

Sweatt v. Painter

By Liza R. Rognas

The Lesson

Anticipatory Set

Define the following terms: Petitioner, Respondent, Appeal, Writ of Mandamus. Describe how these terms are used in **this excerpt from *Sweatt v. Painter***.

Procedures

1. Write a brief essay about the argument given in the *Sweatt v. Painter* petition. Focus specifically on the description of the segregated law school rejected by the petitioner. Why was it rejected?
2. Class project exercise
 - Working in groups, have the students compose a mock education program for their grade including materials needed for all classes. Ask them to then choose one area from their program and compare their list to the materials actually provided by the school.
 - If the students' education program could have the same amount of material as the school provides, would anything else be necessary for their program to "equal" the education provided by the school? Here ask the students to explore the importance of qualities such as reputation, quality instruction, and community support to their education program.
 - Discuss the concept of equality and school equalization using the excerpt from *Sweatt v. Painter* as a foundation.
 - Could the law school proposed by the respondents have provided Sweatt with a legal education comparable to that received by white law students at the University of Texas?
3. Compare the text from the *Sweatt v. Painter* petition to the Fourteenth Amendment and then apply the Amendment to what you know about Sweatt v. Painter. List your conclusions.

Extension Activity

Have the students keep a journal of their family's daily activities for a week. Working in groups and comparing experiences, have them determine those activities that would have been restricted for African Americans according to "To Secure These Rights." Encourage them to list categories of activities, such as employment, transportation, recreation, education, and health.

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