

TITLE

HOW AMERICA SEGREGATED ASIAN AMERICANS: RACIAL HOUSING COVENANTS

GRADE LEVEL: 9-12

DISCIPLINE: History/ US Government

TOPIC: Asian American Residential Segregation

STANDARDS: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1 | CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4 | CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to explore the role of racial housing covenants in segregating Asian Americans communities, as well as research and determine their modern day social and economic consequences.
- Students will practice analyzing primary and secondary sources, including determining the central ideas, summarizing, and using specific textual or technical evidence to make a conclusion.
- Students will evaluate multiple perspectives throughout a range of sources and will be able to formulate their own arguments relying on textual evidence.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- What was the government's role in perpetuating residential segregation of Asian Americans?
- How have these policies have long term/ modern day effects on the Asian American community?
- How is de jure segregation in the form of covenants/laws/judicial rulings different from individual prejudice/ racism?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Projector/ screen for slideshows
- Chromebooks/ access to internet for research
- Printouts of sources

KIT INCLUDES:

- [Google Slides Presentation](#)
- [University of Washington Slides](#)
- [Racial Housing Covenants Google Doc](#)
- [Racial Housing Covenants Database](#)
- [Maps of Segregation \(University of Washington\)](#)
- [Map of Redlining \(Univ. of Richmond\)](#)
- [Gandolfo v Hartman](#)
- [Corrigan v Buckley](#)
- [Shelley v Kramer](#)
- [Court Cases Worksheet](#)

CLASSROOM HOURS NEEDED:

85-90 min

FINAL ASSESSMENT TYPE:

Project

CREDIT AUTHOR AND CONTACT: Valentina Moreno
vmoreno@diversityournarrative.com

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INTRODUCTION

Since the 20th century, racial housing covenants and restrictive deeds have been an integral part of real estate and a major tool for covert segregation. Housing segregation perpetuated by racial-housing covenants has affected access to wealth, schools, and determination of other socio-economic factors. Covenants existed in cities all over America, and students will have the opportunity to research their breadth and implications in these activities. Although restrictive deeds used a variety of language, ranging from explicitly restricting Asian-American ethnicities, to restricting all non-Caucasian people in general, this lesson plan will specifically focus on their role in segregating Asian-American communities.

'Teacher Note: A vast majority of the restrictive deeds include racist language and outdated terms. Please refrain from speaking these words out loud or encouraging students to read them out loud.

BACKGROUND PRESENTATION (10-15 MIN)

Educators will show students this [slideshow](#) briefly examining the history of Asian American residential segregation.

To supplement the [slideshow](#) above, educators will show this slideshow exploring Seattle's residential segregation created by the University of Washington. Teachers have a choice of slideshow with audio or without audio.

ACTIVITY (35 MIN)

PART 1: Students will explore racially restrictive language in housing covenants in the documents below.

[Click on this document](#) to explore the language of restrictive deeds.

*Disclaimer: Language used is different; Ethiopian means of African descent and Malays means Filipino American.

[Click on this document](#) to explore a database of restrictive deeds in Seattle Debrief in small groups: Why might restrictive deeds have existed before FDR's National Housing Act and the institution of redlining? What surprises you about these deeds? How do these deeds relate to other examples of institutional oppression/ racially biased events in American history you know of?

PART 2: Individual Project:

Students will then explore the maps below displaying the racial makeup of segregated areas across America. Using the resources below, students will work together in groups to pick 1-2 areas/ districts from a city of their choosing (encourage students to pick

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ACTIVITY
(35 MIN)

different cities) and research the racial makeup of Asian Americans over time and how that correlates with the color code the HOLC gave it, conditions of the area/ district (crime, sanitation, property values) wealth/ income range over time. Most importantly, students should research what the area they researched looks like now and what factors caused this change (legislation, Supreme Court decisions).

Resources:

- [Segregated Areas in Seattle](#)
- [Redlined Districts across America](#)

Guiding Questions:

Why and how has the segregation of Asian Americans changed over time? What are the modern day consequences (research job inequity, wealth accumulation? What role did local, state and federal government have in perpetuating residential segregation of Asian Americans?

ACTIVITY CONTINUED:
GALLERY WALK
(30 MIN)

Students use visual elements- screenshots of the redlined district, specific excerpts of racial deeds, depictions of the neighborhood-and accompanying written information presenting their research succinctly. Students will hang their presentations around the room. All students will walk around, taking notes it needed.

Then in either groups or as a class, students will reflect on the research of their peers.

Class/ Group Debrief:

What is a pattern you noticed? How are other students' presentations similar to your own research? How do these presentations illustrate a historic pattern of discrimination against Asian Americans? How do these presentations relate to other themes/ topics learned in class?

ACTIVITY #2:
GROUP PROJECT
(10 MIN)

Students will explore the legislation/ court action that the federal government took to combat or reinforce racial deeds.

Instructions:

In groups of 3, each student will fill out the worksheet for 1 of the 3 cases. Then, the students will share their reflections on each case briefly, and together discuss how both of these cases differ in the enforcement of restrictive deeds. At the end of their discussion, each student will add notes to the "Impact of Ruling" section of their worksheet. Notes can be any information helpful for understanding constitutionality of restrictive deeds has changed over time.



CONCLUSION

As the lesson concludes, students should understand the role of restrictive deeds and government legislation/ court action in systemically segregating Asian-American communities.

Students should be able to reflect on the history of Asian-America residential exclusion and how it led up to the use of restrictive covenants, as well as what role this residential segregation has had on modern day Asian-Americans.

⋮ **CREDIT AUTHOR AND CONTACT:** *Valentina Moreno*
vmoreno@diversityournarrative.com

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