Challenging Jim Crow

Beliefs, actions, and results of early civil rights reform

SS24.US1.19c "Analyze the ideologies, efforts, and impacts of civil rights reformers, groups, and civic organizations that challenged Jim Crow laws and violence at the turn of the twentieth century."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each approach's guiding belief and circle an action based on it. For each approach, write 1 beside an impact and 2 beside a limit.

Different Paths Toward Equal Rights

1. In 1892, journalist Ida B. Wells investigated lynchings after a white mob killed three Black businessmen in Memphis, including her friend Thomas Moss. White mobs often claimed that lynching punished crimes, but Wells gathered reports showing that victims were denied trials and that accusations could mask efforts to maintain white power. She published her findings and spoke abroad, urging people to confront the violence. Her work challenged excuses for lynching and drew international attention, yet lynchings continued and federal lawmakers did not pass an anti-lynching law.

2. As Jim Crow laws spread, educator Booker T. Washington urged Black Americans to build economic strength through job training and business. In his 1895 Atlanta speech, he publicly emphasized economic opportunity over immediate demands for social equality. He believed this approach could win support from white leaders in a dangerous climate. Yet Washington also quietly helped fund lawsuits challenging discrimination. His schools expanded educational opportunities, but critics argued that delaying open demands for equal rights left segregation largely unchallenged.

3. W. E. B. Du Bois rejected waiting for equal rights. In 1905, he and other activists formed the Niagara Movement, demanding full voting rights and an end to segregation. Du Bois later helped found the NAACP, a multiracial organization established in 1909 that used public campaigns and lawsuits against Jim Crow. In 1917, an NAACP-backed case led the Supreme Court to strike down a city law requiring racial segregation in housing. The ruling limited housing segregation, but Jim Crow and mob violence continued.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Wells's evidence challenge a defense of lynching, and what limited her impact?

2. Why did Washington publicly emphasize economic opportunity, and how did he also challenge discrimination?

3. How did the Niagara Movement's demands differ from Washington's public approach?

4. How did the NAACP's strategy produce a legal change, and what did that change leave unresolved?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are organizing a 1910 campaign against a segregated public library. In four or five sentences, propose a tactic based on one approach in the passage, explain its guiding belief, predict an impact and a limit, and compare it with a different approach.

ANSWER KEY

Challenging Jim Crow

GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.19c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each approach's guiding belief and circle an action based on it. For each approach, write 1 beside an impact and 2 beside a limit. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Wells's evidence challenge a defense of lynching, and what limited her impact?	**Her reports showed that victims were denied trials and that accusations could hide efforts to maintain white power. Lynching continued, and Congress did not pass an anti-lynching law.**
2	Why did Washington publicly emphasize economic opportunity, and how did he also challenge discrimination?	**He believed economic opportunity could win white leaders' support in a dangerous climate. He also quietly helped fund lawsuits against discrimination.**
3	How did the Niagara Movement's demands differ from Washington's public approach?	**The Niagara Movement demanded full voting rights and an end to segregation immediately. Washington publicly emphasized economic opportunity over immediate demands for social equality.**
4	How did the NAACP's strategy produce a legal change, and what did that change leave unresolved?	**An NAACP-backed case led the Supreme Court to strike down a housing segregation law. Other Jim Crow laws and mob violence continued.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would ask a local newspaper to publish accounts from Black residents turned away from the library. Like Wells, I would use documented evidence to challenge the claim that segregation is fair. Public pressure might persuade town officials to change the library's policy. Still, reports alone might not force officials to act. Unlike the NAACP's lawsuits, this campaign would first try to change public opinion.

Accept other evidence-based comparisons that accurately connect a belief, an action, an impact, and a limit. The proposed library campaign should apply a historical approach to the new situation rather than simply repeat a passage event.