

Valerie Jackson

*Lesson Plan**The Long Road from Brown School Desegregation in Virginia**Target Audience: Grades 5-6***Introduction:**

In 1951, Barbara Johns led a student strike at R. R. Moton High School, in Farmville, Virginia. The strike was not done merely on a whim, but with careful, deliberate and secret planning. Barbara had grown tired of, what she felt were, unacceptable and unequal school standards for the county's high schools. The white school's facilities, transportation, and books in Prince Edward County, far exceeded those of the black school, R. R. Moton. Barbara felt that something should be done.

Guiding Question:

When is it acceptable to break the law?

Learning Objectives:

Analyze how individuals' roles and perspectives shape the American political system.

Identify primary and secondary sources of information that relate to the topic/situation/problem being studied.

Determine and analyze important ideas and messages in informational texts.

Lesson Activities:**Warm Up:**

Allow students to view photos of examples of Jim Crow laws. Included in the photos are blacks entering movie theaters, black and white water fountains, and segregated swimming pools. Discuss what is seen in the photos. Encourage students to share their feelings about their interpretations of the photos.

Primary Activity :

Introduce the topic, "Jim Crow Laws". Share list of some of the laws. Explain to students that separation of races, in many places, even schools, was part of Jim Crow Laws.

Students will rotate in groups. (10 minutes per group) Group 1 will read [Girl From the Tarpaper School](#). Group 2 will view oral history interviews in the video "With All Deliberate Speed." Group 3 will read excerpts from the memoirs of Barbara Johns.



Closure :

Bring groups together to share facts and ideas about the Moton walk out. Have students to express if they felt that Barbara Johns was a hero or a trouble maker. Discuss consequences, and eventual rewards, of the strike which Barbara Johns led.

Assessment:

Pretend that you are a student in 1951, at R. R. Moton High School, in Farmville, Virginia. Write a letter to Barbara Johns. Explain to Barbara whether you feel that you should go on strike. Support your reasons with information from the book, *Girl From the Tarpaper School*, excerpts from Barbara Johns' memoirs, and from the video "With All Deliberate Speed."

Resources:

- *Photo examples of Jim Crow Laws*
- *List of Jim Crow Laws*
- *For group rotations:*
 - *Movie: “With All Deliberate Speed” (not included)*
 - *Book: The Girl from the Tarpaper School. (not included)*
 - *Pages from Barbara Johns’ memoir (Photographed at Moton Museum)*
- *Template of letter for students to write to Barbara Johns.*