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The Shared Inquiry™ Sequence of Activities

Prereading (5-10 minutes)

Students briefly explore a concept relevant to the text they will be reading.

Student Learning Objective: To activate and build background knowledge related to a text

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: Thinking about what we already know helps us get ready to read.

First Reading (25-40 minutes)

Students listen as the text is read aloud, marking questions and/or reactions.

Student Learning Objective: To ask questions and use other reading strategies to improve understanding of a text

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: Reading a text once is just the first step in understanding it.

Sharing Questions (10-25 minutes)

Students share different types of questions about what they just read.

Student Learning Objective: To ask questions arising from a text and identify whether they need to be answered right away

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: Asking and addressing questions are essential strategies for understanding a text.

Second Reading (25-45 minutes)

Students follow along as the text is reread and engage in activities that help them explore the text's meaning in more depth.

Student Learning Objective: To reread and interact with a text in order to gain a deeper understanding of it

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: Rereading is essential to understanding a rich text.

The Shared Inquiry Sequence of Activities, continued

Vocabulary (10-20 minutes)*

Students identify new vocabulary words and use context and outside sources to determine the meaning of important words.

Student Learning Objective: To understand new vocabulary in context

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: Word meaning can often be determined from context, but not all unknown words are equally important to understanding a text.

Shared Inquiry Discussion (20-45 minutes)

Students explore a text's meaning in depth by discussing interpretive questions.

Student Learning Objective: To discuss a text's meaning by sharing ideas, supporting ideas with evidence, and listening to other students' responses

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: Discussing a text with others helps us come to a deeper understanding of it.

Written or Creative Response (times vary)

Students deepen and extend their understanding of what they read through written or creative response.

Student Learning Objective: To extend learning from reading and discussion through written or creative engagement

Key Shared Inquiry Concept: There are many ways to further explore the themes and ideas in a text.

*In some Great Books K-12 programs the vocabulary activity can be found after the sharing questions activity, but it can be done at any time after the first reading.

Birmingham

June 11, 1963

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

President Kennedy gave this speech while civil rights groups were marching in Birmingham, Alabama. The marchers met opposition from segregationists and Birmingham Commissioner of Public Safety Eugene "Bull" Connor. Connor ordered children and adults attacked by police dogs and sprayed with fire hoses to break up the marches.

The unrest was not limited to Birmingham. After Kennedy gave this speech, Mississippi NAACP leader Medgar Evers was murdered outside his home by segregationist Byron de la Beckwith.

This nation was founded by men of many nations and backgrounds. It was founded on the principle that all men are created equal; and that the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.

It ought to be possible, therefore, for American students of any color to attend any public institution they select without having to be backed up by troops. It ought to be possible for American consumers of any color to receive equal service in places of public accommodation, such as hotels and restaurants, and theaters and retail stores, without being forced to resort to demonstrations in the street.

And it ought to be possible for American citizens of any color to register and to vote in a free election without interference or fear of reprisal. It ought to be possible, in short, for every American to enjoy the privileges of being American without regard to his race or his color.

This is not a sectional issue. Difficulties over segregation and discrimination exist in every city, in every state of the Union, producing in many cities a rising tide of discontent that threatens the public safety.

Nor is this a partisan issue. In a time of domestic crisis, men of goodwill and generosity should be able to unite regardless of party or politics. This is not even a legal or legislative issue alone. It is better to settle these matters in the courts than on the streets, and new laws are needed at every level. But law alone cannot make men see right.

We are confronted primarily with a moral issue. It is as old as the Scriptures and is as clear as the American Constitution. The heart of the question is whether all Americans are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities; whether we are going to treat our fellow Americans as we want to be treated.

If an American, because his skin is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the public; if he cannot send his children to the best public schools available; if he cannot vote for the public officials who represent him; if, in short, he cannot enjoy the full and free life which all of us want, then who among us would be content to have the color of his skin changed and stand in his place?

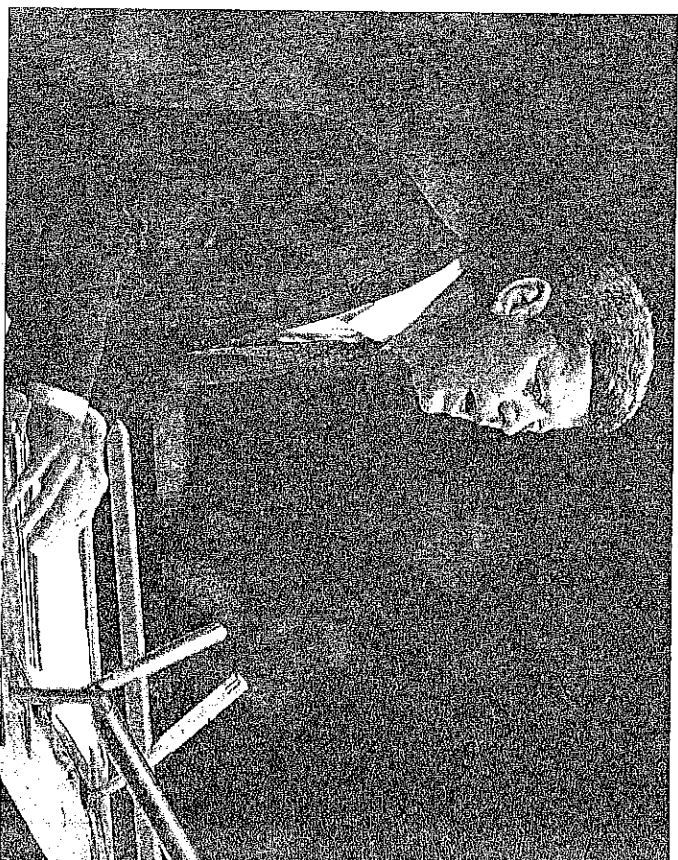
Who among us would then be content with the counsels of patience and delay? One hundred years of delay have passed since President Lincoln freed the slaves, yet their heirs, their grandsons, are not fully free. They are not yet freed from the bonds of injustice; they are not yet freed from social and economic oppression.

And this nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free.

Now the time has come for this nation to fulfill its promise. The events in Birmingham and elsewhere have so increased the cries for equality that no city or state or legislative body can prudently choose to ignore them.

The fires of frustration and discord are burning in every city, North and South. Where legal remedies are not at hand, redress is sought in the streets in demonstrations, parades and protests, which create tensions and threaten violence—and threaten lives.

We face, therefore, a moral crisis as a country and a people. It cannot be met by repressive police action. It cannot be left to increased demonstrations in the streets. It cannot be quieted by token moves or talk. It is a time to act in the Congress, in your state and local legislative body, and, above all, in all of our daily lives.



President John F. Kennedy

I am, therefore, asking the Congress to enact legislation giving all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public—hotels, restaurants and theaters, retail stores and similar establishments. This seems to me to be an elementary right.

I'm also asking Congress to authorize the Federal Government to participate more fully in lawsuits designed to end segregation in public education. We have succeeded in persuading many districts to desegregate voluntarily. Dozens have admitted Negroes without violence.

Other features will also be requested, including greater protection for the right to vote.

But legislation, I repeat, cannot solve this problem alone. It must be solved in the homes of every American in every community across our country.

In this respect, I want to pay tribute to those citizens, North and South, who've been working in their communities to make life better for all.

They are acting not out of a sense of legal duty but out of a sense of human decency. Like our soldiers and sailors in all parts of the world, they are meeting freedom's challenge on the firing line, and I salute them for their honor—their courage. ♪

Building Your Answer in Shared Inquiry Discussion

Name: _____

Selection: _____

Your leader's opening question: _____

Your answer before discussion: _____

How did discussion affect your answer? Did it change your mind? Provide additional support for your answer? Make you aware of additional issues?

Your answer after discussion: _____

What in the selection helped you decide on this answer?

DISCUSSION UNIT 4

Birmingham

JOHN F. KENNEDY

Text Opener

Do you follow the law because you believe that it is the right thing to do or because you know that the law will be enforced?

Directed Notes

Mark places that deal with laws or legislation with L, and places that deal with morals or morality with M.

Interpretive Questions for Discussion

Why does Kennedy argue that the concept of equal rights is "primarily . . . a moral issue"?

1. According to Kennedy, how are "the rights of every man . . . diminished when the rights of one man are threatened"?
2. Why does Kennedy say that the moral issue is "as old as the Scriptures" and "as clear as the American Constitution"?
3. How and why does Kennedy make a distinction between the sectional, partisan, legal, and moral issues involved in equal rights?
4. What is the promise that Kennedy says it is time "for this nation to fulfill"?
5. What is the "moral crisis" that Kennedy refers to?

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6. Why does Kennedy believe that "legislation . . . cannot solve this problem alone"? What does he believe is the solution to the problem?

Writing After Discussion

1. Write a speech about an issue or problem that could be addressed with legislation, but that you feel is primarily a moral issue.
2. Do you agree that "law alone cannot make men see right"?
3. To what extent do the ideas in Kennedy's speech parallel or duplicate the ideas in King's "I have a dream" speech?
4. Why does Kennedy return to legislative solutions at the close of his speech after defining equal rights as a moral issue?



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Effective Practices in Asking Follow-Up Questions

Below are some suggested questions (ranging from basic to more complex) to help participants develop their **ideas**, search for **evidence** in the text, and **respond** constructively to others.

Idea Questions

- Can you say more about that?
- Is there another way you can explain that to us?
- When you say [word or phrase], what do you mean?

Evidence Questions

- Where do you see that in the text?
- Can you read us the part where that happens?
- What part of the text supports your answer?

Response Questions

- Can you tell [student] why you agree with her?
- What do you think about what [student] just said?
- Does anyone have a different answer than [student]?

Going further: Considering the implications of ideas

- How does that idea help us answer our focus question?
- When you say that, do you mean [implication]?
- Does anyone have a different answer to the question?

Going further: Explaining the evidence

- How does that part of the text support your answer?
- Can you explain why this part makes you think that?
- What does the character do or say to support your idea?

Going further: Relating other responses to your own

- Why do you disagree with [student]’s answer?
- Whose idea connects most strongly to your own?
- Is your idea similar to what [student] just said, or is it different?

Listen carefully to what is being said. Let your questions flow from students’ responses and incorporate their phrasing into your questions (e.g., *Can you explain what you mean by [word or phrase]?*)

Use the text. Ask students to return to the selection for evidence and to read that evidence aloud. Ask questions about specific words and phrases to help students explore ideas.

Let your students do the work. Don’t feel that you need to ask a follow-up question after every comment. If other students jump in with responses, let the conversation unfold for a while. Similarly, don’t worry about filling every silence—some students may need more time to think and respond.

Set a good example. Over time, as they see you modeling good follow-up questions, students will take more responsibility for the discussion and begin asking questions of one another.