second Edition of

TOGETHER

*An Inspiring Response to the “Separate-but Equal”
Supreme Court Decision that Divided America*

by Amy Nathan / Paul Dry Books/ 2023

Online Copy of this Guide is available at:

<https://www.pauldrybooks.com/products/together-2nd-edition>

Half the royalties support the work of the Plessy & Ferguson Foundation

<https://www.plessyandferguson.org>

ABOUT THE BOOK:

TOGETHER intertwines the personal stories of Keith Plessy and Phoebe Ferguson with an account of the long-lasting impact of the 1896 Supreme Court decision that bears their family names, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which ushered in more than fifty years of Jim Crow segregation.

-- **Chapters 1–7:** An historical overview of the *Plessy* case and beyond, with a personal link to that history, describing its impact on Keith Plessy and Phoebe Ferguson.

-- **Chapters 8–11:** Plessy & Ferguson Foundation, its historical markers and other projects.

-- **Epilogue:** The 2022 pardon for Homer Plessy

-- **Afterword:** Others that bring people together.

-- **Historical Marker How-To Guide.**

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

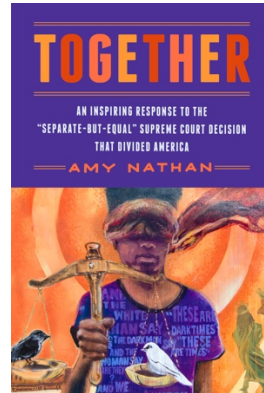
Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.



TEACHER PAGES: pages 1 to 4 in this Guide.

These Pages provide discussion questions and activity ideas for each chapter, suggested answers (*in italics*), and project ideas.

For each chapter, students will create a #Hashtag giving the main message of the chapter.

There are final project ideas (on page 3), including making a One-Pager, described in this article:

<http://www.nowsparkcreativity.com/p/ready-for-one-pager-success.html>

STUDENT WORKSHEETS:

Are on page 5 of this file

HISTORICAL MARKER LESSON

On page 7 of this file

This lesson analyzes the “5-W’s” used in historical markers—**Who, What, Where, When, Why**—which can also be a useful tool for student mastery of any nonfiction material. The lesson has students use an incident in the book to write a new historical marker and offers suggestions for researching and writing local historical markers.

SUPPLEMENTARY ARTICLES:

<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/articlesforteachingguide.pdf>

<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/whodesevesmonument.pdf>

<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/1811text.pdf>

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TEACHER PAGE: Chapters 1 - 5
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER GUIDE

(See pp. 5-6 for Student Worksheets)

Pre-Reading: Explore Cover & Lesson Plan

Cover Analysis: Before students start reading, ask them to look at the cover and discuss who the young man is supposed to be and what the art suggests the book will be about? *(FYI for Teacher: See artist's explanation on copyright page.)*

#Hashtag Project: Explain that after reading each a chapter, students could create a #hashtag—no more than 280 characters—to sum up the chapter's main message. Ask students what #hashtag might fit the cover? *(possible answers #colorblindjustice, #justiceforchange.)*

Final projects: Three options are suggested: a One Pager, Creative Writing, or Art Creation (see page 4 of this Guide for details).

Chapter 1: *(pp. 3-9)*

- 1) How did rules separating people by skin color puzzle Keith Plessy & Phoebe Ferguson as children? *(Not understanding why Keith couldn't play in a park or be served in a store; why Phoebe's babysitter couldn't sit with her in a movie theater or on a carousel)*
- 2) How might these experiences affect them as they grow up? *(Varied answers.)*

Activity: Write a paragraph about when you first realized that skin color can affect how some people are treated by others, and how that realization made you feel.

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag to sum up the main message of this chapter.

Chapter 2: *(pp. 10-35)*

- 1) What rights did free people of color and those who were enslaved have in Louisiana before the Civil War? *(Both: Couldn't vote, testify in court, use public schools, sit with whites in public places, meet without whites present; Enslaved: hard to buy freedom; forbidden to read; Free people: had to register; could own property, run businesses, form schools, and be slaveholders)*
- 2) What new rights did Black people gain after the Civil War from three new amendments to the U.S. Constitution and from Louisiana's 1868 Constitution? *(13th: end of slavery; 14th: citizenship, equal protection of laws; 15th: Black male voting; 1868 Constitution: voting rights for Black men, integrated schools, end to segregation in businesses, led to laws allowing interracial marriage and to Blacks being elected to office)*
- 3) How did Confederacy supporters try to block equal rights for people of color? *(pass laws limiting Black rights, terrorize Black areas, end integrated schools)*

Activity: Write a paragraph, poem, or rap about the roots that you see in this chapter for rules and attitude that would later trouble Keith and Phoebe as children and that still exist today.

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for chapter's message.

Chapters 3 and 4: *(pp. 36-57)*

- 1) What strategy did the Citizens' Committee use to try to overturn the Separate Car Act? *(Civil disobedience, followed by a court case that would reach the U.S. Supreme Court)*
- 2) What were the main arguments used in court by the Citizens' Committee's lawyer and by Judge Ferguson? *(Lawyer: The Separate Car Act violated the 14th Amendment, it let a train conductor decide a passenger's fate; Judge: it wasn't a judge's job to rule on constitutionality, train company did what the law required, white people were limited by the law too)*
- 3) Martinet and Tourgée wrote each other letters with deeply felt messages but never met in person. Might that have made it easier to express those feelings? If there had been e-mail then, would it have been easier or harder to express such personal views? *(Varied answers.)*

Activity: On page 53, Martinet describes the pain he experienced as a person of color; on page 57, Tourgée says Blacks and whites need to work together. Write a paragraph on each quote and its relevance for today.

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for these chapters.

Chapter 5: *(pp. 58-67)*

- 1) What main points did Tourgée make at the Supreme Court to oppose the Separate Car Act? *(Violates 14th & 13th Amendments, pretends to treat Black & whites same, Justice & Law should be color blind)*
- 2) What main reasons did the court's seven-judge majority use to support the Separate Car Act? *(14th Amendment applies to business issues not social interactions, others approved "equal but separate")*
- 3) What arguments did Justice John Marshall Harlan use to oppose the majority decision? *(Amendments meant all are equal; laws like that will lead to race hatred and division, worse than Dred Scott decision)*

Activity: The book shows different interpretations of the 14th Amendment: Courts' views *(pp. 55, 60-61)*; Harlan's *(pp. 62-4)*; Walker & Tourgée views *(pp. 52, 59)*. Write a paragraph with YOUR interpretation of the 14th Amendment. *(See p. 181 for the Amendment's text.)*

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for this chapter.

TEACHER PAGE: Chapters 6 - 11

Chapter 6: (pp. 68-81)

- 1) Describe similarities between restrictions on people of color pre-Civil War with those in the Jim Crow era? (See pp. 13-23).
- 2) How did the 1898 Constitution help guarantee Jim Crow a future? (With few Black voters, elected officials unlikely to support Black rights; less access to education could limit Black people passing voting tests.)

Activity: In two paragraphs, explain which Jim Crow restrictions were most destructive to Black success? Which would have felt most insulting?

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for the chapter.

Chapter 7: (pp. 82-99)

- 1) What are some reasons *Brown v. Board of Education* succeeded in ending a form of segregation while *Plessy v. Ferguson* didn't? (Recent court cases had succeeded, Thurgood Marshall had research proof of segregation's negative impact)
- 2) How did lawmakers make sure the Civil Rights Act of 1964 wouldn't be struck down as a similar law was in 1883 (page 55)? (Congress used the Commerce Clause to support its right to pass such a law).
- 3) What examples of Jim Crow attitudes linger now? What progress do you see in moving away from Jim Crow attitudes? (Varied answers.)

Activity: New Orleans is changing the names of streets named for slaveholders or Confederacy supporters. Pick someone you met in this book and explain why a street should be named in that person's honor? (On p. 5 of this link to a collection of resource articles is one on new names selected:

<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/articlesforteachingguide.pdf>

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for this chapter.

Chapters 8, 9, 10 & 11: (pp. 100-147)

- 1) How did Keith and Phoebe's childhoods shape their decision to work together and how they chose to bring history to life for others? (Keith wanting history to be more accessible, his mother's support, their training as visual artists, Phoebe's warm relationship with her childhood babysitter, her mother's civil rights work.)
- 2) Chapter 8 says the Unification Movement of 1870 failed "because it was premature." How does the Plessy & Ferguson Foundation help fulfill the Unification Movement's goals? (Varied answers)
- 2) List the pros and cons of telling history by using historical markers? (*pro*: come upon them by surprise, see where it happened; *con*: few details, limited reach)
- 3) Pick one of the historical markers described in Chapter 10 that surprised you. What was surprising and why should people learn about it. (Varied answers.)

- 4) Phoebe Ferguson said (page 144); "When it comes to race, the past is always present." Do you agree? Why or why not. (Varied answers.)

Activity: Do one of these activities: Create a slogan, design a logo, or write a theme song for the Plessy & Ferguson Foundation; create a playlist or write a poem for a Plessy Day celebration.

#Hashtag: Create hashtags for these chapters.

Epilogue & Afterword: (pp. 149-160)

- 1) What was the goal of the District Attorney's new Civil Rights Division and why was it interested in Homer Plessy's conviction? (To review wrongful convictions; Plessy's was a prime example.)
- 2) The District Attorney said of the pardon: "There are small things we can all do, every day, to atone for the sins of the past we had nothing to do with." The governor added that the pardon "doesn't...fix all of our present challenges." But it "is a step in the right direction." What other wrongs of the past need to be revisited and repaired? How might that be done in symbolic ways or more practical ones? (Varied answers.)
- 3) Phoebe Ferguson said (page 154) that we can learn from the wrongs of the past. What have you learned from the wrongs described in this book that can help you going forward? (Varied answers.)

Activity: Which ways of bringing people together across racial lines discussed in this book, including its Epilogue and Afterword, would work best in your community? What new ways can you suggest? (Varied answers.)

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for the Epilogue.

Final Project Choices

--One-Pager: Create a "One-Pager" that reflects what you learned from this book. The One-Pager should include at least two quotes from people you met in the book; descriptions or illustrations of at least three events presented in the book; suggestions for projects that members of your community could do to bring people together.

--Letter Writing: Students could write about the importance of what the New Orleans Citizens' Committee tried to do, either by writing a Letter to the Editor for a newspaper or a letter to give to a younger student or family member.

--Creative Writing: Students could write an imaginative story about what might have happened if Louis Martinet and Albion Tourgée met in person, before the Supreme Court ruled in the *Plessy* case; and then again after the Supreme Court's ruling of 1896.

FOLLOW-UP PROJECTS

Creative Writing:

- Two photos in the book (*pages 10 & 136*) show scenes from a play created by teenagers— *Se-Pa-Rate*—to explore connections between their lives and the history the book tells. After students finish reading the book, ask them to think about connections to their lives of the events described. Students could work together (or on their own) to write about these connections—in an essay, poem, play, song, or a Letter to the Editor of a newspaper, or text for a video. Or if there is a drama program in the school or community, they could explore creating a play together, using improvisation techniques as was done at NOCCA, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. www.nocca.com
- Students could select quotes from people they met in the book and write about what message those quotes have for them. The writing could be prose, poetry, rap, or lyrics for a song.
- Students could write an essay on how efforts to overturn the Separate Car Act would have been different if there had been TV and Internet.

Art-Making:

- There are images in the book (*pages 36, 58, 82, 123, 147, and the Cover*) from a mural by New Orleans artist Ayo Scott that responds to the history presented in this book. These images could inspire student artwork. Students could create a mural or a frame from a mural about something in the book that made a strong impact, using the artwork of Ayo Scott as an example.
- Students could select quotes from people they met in the book and create art (including a mural) to show what message those quotes have for them.
- Students could create a clay model for a statue of someone they met in this book that they imagine could be placed in New Orleans or elsewhere, to celebrate the achievements of that individual. Here's a link to curriculum developed by Baltimore teachers:
<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/wodesevesmonument.pdf>
- Ask students to make a drawing (or write a paragraph) about someone they would paint a portrait of in their old elementary school to

inspire the students (as Keith Plessy was asked to do)—or describe a different kind of artwork they would make for the walls of their old elementary school.

Family Interviewing:

- Students could interview an older member of their family—parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles—to ask about their memories of or knowledge about events described in this book. Students could write up the family member's comments and include photos and other materials to create a family scrapbook.

Research Projects:

- Students could explore a problem in the local community or beyond that a committee similar to the Citizens' Committee could help with today. The Citizens' Committee members were all male, people of color and mainly successful businessmen, writers or craftsmen. Would it help to have a more diverse membership in such a committee today? Students could do research on the issue and write an essay or Letter to the Editor on how a Committee could help.
- Students could use articles, books and videos in the Bibliography of *TOGETHER*, or online resources, to do research on health, educational, and financial disparities, as well as issues concerning voting rights and mass incarceration that have resulted from the longterm effects of the Jim Crow era. Students could also research local events that might merit a historical marker. See suggestions in the Historical Marker lesson for doing such research.
- To learn more about the Plessy & Ferguson Foundation, students can visit its website:
<https://www.plessyandferguson.org>

**STUDENT WORKSHEET: Ch. 1-5
HISTORICAL MARKER LESSON (see below)**

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER GUIDE

Pre-Reading Discussion: Exploring The Cover and Explaining the Lesson Plan

Cover Analysis: Before you start reading, look at the cover and think about who the young man is supposed to be and what this artwork suggests that the book will be about.

#Hashtag Project: After reading each chapter, you will be asked to create a #hashtag—a phrase (no more than 280 characters)—that sums up the chapter’s main message. What #hashtag might fit the cover illustration?

Chapter 1: (pp. 3-9)

- 1) How did rules separating people by skin color puzzle Keith Plessy & Phoebe Ferguson as children?
- 2) How might these experiences affect them as they grow up?

Activity: Write a paragraph about when *you* first realized that skin color can affect how some people are treated by others, and how that realization made you feel.

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag to sum up the main message of Chapter 1.

Chapter 2: (pp. 10-35)

- 1) What rights did free people of color and those who were enslaved have in Louisiana before the Civil War?
- 2) What new rights did Black people gain after the Civil War from three new amendments to the U.S. Constitution and from Louisiana’s 1868 Constitution?
- 3) How did Confederacy supporters try to block equal rights for people of color?

Activity: Write a paragraph, poem, or rap about the roots that you see in this chapter for rules and attitude that would later trouble Keith and Phoebe as children and that still exist today.

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for chapter’s message.

Chapters 3 and 4: (pp. 36-57)

- 1) What strategy did the Citizens’ Committee use to try to overturn the Separate Car Act?
- 2) What were the main arguments used in court by the Citizens’ Committee’s lawyer and by Judge Ferguson?

- 3) Martinet and Tourgée wrote each other letters with deeply felt messages but never met in person. Might that have made it easier to express those feelings? If there had been e-mail then, would it have been easier or harder to express such personal views?

Activity: On page 53, Martinet describes the pain he experienced as a person of color; on page 57, Tourgée says Blacks and whites need to work together. Write a paragraph on each quote and its relevance for today.

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for these chapters.

Chapter 5: (pp. 58-67)

- 1) What main points did Tourgée make at the Supreme Court to oppose the Separate Car Act?
- 2) What main reasons did the court’s seven-judge majority use to support the Separate Car Act?
- 3) What arguments did Justice John Marshall Harlan use to oppose the majority decision?

Activity: The book shows different interpretations of the 14th Amendment: Courts’ views (pp. 55, 60-61); Harlan’s (pp. 62-4); Walker & Tourgée views (pp. 52, 59). Write a paragraph with *YOUR* interpretation of the 14th Amendment. (See p. 181 for the Amendment’s text.)

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for this chapter.

Chapter 6: (pp. 68-81)

- 1) Describe similarities between restrictions on people of color pre-Civil War with those in the Jim Crow era?
- 2) How did the 1898 Constitution help guarantee Jim Crow a future?

Activity: In two paragraphs, explain which Jim Crow restrictions were most destructive to Black success? Which would have felt most insulting?

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for the chapter.

Chapter 7: (pp. 82-99)

- 1) What are some reasons *Brown v. Board of Education* succeeded in ending a form of segregation while *Plessy v. Ferguson* didn’t?
- 2) How did lawmakers make sure the Civil Rights Act of 1964 wouldn’t be struck down as a similar law was in 1883 (page 55)?
- 3) What examples of Jim Crow attitudes linger now? What progress do you see in moving away from Jim Crow attitudes?

Activity: New Orleans is changing the names of streets named for slaveholders or Confederacy supporters. Pick someone you met in this book and explain why a street should be named in that person’s honor?

#Hashtag: Create a hashtag for this chapter.

STUDENT WORKSHEET: Ch.8-11, Epilogue

Chapters 8, 9, 10 & 11: (pp. 100-147)

- 1) How did Keith and Phoebe's childhoods shape their decision to work together and how they chose to bring history to life for others?
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Activity: Do one of these activities: Create a slogan, design a logo, or write a theme song for the Plessy & Ferguson Foundation; create a playlist or write a poem for a Plessy Day celebration.

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Epilogue & Afterword: (pp. 149-160)

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- 3) Phoebe Ferguson said (page 154) that we can learn from the wrongs of the past. What have you learned from the wrongs described in this book that can help you going forward?

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--Letter Writing: Write about the importance of what the New Orleans Citizens' Committee tried to do, either by writing a Letter to the Editor for a newspaper or a letter to give to a younger student or family member.

--Creative Writing: Write an imaginative story about what might have happened if Louis Martinet and Albion Tourgée met in person, before the Supreme Court ruled in the *Plessy* case; and then again after the Supreme Court's ruling of 1896.

TEACHER PAGE

HISTORICAL MARKERS LESSON

(Duration: 1 to 2 class periods)

Introduction:

This lesson introduces the “5-W’s” strategy that can help in identifying the main ideas in any nonfiction material, by having readers look for the “5-W’s”: **Who, What, Where, When, Why.** The 5 W’s are essential in writing a good Historical Marker. After students complete the activities below that relate to *TOGETHER*, you could add the 5-W’s Strategy to your approach for future historical events that students will study — a way to help them grasp and remember the basics of any historic event.

- Distribute to students the worksheet: **“THE 5-W’S OF HISTORICAL MARKERS”**
- Read with students each of the “5-W’s.”
- Ask students to read the text from the CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEERS MARKER (p. 168 of *TOGETHER*—also printed on the worksheet)
- Working individually or in small groups, students should identify and write on the worksheet the “5-W’s” of the marker
- Distribute to students the worksheet: **“WRITING A HISTORICAL MARKER”**
- Using text on pp. 20 – 22 of *TOGETHER* students will write a historical marker on either:
 - the January 8, 1811, Slavery Uprising
 - the November 9, 2019, re-enactment.Students could design a logo or illustration for the historical marker..

FOLLOW-UP MARKER ACTIVITIES

- Research existing historical markers in your area by searching the Historical Marker Database - <https://www.hmdb.org>, or by contacting your state’s department that handles installing historical markers.
- Research topics for new historical markers that could be created in your area. Look at the guidelines in the How-to Guide in

TOGETHER for Louisiana’s rules. Each state has its own rules, but Louisiana’s can give a general idea about what is thought to be appropriate.

- Ideas for researching events or people that might merit a local historical marker: Search the archives of the local newspaper looking for civil rights protests, school de-segregation efforts, or other protest events in the 1960s to today; ask older relatives, community leaders, local historical societies or the local library’s reference librarian for suggestions.
- If students find events that merit a historical marker, they could write markers as a classroom activity and then share them with community groups, newspapers, and officials to see if there might be interest in creating a real marker.
- Projects could also involve thinking of statues, murals, or naming a street corner to celebrate a local event or person of importance that is discovered by students. Articles in these links may offer additional ideas:
<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/articlesforteachingguide.pdf>
<http://www.amynathanbooks.com/attachments/whodesevesmonument.pdf>
- The articles on pages 2-3 of the link above describe markers that have been damaged. Students could explore ways to safeguard a marker or monument.

STUDENT WORKSHEET

THE “5-W’S” OF HISTORICAL MARKERS

1. **WHO** - the *main* focus of the marker
(a person, place, or object)
2. **WHAT** -the *main or most important* thing that happened to the person, place or object that’s the focus of the historical marker (Sometimes there may be more than one main event.)
3. **WHERE** - the event took place
4. **WHEN** - the event took place
5. **WHY** – it is important

ACTIVITY: Finding the “FIVE W’S”

Read the text below of the CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEERS MARKER (also on p. 168 of *TOGETHER*). Then answer the questions in the next column about the 5-W’s in this marker.

CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEERS

McDonogh No. 19 Elementary School

Site of the Integration of Southern Elementary School
November 14, 1960

On November 14, 1960, four six-year-old children in New Orleans became the first African Americans to integrate white only public elementary schools in the Deep South. On that day, three girls enrolled in McDonogh 19 School at 5909 St. Claude Avenue. A fourth girl began classes at William Frantz School at 3811 North Galvez Street.

The integration of New Orleans public elementary schools marked a major focal point in the history of the American Civil Rights Movement. With worldwide attention focused on New Orleans, federal marshals wearing yellow armbands began escorting the girls to the schools at 9 am. By 9:25 am, the first two elementary schools in the Deep South were integrated. As front line soldiers in the Civil Rights Movement, the four girls, their families, and white families who kept their children in integrated schools endured taunts, threats, violence and a yearlong boycott by segregationists. Despite danger, the four children successfully completed the school year. Their courage paved the way for a more peaceful expansion of integration into other schools in the following years.

1. **WHO** is the *main* focus of the historical marker?

2. **WHAT** is the *main or most important* thing that happened ?

3. **WHERE** did the event take place?

4. **WHEN** did the event take place?

5. **WHY** is that event important?

ACTIVITY:

WRITING A HISTORICAL MARKER

Directions:

Using text on pages 20 – 22 of *TOGETHER* write a historical marker on either:

- the January 8, 1811, Slavery Uprising
- the November 9, 2019, re-enactment.

You could also design a logo or illustration for your historical marker. Such a marker might be placed near the start of both events: LaPlace, Louisiana, close to where the plantation on the banks of the Mississippi River was located in 1811, where the uprising began.