



## Teaching Guide

### SEGMENT 2, WEBISODE 13

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



#### Segment Overview



#### Let's Discuss

At the end of World War II, African American soldiers who had fought to end tyranny and genocide returned home to a segregated nation rift by racial injustice. President Harry S. Truman made determined efforts to advance civil rights by desegregating the armed forces and urging Congress to pass comprehensive civil rights legislation.

On July 26, 1948, President Truman used his prerogative as commander in chief to issue Executive Order 9981 that established the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. Although it took years to bring change, Truman had put the process in motion.

Although the first president to address the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Truman lacked the support of a majority of Americans who rejected his civil rights platform. Undeterred, this man from a former slave state and a Confederate family background publicly and forcefully said that African Americans deserved equal rights.

#### Teacher Directions

1. Pose the following questions to the students.
  - Suppose you were president of the United States. What might you do to end racial unfairness?
  - In what ways can a president bring about change?
  - What did President Harry Truman do to end racial unfairness?
2. Make sure students understand the following points in discussing the questions. Presidents bring about change by exerting their influence in getting legislation created and passed, by campaigning for change, by seeing that legislation is put into effect, and by issuing executive orders. President Truman sent proposals to Congress to stop lynching, to outlaw the poll tax that kept some people from voting, and to end segregation in the armed forces. He created a commission on civil rights.



### History Sleuth

#### Teacher Directions

1. Distribute and explain the Student Sheets: *Executive Order* and *Written Document Analysis Worksheet*.
2. Explain that President Truman used an executive order to bring about a change that he thought could not be accomplished through legislation. He wrote the Executive Order in his role as commander in chief of the armed forces. The students examine Executive Order 9981 to determine that change.
3. Working in their teams, the students analyze Executive Order 9981 using the *Written Document Analysis Worksheet*.
4. Teams share their analyses of Executive Order 9981 and explain if they think Truman was wise in issuing the order instead of seeking legislation to integrate the armed forces.

#### Teacher Directions

Discuss the following questions with the students, asking them to provide examples or explanations to support their responses.

- Does racial unfairness still exist in the United States today? Explain your opinion or give examples.
- Are any citizens still kept from voting? Explain your opinion or give examples.
- Does racial unfairness still exist in other parts of the world? Where? For what reasons?



### What do you Think?

#### Teacher Directions

1. Explain to the students that on July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 to establish equality of treatment and opportunity in the armed services.
2. Distribute and explain the Student Sheet: *How Long?—A Timeline*.
3. Students work in small learning teams to examine the timeline and determine,
  - How quickly was President Truman's Executive Order implemented after 1948?
  - Which branch of the armed forces was the slowest to integrate and why?
4. Discuss the reluctance of the armed services to integrate. Ask the students to explain their reactions to the delay. Do they think President Truman



### Moving Toward Freedom

chose the best way to move the nation toward integration? How did Truman's Executive Order 9981 move the nation toward freedom?

### Teacher Directions

To further explore the Truman years, use the following activities with your students.

**Language Arts** — Students develop word glossaries of the Truman years and use the glossaries to create word games or crossword puzzles.

**Math** — Students chart the baby boom by creating a graph of how many babies were born between 1947 and 1961. Students research the most popular names for babies during these years.

**Science/Library** — Students explain what happens during a nuclear explosion and the consequences for life and structures impacted by the bomb.

**Research/Technology** — In 1950, Daniel Marsh, president of Boston University, said, "If the television craze continues with the present level of programs, we are destined to have a nation of morons." Students use magazines and newspapers of the times as well as books and web sites about television and popular culture to create a TV guide for a day (or week) during Truman's presidency. Students identify what shows were popular and why they agree or disagree with Marsh's assessment.



Connections

## *How Long?—A Timeline*

### **1948**

**January 1948:** President Truman decides to end segregation in the armed forces through an executive order.

**February 2, 1948:** President Truman instructs the secretary of defense to end discrimination in the armed services as rapidly as possible.

**March 27, 1948:** Twenty African American organizations issue the Declaration of Negro Voters, which demands that segregation and discrimination in the armed forces end.

**March 30, 1948:** A. Philip Randolph, representing the Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training African Americans, tells President Truman that African Americans will not serve in the armed forces if they do not end segregation.

**June 26, 1948:** A. Philip Randolph tells President Truman that unless segregation ends in the armed forces, African Americans will resist the draft.

**July 26, 1948:** President Truman signs Executive Order 9981, which states, "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin." The order also establishes the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services.

**July 26, 1948:** Army staff officers secretly tell the press that Executive Order 9981 does not specifically forbid segregation in the army.

**July 27, 1948:** The army's chief of staff states that desegregation will come to the army only when it becomes a fact in the rest of American society.

**July 29, 1948:** President Truman states in a press conference that the intent of Executive Order 9981 is to end segregation in the armed forces.

**August 14, 1948:** The secretary of the army admits that segregation in the army must go, but not immediately.

**September 18, 1948:** The White House announces the five members (two of whom are African-Americans) of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services.

**October 9, 1948:** The navy announces that it is extending the policy of integration that it had begun in the closing months of World War II.

**December 1948:** The army proposes an experimental integrated unit that would test how integration would affect the army.

**December 1948:** The Air Force submits an integration plan to assign African Americans on the basis of merit alone.

## 1949

**January 12, 1949:** President Truman tells the secretaries of the army, navy, air force and defense. "I want the job done, and I want it done in a way so that everyone will be happy to cooperate to get it done."

**January 13, 1949:** The army and marine corps defend segregation of African Americans. Only one of the marine corps' 8,200 officers is African American. The navy and air force say they will integrate their units. Only five of its 45,000 officers are African American.

**January 22, 1949:** The air force tells the press it has completed plans for full integration of its units.

**March 28, 1949:** The navy states it is opposed to segregation and is planning to integrate. The army argues in favor of segregation, saying that the army "was not an instrument for social evolution."

**April 1, 1949:** The Department of Defense tells the army, navy, and air force that "qualified Negro personnel shall be assigned to fill any type of position ...without regard to race."

**May 11, 1949:** The Department of the Defense approves the integration plans of the air force, but rejects those of the army and the navy.

**May 11, 1949:** The army is told to desegregate its units and abolish its ten per cent enlistment quota for African American recruits.

**June 7, 1949:** The Department of Defense accepts a revised navy integration plan.

**June 7, 1949:** The Department of Defense rejects the army's revised integration plan.

**July 5, 1949:** The army presents a revised plan to maintain segregation in army units and continue the ten per cent recruitment quota for African Americans.

**November 1949:** The army completes another integration plan that still includes segregated units and the ten per cent recruitment quota for African Americans.

**December 27, 1949:** The secretary of the army agrees to integrate the army's units, but wants to do so gradually.

## 1950

**January 16, 1950:** The army officially issues its new integration policy still with its 10% recruitment quota for African Americans.

**March 13, 1950:** The army agrees to abolish its ten per cent recruitment quota for African Americans, effective in April 1950.

**May 22, 1950:** President Truman says, "within the reasonably near future, equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons within the armed services would be accomplished."

**June 1950:** The army decides to integrate basic training.

**June 1950:** Segregation in army units serving in Korea begins to break down as large numbers of African American recruits cannot be absorbed into segregated black service units.

## 1951

**January 1951:** The army in Korea integrates African American soldiers because there are too many to place in segregated units.

**March 18, 1951:** All basic training within the United States is integrated.

**July 26, 1951:** The army announces that the integration of all its units in Korea, Japan and Okinawa will be completed within six months.

## 1953

**October 1953:** The army announces that 95 per cent of African American soldiers are serving in integrated units.

## EXECUTIVE ORDER

---

### ESTABLISHING THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN THE ARMED SERVICES

WHEREAS it is essential that there be maintained in the armed services of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country's defense:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, by the Constitution and the statutes of the United States, and as Commander in Chief of the armed services, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.

2. There shall be created in the National Military Establishment an advisory committee to be known as the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, which shall be composed of seven members to be designated by the President.

3. The Committee is authorized on behalf of the President to examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the armed services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order. The Committee shall confer and advise with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary

of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, and shall make such recommendations to the President and to said Secretaries as in the judgment of the Committee will effectuate the policy hereof.

4. All executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Committee in its work, and to furnish the Committee such information or the services of such persons as the Committee may require in the performance of its duties.

5. When requested by the Committee to do so, persons in the armed services or in any of the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government shall testify before the Committee and shall make available for the use of the Committee such documents and other information as the Committee may require.

6. The Committee shall continue to exist until such time as the President shall terminate its existence by Executive order.



THE WHITE HOUSE,

July 26, 1948.

# Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

- |                                    |  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Map           | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter    | <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram      | <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patent    | <input type="checkbox"/> Press release | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Report    | <input type="checkbox"/> Census report | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                |

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

- |   |   |                                    |                                |
|---|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten      | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations |                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Typed                  | <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp | <input type="checkbox"/> Seals     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT \_\_\_\_\_

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT \_\_\_\_\_  
POSITION (TITLE) \_\_\_\_\_

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Why do you think this document was written?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written?  
Quote from the document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at  
the time it was written:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from a design by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration