

Teacher Name: Noelle

Course/Grade: US History 2

Date:

Block:

Content Standards: SS 12.4.4 (US) Students will identify and evaluate the effects of past, current, and potential future events, issues, and problems. SS 12.4.4.e (US) Evaluate the relationships among historical events in the United States and the students' lives today.

Unit Title: Why is Omaha Segregated?

Concept Based (Enduring Understandings/Generalizations): The Civil Rights Movement didn't just happen at the national level; the movement and activism was also mirrored at the local level in Omaha. Red-lining and unfair housing happened in North Omaha, but with the work of activists like Dorothy Eure it decreased. However the effect of red-lining can still be seen in the city today.

Materials & Resources: Attached documents, T-Chart, invisible histories website, background knowledge of Civil Rights Movement-this lesson should be introduced after students have contextual knowledge of the movement.

Accommodations for Students with IEPs or 504s: graphic organizer

Literacy Strategies: Think Alouds, graphic organizer, Reciprocal Teaching

Procedures/Routine Focus: Hand Raising

Anticipatory Set: Show students Document 1. Ask students to describe what they see to make sure they have an understanding of the map. Then have students hypothesize why Omaha is segregated as shown on the map: whites in west, African Americans in north, and Latinos in south. Compare/Contrast Omaha's population map with Southern Los Angeles's map. Start to hypothesize what causes segregation and integration.

Objective/Learning Goals

I will know (knowledge): Segregation and racial inequality of the 1960s affected Omaha just as it did around the country. Dorothy Eure, a local civil rights activist, worked for housing equality for African Americans in North Omaha.

I will be able to (skill): Evaluate Dorothy Eure's activism on fair housing. Students will also be able to infer the cause of the Omaha's current segregated population as depicted on the map from Document 1 and propose a change on how to desegregate the city's population.

Procedures (GRL)

Modeled:

Teacher defines and explains "red-lining" (a brief description is attached on the Introductory page below). Use the Dorothy Eure invisible history website to introduce Eure's work to students. Show the video from the website.

Shared:

After the video, hand out the T-Chart provided. Read over the issues/events on the right side of the chart about Omaha. Verbal check on knowledge of red-lining. Use Document 2 to reinforce the red-lining area of North Omaha. As a class, fill in the left side of the T-Chart of national issues; this allows for recheck of Civil Rights knowledge. Ask students to find similarities/differences between the two sides of the T-Chart.

Guided:

Break students into groups of four. Use the Reciprocal Teaching strategy to have students read the article "When New Horizons dawned for African Americans in Omaha" which highlights the struggle of African Americans in the 1960s in Omaha to find housing outside of North Omaha. When finished, have each group discuss their findings about the article to the rest of the class.

Independent:

Each student will write their own RAFT. R=Dorothy Eure (as if she was still alive today doing activism). A=Omaha's mayor. F=Letter or Speech. T=Ways to better integrate the city of Omaha and why integration is important to the city and the residents of the city. How can we get Omaha's population map look more like South Los Angeles's map?

Summary:

If time allows, students can share their RAFT. Ending discussion on the future of Omaha/North Omaha/segregated population.

Introductory Information on Red-Lining

Redlining was one piece of an elaborate puzzle denying people of color access to housing and to wealth. The term refers to the practice many banks used to designate "undesirable" areas of a city by drawing a red line around those neighborhoods on a city map. These areas were largely inhabited by African Americans and/or other people of color. The banks were unwilling to provide loans for property inside the red line, claiming the loans were too high risk or were for sums too low to be worth the bank's effort. This artificially devalued property inside the red lines.

Low property values and the inaccessibility of financing for homeowners encouraged ownership by absentee landlords, who often let property fall into decline. Ignoring their importance as centers of African American business, religion, politics, and culture, whole neighborhoods were deemed "blighted," which made it even more difficult to secure loans.

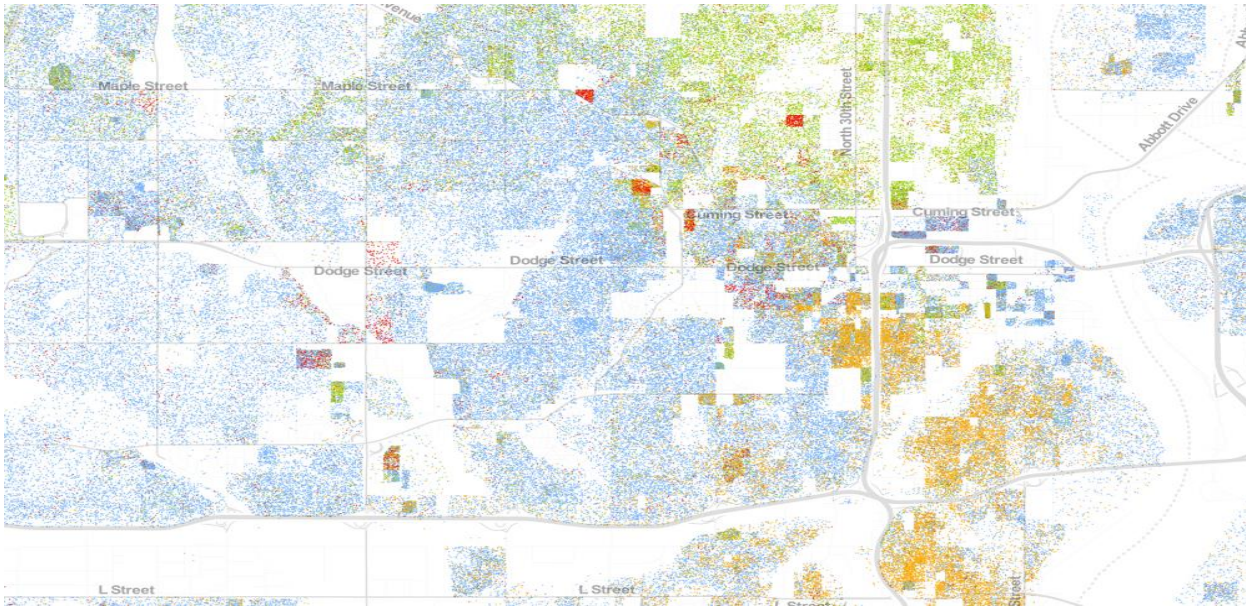
Source: http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/27_01/27_01_johnson.shtml

Document 1

Source:

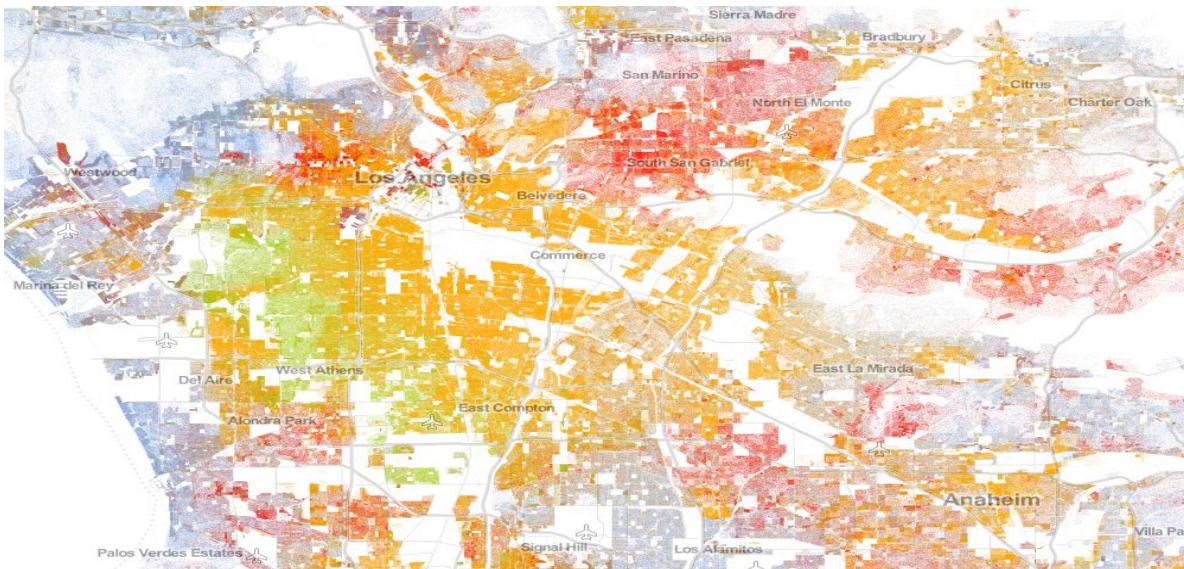
<http://www.wired.com/2013/08/how-segregated-is-your-city-this-eye-opening-map-shows-you/>

Omaha's Racial Segregation



White: blue dots; African American: green dots; Asian: red; Latino: orange; all others: brown

Southern Los Angeles

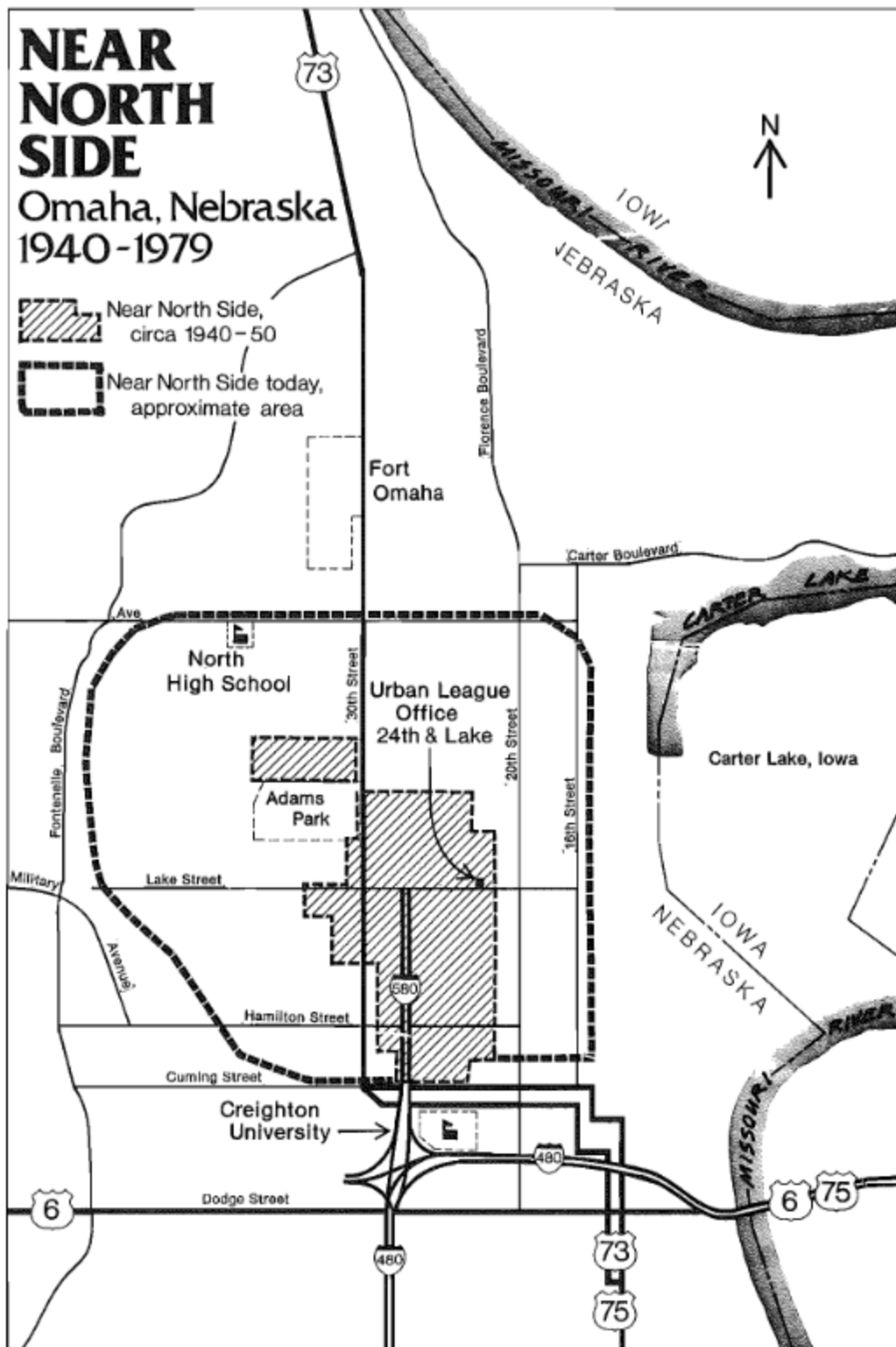


Southern LA is relatively well-integrated, with the colors mixing into each other throughout. **White: blue dots; African American: green dots; Asian: red; Latino: orange; all others: brown**

Document 2

Source: Donald L Stevens Jr, "Government, Interest Groups, and the People: Urban Renewal in Omaha, 1954-1970," Nebraska History 67 (1986): 137.

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1986UrbanRenewal.pdf>



National Civil Rights Issues/Events	Omaha Civil Rights Issues/Events
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1919 Peony Park opened. The amusement park was segregated until 1963.• Some businesses wouldn't hire African American workers like bus drivers or stores.• Omaha Public Schools had few African American teachers• Red-lining and unfair housing. African Americans could only live in certain areas and in certain houses. In 1963 25,000 homes were available, but only 50 of those were for African Americans.• 92% of African American population lived in North Omaha where poverty was at its greatest—unequal pay for African American workers, couldn't afford to fix house repairs, high rents with owners who wouldn't fix repairs.• Minimal parks, pools, and recreation areas where majority of African Americans lived.• Segregated schools-no busing available.• Excluded from white events and arts like dances, plays, and concerts, so African Americans created their own.• Race Riots 1966, 1968, 1969 North Omaha saw lots of violence and destruction.

[http://www.thereader.com/post/when new horizons dawned for african americans in omaha](http://www.thereader.com/post/when-new-horizons-dawned-for-african-americans-in-omaha)

When New Horizons dawned for African Americans in Omaha

BY LEO ADAM BIGA

It took the civil rights movement to bring segregation in the United States into sharp relief. The South was the epicenter of the racial equality battle but American-style apartheid as well as attempts to dismantle it were everywhere, including Nebraska.

Omaha prides itself on hospitality yet African Americans here could not always live or work or play or attend school where they wanted through the 1960s. In response to housing and work discrimination, for example, protest marches, sit-ins and other advocacy efforts organized.

With homeowners, realtors and banks discouraging blacks from white neighborhoods, it took extraordinary measures for blacks to integrate some sections of the city. One remedy was the creation of a new subdivision, appropriately named New Horizons, located on the then-western outskirts of the city, just off 108th Street between Dodge and Blondo and just north of Old Mill. The interracial developers designed the new addition as an integrated neighborhood open to all. By all accounts their vision was fulfilled.

Situated in what was then-countryside New Horizons was established in 1965 and the first houses were built soon after on the tiered land. Corn fields stretched south, west and east of this built-from-the-ground-up neighborhood only a stone's throw away from small working farms and stables. The two major east-west thoroughfares in the area, Dodge and Blondo, were two lanes each then.

This story chronicles the experiences of some past and present residents of this mixed race community, including what precipitated their moving there. They don't necessarily view New Horizons as having been a social action or social experiment but that's exactly what it was. It was revolutionary for the time, especially by Omaha standards, where even hometown icon and Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Bob Gibson was frustrated in his attempts to move into the neighborhood of his choice. If he couldn't find satisfaction, then everyday people like George and Juanita Johnson stood little chance.

In the mid-1960s the Johnsons were a college-educated, two-income married couple on an upwardly mobile track, but neither their names nor their positions gave them any influence to change that era's prevailing discrimination. He was a Benson High art teacher. She was a North High math instructor and guidance counselor. They'd recently started a family and next sought buying a new, larger home near a park and good schools.

The North Omaha residents had built a house at 38th and Bedford but having outgrown it they set their sights on moving to wherever they could find their dream home. As African Americans, however, their aspirational pursuits, like those of countless other persons of color, were blocked.

It was a time when blacks were routinely subjected to unfair housing practices, some subtle, others blatant, that effectively confined them to living in a small geographic area. Regardless of means, if you were black in Omaha then you had little choice but to live, as the Johnsons did, in the area bounded by Cuming Street on the south, Ames Avenue on the north, 40th Street on the west and 16th Street on the east. The northeast inner city became the black "ghetto." Getting out of it required a migration not unlike that of blacks migrating from the Deep South.

In many ways Omaha's de facto segregation was as pernicious and long lasting as any on the books in the South, resulting in a divided city that clearly demarcated the Near Northside as Black Omaha. Red lining real estate tactics, discriminatory banking practices, restrictive housing covenants and unfair hiring standards made it difficult if not impossible for blacks to live and work in many parts of their own city, denied and discouraged simply due to the color of their skin.

Though blacks live everywhere in the metro today, Omaha's geographic segregation persists – with most blacks in Omaha still residing in North Omaha – in part due to the lasting imprint of the housing discrimination that once ruled the day.

Better opportunities in education, employment and housing slowly emerged in response to equal rights pleas, marches, mandates, laws and court rulings.

"Things were just beginning to open up with schools and jobs and activities in Omaha but you had to look for them. You know, you would see pictures in the paper of things happening, of activities that should have been open to everyone, but because of restrictive housing they really weren't," says Juanita Johnson.

She says an entire apparatus or conspiracy of bigoted hearts kept white areas off limits to blacks. Realtors and others acted as overseers in steering blacks to all black enclaves or to undesirable neighborhoods deemed ready for integration.

"We contacted some realtors and they showed us some places north. They told us we could be blockbusters and open up some new neighborhoods," Johnson recalls. "The realtors decided which areas were going to integrate and which areas weren't. They would watch the housing trends and determine, 'We'll let this block go now.'" But the neighborhoods they were offering to us didn't show much potential, they didn't look like they were going to stay good working neighborhoods, they didn't look like they were stable. There were several for rent signs on properties. "

She's sure some realtors she and her late husband George dealt with were merely "going through the motions" to placate them. "They just showed us places that we would not have been interested in anyway – houses that were too small for what we wanted. We didn't want a place that would have other houses six feet on either side. We wanted to find a house or build a house on a good-sized lot that had room for yard and play space for kids."

Even though the Johnsons were eager and prepared to buy, it was as if their money was no good and their wishes didn't matter. The more they looked for a home and were turned away the more incredulous they grew.

"We went to several open houses and at some of them it was as if we were invisible," Johnson says. "I mean, they would greet people in front of us, they would greet people that were coming in behind us and it was just as if we weren't there. I really can't say there was anything (racial) said, it was more or less as if we were invisible walking through the places. We just thought they were stupid to behave in this way and we laughed at them."

The Johnsons experienced the same frustration in their desire for a better life that the fictional Younger family encountered in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*. Though the Youngers meet much resistance in the story, they eventually fulfill their goal of moving out of the inner city tenement they rent into a suburban home of their own. That novel's powerful dramatization, later adapted to the stage and screen, made quite an impact on blacks facing the same issues in real life.

"I think that helped to motivate a lot of us in that it appeared to be possible and that this could happen to us as individuals," says Johnson.

But there were societal-cultural roadblocks to achieving that dream. Being shunned, ignored and disrespected the way the Johnsons and so many of their black peers were elicited hard feelings in some, discouraged others and in the case of the Johnsons, motivated them even more [. . .]

Reciprocal Teaching

You will assume the responsibility for helping your group to use one of four reading strategies to discuss the assigned reading: summarizing, questioning, predicting, and connecting. As you read, take notes based on your assigned strategy and be prepared to lead a discussion for your role in your group.

Summarizing	Questioning	Predicting	Connecting
Beyond retelling what happens in the reading, identify what you think are the three most important events/details from the reading and explain why they are important and how they are connected.	Pose at least three questions about the reading; these could include questions that address confusing parts of the reading, or thought questions that the reading makes you wonder about.	Identify at least three text-related predictions; these predictions should be based on new developments in the reading and your predictions should help the group to anticipate what will happen next.	Make at least three connections between ideas or events in the reading to your own experience, the world around you, or other works of literature. Be prepared to explain these connections to your group.