

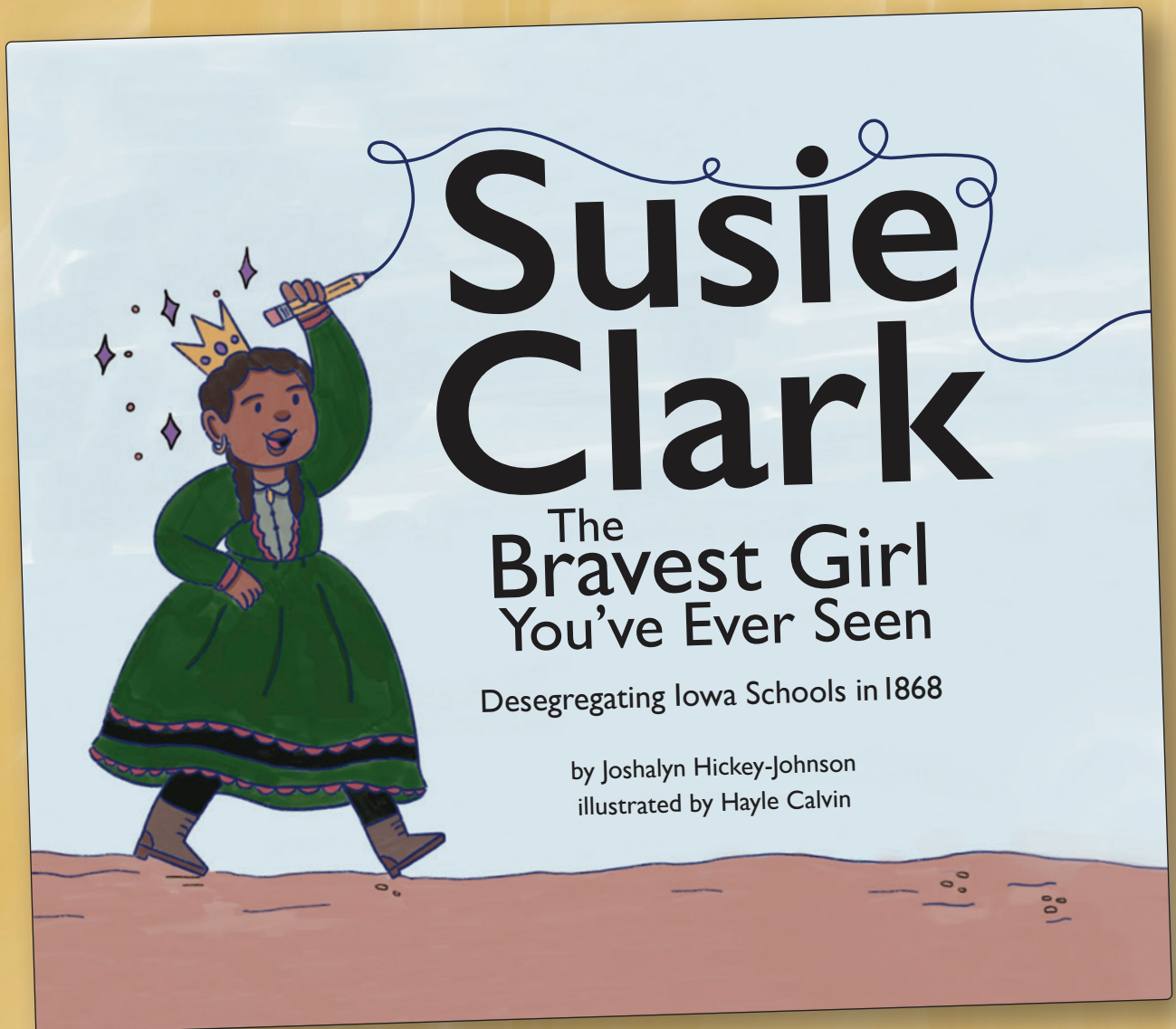
Susie Clark

The Bravest Girl You've Ever Seen

Desegregating Iowa Schools in 1868

Educator's Guide

by Dawn Thomas



The Women Behind the Book



Joshalyn Hickey-Johnson, a.k.a Ms. Rocki, was born and raised in Waterloo, Iowa, and attended Waterloo public schools. She is the mother of two and grandmother of seven. Ms. Rocki took on the challenge of working a traditionally male job at Viking Pump in Cedar Falls, Iowa, and worked there for 30 years. She began writing books featuring real-life experiences from her children's lives as they were growing up.

Her debut book, *Good Morning, Lovey!* was published in 2005, followed by *Travis It's NOT Your Birthday!* in 2008. She partnered with Chaveevah Ferguson, serving as a publicist with BaHar Publishing, the first African-American-owned book publishing company in Iowa. She co-authored *Ropes In The Kitchen* with her father, Naaman "Jock" Hickey. Ms. Rocki started "North End Update," a weekly live interactive show highlighting good things in her local community and featured on Iowa Public Television's *Greetings from Iowa*. Since 2017, she has worked on the show with her best friend and co-host Chaveevah. Ms. Rocki recently hosted Iowa PBS's "Juneteenth: The Movement."

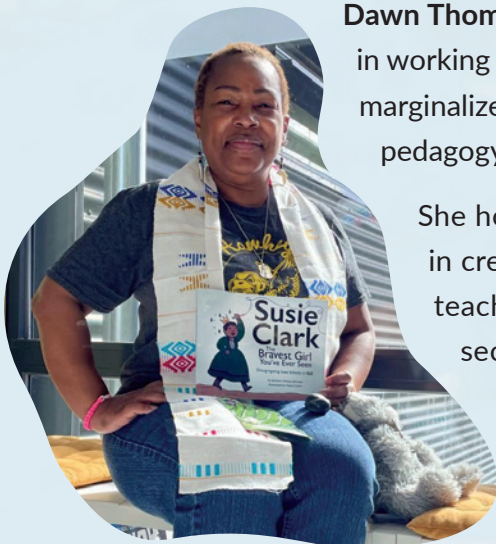
Hayle Calvin is an artist/graphic designer based in her hometown of Clinton, Iowa. She graduated from Clinton Community College with an associate of arts degree in 2019. She graduated two years later from the University of Northern Iowa with a bachelor of arts in graphic design. Currently, Hayle works as an associate graphic designer for a nonprofit organization and dabbles in many areas of fine arts, including digital illustration. When she's not drawing, you can find Hayle roller-skating, working on a crochet project, or playing with her cat, Luna. She loves her work and hopes to inspire at least one person to be creative.



Dawn Thomas is an African American educator with a strong background in working with underserved students. She has a passion for helping marginalized students see themselves in their academic leaders and pedagogy.

She holds a bachelor's degree in liberal studies with a focus in creative writing and art expression, and a master of arts in teaching English education with a certification in English as a second language, all from the University of Iowa.

Dawn created the educator's guide while completing a Fulbright fellowship in Spain, where she taught Susie Clark's story to Spanish-speaking primary school students.



General Book Themes and Questions

Susie loved the muddy trail (SS.3.4.)

- What does the “muddy trail” represent? *Hard times and difficulties.*
- How could that reflect the African American experience in America? *Civil War, civil rights movement, Black Lives Matter, etc.*
- What does Susie’s love for the muddy trail reflect? *It leads to a place where she can be herself and feel loved.*



Walking home the same way every day

(SS.1.21.)

- What is the importance of this rule? *Danger could be avoided and parents expected children to come the same way everyday.*
- How can we see evidence of this rule in today’s society? *In your culture?*

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about how Black parents continue to provide their children with instructions for **Getting Home Safe**.

Seeds and maps in hair (SS.1.21.)

- **What do the seeds represent?** *Captured and enslaved Africans often hid seeds in their hair and clothing to help them bring a part of home with them to a new or unsafe place. They also often hid maps and directions in the pattern of their braids or clothing (i.e., kente cloth). These cultural practices often helped them feel brave.*
- **How do we see “seeds” of Africa in today’s society?** *African American hair, nails, language, and clothing style.*

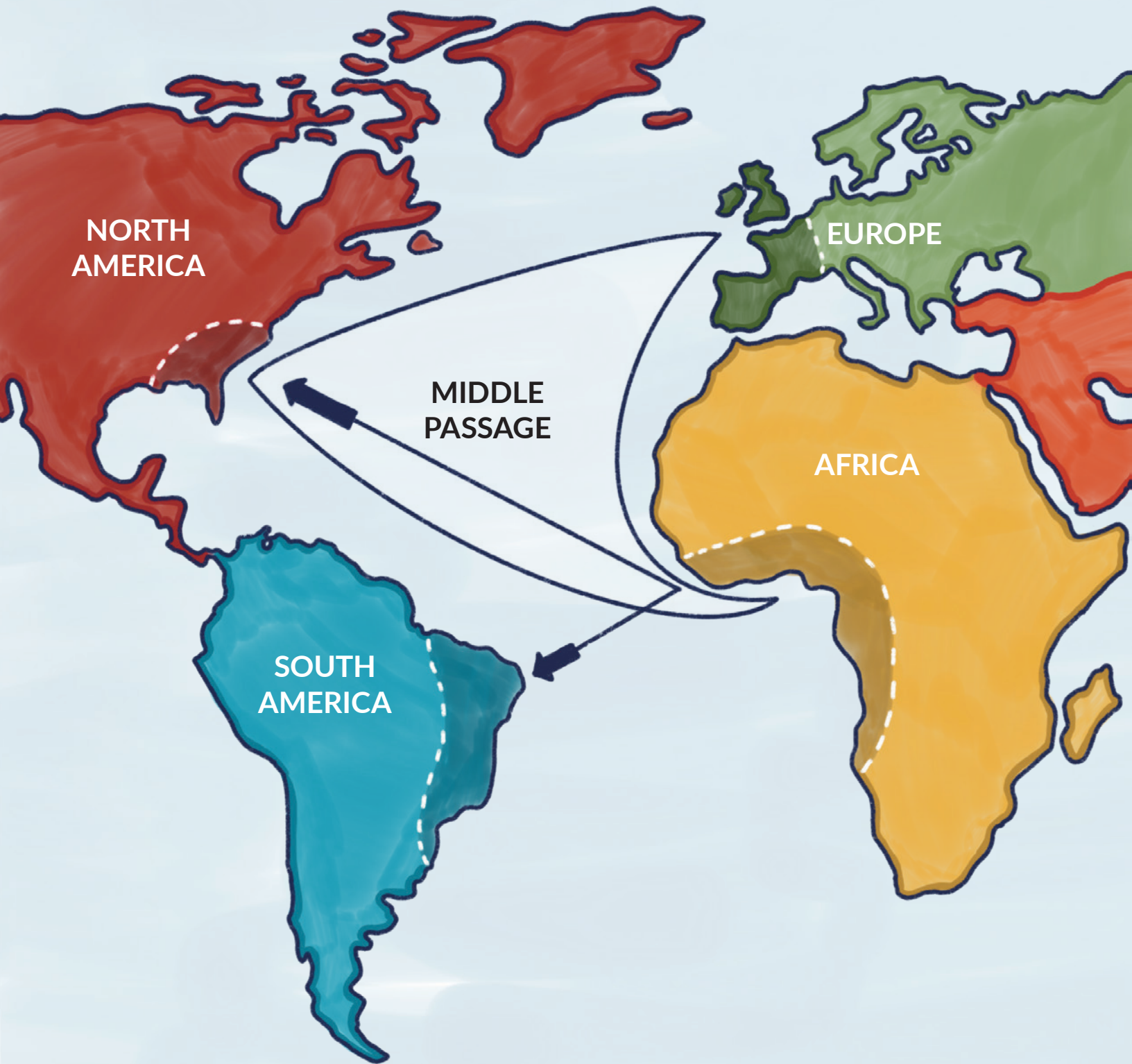
See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about how Black **Hairstyles and Braiding** are essential to Black history and culture.



Middle Passage (SS.2.20.)

- **Why do you think this area is called the “Middle Passage”?** *It is the space in the “middle” of most of the continents in the world.*
- **Where did most Black people live before the Middle Passage existed?** *In Africa.*
- **Where did some Black people live after the Middle Passage?** *In Africa, in South America, and in North America.*
- **What is the process of a group of people spreading out all over the world called?** *Diaspora.*
- **How did the Middle Passage change the lives of Africans?** *They were forcibly taken far from their homes and families.*
- **On the map, find where Susie’s ancestors were taken from.** *The yellow area on the map (i.e., West Africa).*
- **Where were they originally taken to?** *Primarily the red and blue areas on the map (i.e., The western parts of South America and the south and eastern parts of North America).*
- **Now find where her family lived.** *Find the area where the state of Iowa now exists.*

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about the **Middle Passage**.





Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

The Underground Railroad

(SS.2.20.)

- **What was the name of the activities that described enslaved Africans escaping the South to live in Iowa and other places in the North?** *The Underground Railroad.*
- **Why do you think it was called the “Underground Railroad?”**
 - *Even today, when important things are happening in secret, they are referred to as “underground.” Because people were hiding and traveling in secret, their escape was called “underground.”*
 - *Because people were leading and transporting Africans from the South to the North, they were given coded names for the most common form of mass transportation employers of the time: railroad employers.*
- *These names were meant to hide activities and people’s real names from authorities.*
- **How was the act of Africans moving to or escaping to Iowa and other places in the North from the South similar to the Middle Passage?** *More Africans spread out across parts of North America.*
- **How was it different?** *They chose to go or had kind people helping them. They were not forced into these new areas.*

Alexander Clark, the Clark family, and the Iowa Supreme Court

(SS.3.28.)

- How did the bravery of these people change Iowa? America? *Desegregation*.
- What does desegregation mean?
- Why is desegregation important today?

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about Alexander Clark.



Separate but Equal

(SS.1.21.)

Segregation: People who have different skin color, different race, or different gender have separate places to work, learn, eat, play, etc. This often meant that these separate places were not as good or nice as the places for people who looked like the people who made the rules.

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about Alexander Clark's lawsuit, **Desegregation in Iowa**, and why "separate is never equal."



"Colorism" (SS.1.21.)

How does having "lighter" skin often impact how people are treated?

Is that fair?

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about how American slavery became focused on skin color and how **Colorism** among Blacks became a reality.



Grade Specific Discussion Questions by Standard

Inquiry Anchor Standards



1st Grade: Gathering and Evaluating Sources

SS.1.3. Determine if a source is primary or secondary and distinguish whether it is mostly fact or opinion.

- Which parts of the story are nonfiction and which parts are fiction? Why do you think that?

2nd Grade: Gathering and Evaluating Sources

SS.1.3. Determine if a source is primary or secondary and distinguish whether it is mostly fact or opinion.

- Which parts of the story are nonfiction and which parts are fiction? Why do you think that?
- Currently there is no known photo of Susie Clark. There are some that have been used to represent Susie, but none have been confirmed to be her. Why do you think that is?
 - Because she was a woman?
 - A Black woman?
 - Possibly because records have been lost?



See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about **Susie Clark**.

3rd Grade: Developing Claims and Using Evidence

SS.3.4. Cite evidence that supports a response to supporting or compelling questions.

- Which parts of the story are nonfiction and which parts are fiction? How do you know?
- What words or pictures do you notice that are the same as today? Give examples.
- Which words or pictures are different from now? Give evidence.



Content Anchor Standards

1st Grade: History

Analyze Change, Continuity, and Context

SS.1.21. Compare life in the past to life today within different communities and cultural groups, including indigenous communities.

- Which pictures remind you of the way things are today?
- Which pictures are different?
- Compare your school to the white school in the book.
- Compare your school to the Black school in the book.
- Compare the two schools to each other.
- Which school would you choose and why?



2nd Grade: History

Analyze Change, Continuity, and Context

SS.2.20. Determine the influence of particular individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical change.

- Who are some people that remind you of Alexander Clark? Give evidence.
- Who are some people that remind you of Susie Clark? Give evidence.
- How do family and cultural practices help people be brave?

3rd Grade: Iowa History

SS.3.28. Explain the cultural contributions that different groups have made on Iowa.

- How did Susie Clark change education in Iowa?
- Did she make Iowa better for certain people or for everyone? Why do you think that? Give examples.
- Susie's Black school was located in the local AME Church that was thought to be founded by her father, Alexander Clark. The AME (African Methodist Episcopal) Church, was one of the central organizations, nationwide, for fostering the social, financial, and political success of Black people.
 - How do you think this organization may have helped Alexander Clark in his career? Other Black people in Iowa? Education for Black people in Iowa?

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about the **AME Church in Iowa**.

Activities

Teacher note: Drawing and writing templates are located at the end of the guide.

1. Create your own picture story of a time when you had to go somewhere by yourself and how you felt.
 - a. Write: How was your experience the same as or different from Susie's? Why was Susie's experience so important?
2. Draw your own picture story of when you were able to do something hard or sad but someone you loved went with you or helped you.
 - a. Write: How did it make you feel? Brave? Happy? Explain with an example if possible.
3. Choose one character from the story and write a letter to them about how their bravery made things better for people in Iowa.
4. What are some of your family or cultural practices that help you become brave (i.e., getting new shoes and/or new school clothes; wearing tribal, cultural, or national clothing; wearing tribal, cultural, or national hairstyles, etc.)?
 - a. Write a letter to your class explaining this practice and why it helps you become brave.

OR

- b. Both students and teachers bring one or two items that help you feel brave or strong to class. Show and tell the class:
 - What the item is.
 - Where/from whom you received it.
 - Why it is important to you.
 - How it makes you feel brave or strong.

Teacher: Explain the connections between how the okra seeds in the story helped both Susie and her mom feel strong and brave when they had to leave the places where they felt safe and loved. Make connections between **The Motherland** and students' homeland or hometown. Provide explicit definitions about why African Americans call Africa **The Motherland**. See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about **The Motherland**.

5. As the teacher reads the book aloud, have students yell out "They were BRAVE" and make the superhero gesture whenever something happens that shows bravery, courage, or doing something hard.



6. Share about okra:

- Materials

- One pack of okra seeds enough for each student to have one to three.
- Plastic cups enough for each student to have one.
- Water.
- Planting soil.
- Marker to write each student's name on the plastic cup.



- When reading about Susie's mom braiding the okra seed crown into her hair, pass around the pack of okra seeds and allow students to take one or two seeds each. After reading the story, guide students in planting their okra seeds in a cup of soil. Explain to students:

- The many uses for okra.
- How enslaved Africans brought their agricultural skills to the Americas.
- How these skills helped enslavers become successful with their crops.
- How this success became the foundation for America's financial status.

See Glossary of Teacher Resources to learn more about **Okra Seeds**.



Glossary of Teacher Resources

General Resource

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery/k-5-framework>

AME Church in Iowa

<https://www.iowa-city.org/WebLink/ElectronicFile.aspx?dbid=0&docid=1887924&>

Social and political impacts of the AME Church in Iowa begin on page nine of the pdf.

<https://www.cedar-rapids.org/crn/bethel.php>

Alexander Clark

<https://gpb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/alexander-clark-school-desegregation-video/lost-in-history-alexander-clark/>

<https://uipress.lib.uiowa.edu/bdi/DetailsPage.aspx?id=62>

Susie Clark

<https://discovermuscatine.com/susan-clark-1854-1925/>

<https://gpb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/alexander-clark-school-desegregation-video/lost-in-history-alexander-clark/>

Colorism

https://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-background-02-03.htm

“In the years following Bacon’s Rebellion, the distinction between indentured servitude and slavery grew into a pronounced difference. Indenture became less attractive as a source of labor because

servants now lived long enough to claim land—as the rebellion had demonstrated violently—and improved economic conditions in Britain reduced the supply of workers willing to come to America and increased the price of their contracts.

Africans continued to be readily available, and because many were not Christian, they could be enslaved and regulated in a manner that indentures could not. Virginia enacted a series of laws, constituting a formal slave code that removed many of the rights slaves had previously enjoyed and added further restrictions to slavery including anti-miscegenation statutes. Previously one of several labor sources, slaves became Virginia’s primary workforce for its plantations, and slavery an integral institution within its society.

“With the hardening of slavery came the emergence of race. Previously, people’s appearance and origins had not mattered as much before socially, particularly among the working class. The physical distinctiveness of African slaves—now absent similar European indentured servants—however, not only marked their newly created subordinate position within Virginian society, it became the justification and reason for that position. Virginia’s example, in turn, became a model that other British colonies with slaves, when they were created, followed with a mutually reinforcing dynamic. ‘Race’ explained why Africans were slaves, while slavery’s degradation supplied the evidence for their inferiority. When Thomas Jefferson observed almost a century later that Africans were slaves, the apparent

naturalness of their position had erased the actual social history that had produced it.”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4365794/>

“In American history, slavery constituted a strict caste system that distinguished Black slaves by their skin tones. Lighter-skinned slaves were usually mixed-raced and favored by White slave-owners. These lighter-skinned slaves were frequently fathered by White slave-owners (typically from nonconsensual sexual relations with female slaves) and were, therefore, privileged (Brown, Ward, Lightbourn, & Jackson, 1999; Keith & Herring, 1991); unlike dark slaves, lighter-skinned slaves were spared physically strenuous, outdoor work and instead held domestic indoor jobs like housekeeping in closer contact to Whites. Over time, these privileges in the antebellum period allowed lighter-skinned Blacks to become more educated (Wirth & Goldhamer, 1944) and to own more property (Frazier, 1957). Furthermore, to maintain their elite status and privileges, lighter-skinned men engaged in social practices to exclude darker-skinned Blacks from entering their social circles; these practices included the ‘Paper Bag Test,’ (which banned Blacks from joining fraternities if their skin tones were darker than a brown paper bag), the ‘Comb test,’ (which banned Blacks with coarse, nappy African hair if combs could not glide through it) and the ‘Blue veins’ society (which banned Blacks whose skin tones were too dark to see the blue veins on their arms) (Bond & Cash, 1992). These findings consistently indicated that light skin tone resulted in clear social and economic advantages.”

Desegregation in Iowa

<https://history.iowa.gov/history/education/educator-resources/primary-source-sets/school-desegregation/iowa-supreme-court>

<https://history.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/history-education-pss-desegregation-alex-clark-transcription.pdf>

Getting Home Safe

<https://www.gpb.org/news/2020/06/26/the-talk-rite-of-passage-in-black-families-even-when-the-parent-police-officer>

Hairstyles and Braiding

<https://www.amplifyafrica.org/the-rich-history-of-braids/>

Middle Passage

<https://www.history.com/news/african-diaspora-trans-atlantic-slave-trade>

“The trans-Atlantic slave trade was the capture, forcible transport and sale of native Africans to Europeans for lifelong bondage in the Americas. Lasting from the 16th to 19th centuries, it is responsible, more than any other project or phenomenon in the history of the modern world, for the creation of the African diaspora—the dispersal of Black people outside their places of origin on the continent of Africa.

“As a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, there are presently 51.5 million people of African descent living in North America (United States, Mexico and Canada), approximately 66 million in South America, 1.9 million in Central America, and more than 14.5 million throughout the islands of the Caribbean. Over centuries of transformation and upheaval, these

diasporic peoples have developed rich cultural traditions, distinct societies and independent nations—all sharing elements of a common African heritage.”

<https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/history-of-slavery/africa-before-transatlantic-enslavement/>

“The significance of the transatlantic slave trade is not just that it led to the loss of millions of lives and the departure of millions of those who could have contributed to Africa’s future, although depopulation did have a great impact. But just as devastating was the fact that African societies were disrupted by the trade and increasingly unable to follow an independent path of development. Colonial rule and its modern legacy have been a continuation of this disruption.”

<https://sites.miamioh.edu/art-museum/2018/05/1650s-1850s-the-middle-passage/>

The Motherland

<https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2019/12/16/ghana-year-of-return-boris-kodjoe>

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/columnists/2021/12/31/22860362/africa-is-my-motherland-america-my-homeland-john-fountain-column>

“...Africa is my ancestral Motherland. But America is my Homeland.”

Okra Seeds

https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/2002/oct02/art6oct.html

“Okra is a very odd plant with a strange history, most of it undocumented. It’s a member of the hibiscus family, related to the hollyhock, the rose of Sharon, and cotton. Experts think it originated over 1000 years ago in the part of Africa that is now Ethiopia and Sudan, where it’s still found growing wild. It spread to Arabia, the Mediterranean, and India, nobody knows exactly how. A Spanish traveler found it on his travels through Egypt in 1216— young pods were eaten with meal [i.e., cornmeal]. Meal-coated fried okra . . . sound familiar? The word ‘okra’ may have come from a corruption of the West African name for the plant : nkruma. In Swahili, it’s called ‘gumbo’, and the people of the Mediterranean call it “Bamyia.”

“Since okra is a native African food, it’s believed by many to have come to America with the African slaves. However, it’s also possible that French colonists brought it to Louisiana in the early 1700’s, or it came into the port of New Orleans from Brazil where it was established as a crop in the mid-1600’s.”



Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.



Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top blue, middle dashed blue, bottom red).





