

Why Can't I Do That?

Using Janice N. Harrington's *Going North*
to Explain Segregation

Teacher: Tricia Adams

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Title of Lesson: Why Can't I Do That?

Grade Level: 2nd Grade

Content Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Description/ Abstract of the Lesson: During the lesson, the teacher will read aloud Janice N. Harrington's picture book *Going North* and discuss the term segregation. Students will participate in a pre-activity to see what it feels like to not be allowed to do something or go somewhere due to the fact that they are assorted by a particular color note card. Students will learn about the author Harrington and about Rosa Parks and will compare the two. The students will be introduced to Harrington's life and how she is connected to the state of Alabama.

Time-Line: 25 minutes for the Pre-Lesson
30 minutes for the Activity
15 minutes for the Curriculum Connections

Goals/Objectives (Cognitive/Affective):

- Students will understand and define the term segregation.
- Students will demonstrate how it feels to be segregated through different color note cards.
- Students will learn about Janice N. Harrington, an Alabama author.
- Students will learn about Rosa Parks.
- Students will compare and contrast Rosa Parks and Janice N. Harrington with a Venn Diagram.
- Students will paraphrase and/or retell the events of the story while discussing segregation.

Curriculum Standards:

- ALCOS LA 2.4: Demonstrate comprehension of second-grade reading materials across the curriculum, including drawing simple conclusions, classifying ideas and things, identifying sequence, and retelling directions and information from informational and functional reading materials.
 - Relating events and ideas to specific life experiences
 - Answering *what if*, *why*, and *how* questions
- ALCOS LA 2.14: Respond to various types of literature read aloud.
- ALCOS SS 2.1: Compare features of modern-day living to those of the past.
- ALCOS SS 2.3: Discuss historical and current events within the state and the nation that are recorded in a variety of resources.

Information Literacy Standards:

- Identify information to be gained from various parts of a book.
- Elaborate when retelling a story or account of an incident.

Materials:

- Different colored note cards (blue, pink, green, yellow)
- Janice N. Harrington's *Going North*
- *This Goodly Land* Website <http://alabamaliterarymap.org> for background information on author Janice N. Harrington
- Venn Diagram Graphic Organizer
- David A. Adler's *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks*

Pre-Lesson Activity:

Activity 1:

A) Pass out four different colored note cards, one color to each student.

B) Assign two rules to each colored note card. Students will follow these rules while you are reading the book *Going North* aloud to students. For example:

- Blue card: Must stay seated at the desk during read aloud. Not allowed to ask questions during the read aloud.
- Pink card: Only allowed to ask questions before beginning to read the book and must sit on the back row of the rug.
- Green card: Only allowed to ask questions during the read aloud and are not allowed to sit with anyone else that has a green card.
- Yellow card: Allowed to sit in front of the teacher during read aloud and only allowed to ask questions after the reading.

*You can assign only one rule per card if students have a hard time remembering more than one rule.

C) Explain to students that it is very important that they follow their rules during read aloud. During the read aloud, if students break their rule, remind them. Don't allow them to break their rule.

D) Read aloud *Going North* using the before, during, and after questions written below to help students to gain a deeper understanding of the text. You can choose your own questions if you desire.

E) After reading, ask students to compare the activity you had them do to what the family in the book had to go through while traveling north. Use the Guided Reading Questions for this discussion.

F) Explain that this separation is called segregation and explain the background of segregation.

Segregation: the separation or isolation of a race, class, or group (as by restriction to an area or by separate schools).

G) Have students return to their desks and paraphrase and/or retell the story they just heard in one sentence. Have students define the meaning of segregation in their own words. Then in another sentence, have students explain how the story made them feel and how they would feel if we still had segregation today. (Assessment)

Guided Reading Questions:

- Before Reading
 - By looking at the cover, what do we predict this story is going to be about?
 - What about the author? What do you think she might be trying to tell us while we read this particular story?
 - Where do you think this story might take place?
- During Reading
 - Why do you think the girl in the story wants to stay?
 - Why do you think her family has to leave the state of Alabama?
 - Why do you think the family is eating in their car? Why didn't they stop somewhere to eat?
 - Why are they worried about stopping at the gas station?
 - Why do you think the little girl thinks the North will be better?
 - Why didn't they stop at a motel to stay instead of driving through the night?
 - Why does their daddy call them "pioneers?"
 - Why do you think they left Alabama to move to Nebraska? What do you think is better about the state of Nebraska?
- After Reading: Read the excerpt.
 - What is similar with the activity and the story of the book?
 - How did the activity make you feel, especially when you really wanted to ask a question but it wasn't allowed?
 - Do you think you feel what the characters felt during their travel north?
 - What is it called when one group of people is not allowed to go somewhere because of who they are?
 - How would you feel if you could only use a certain bathroom in the school?
 - How would you feel if you weren't allowed to sit in the front while I read a book aloud?
 - How does this story relate to the activity and rule I had you follow before I read the book?

Learning Activities or Tasks:

Activity 2:

A) Read, "A Note from the Author," from the back of the book and introduce the author, and ask students if anyone has heard of her before.

B) Tell students that she is from Alabama and give background information about the author.

C) Explain to students that *Going North* is a story that tells about her life and her journey leaving the South because of segregation. Ask students if they know of anyone who helped end segregation in Alabama.

D) Share the story of Rosa Parks. This allows students to see another real-life connection to segregation and why segregation is illegal today. Speak briefly about Rosa Parks to help students make a connection or read aloud *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks* by David A. Adler.

E) Discuss together how Rosa Parks played an important role in helping segregation come to an end. Have students retell the importance of Rosa Parks and the importance of Harrington's travel north.

F) Have students create a Venn Diagram Graphic Organizer and have them compare *Going North* with the story of Rosa Parks. Compare and contrast both books read aloud. What is similar and different? Is there still segregation today? Students can work in groups or individually when creating the Venn Diagram.

Other Curriculum Connections:

- Social Studies: Show the county which your students live in and the county which Harrington is from.
- Social Studies: Use the United States Map and show Harrington's family's journey from Alabama to Nebraska. If teaching mapping skills, you can calculate the estimated time and distance.
- Language Arts, Drama: Students can create a readers' theatre and act out the story of Rosa Parks or Harrington's story.
- Language Arts: Students write a summary of either *Going North* or *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks*.

Assessment:

- The students will be assessed both formally and informally during the activities and read alouds. The students will be responsible for class participation (following their

note card rules, asking questions), individual and partner work, and thoughtful responses.

- Students will be assessed from their responses under Pre-Lesson, Part G, and the teacher will be able to check for understanding of segregation. A check plus, check, and check minus will be used to help the teacher record which students grasped the concepts.
- Questions to ask yourself while checking:
 - Did they paraphrase the story using just one sentence?
 - Did they clearly understand the term segregation?
 - How did the book make them feel?
 - How would the student feel if they still had segregation today?
- Students will also be assessed from the Venn Diagram they created. This may be taken for a grade.
 - Did students listen to the story and provide enough similarities and differences?
 - Did they involve the word segregation in the middle of their diagram?
- Assessment of other Curriculum Connections can be done by the decision of the teacher and choice of extra curriculum connection.

Resources:

Adler, David. A. *A Picture Book of Rosa Parks*. Holiday House, c1995. 30 pgs. Illustrated by Robert Casilla.

Alabama Course of Study Curriculum Standards. Alabama State Department of Education, Second Grade. www.alsde.edu/html/sections/.

Author Information on Janice N. Harrington:

Alabama Literary Map, *This Goodly Land: Alabama's Literary Landscape*
<http://www.alabamaliterarymap.org/author.cfm?AuthorID=73>

Harrington, Janice. N. *Going North*. Melanie Kroupa Books, c2004. New York. 31 pgs. Illustrated by Jerome Lagarrigue. Ezra Jack Keats Book Award.

Information Literacy Objectives. Literacy Partners: A Principal's Guide to an Effective Library Media Program for the 21st Century. (2000) "Appendix B K-12 Information Objectives." Second Grade.
<http://www.alsde.edu/general/LiteracyPartners.pdf>