

**Pacing: One to two classes**  
**GRADE: 4**

**LESSON ACTIVITY TITLE:** Quenching My Thirst with Equality

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:**

- What is the significance of water in the story?
- Why does the main character yearn for a taste of the “white water”?
- How does segregation contribute to the main character’s point of view in the story?

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING:** Students will understand that although things appear to be different on the outside, sometimes the contents on the inside remain the same. They will also understand that even the same things, while separated, can be unfair.

**PICTURE THE DREAM REFERENCE BOOK:** *White Water* by Michael S. Bandy and Eric Stein, illustrated by Shadra Strickland

**SOCIAL STUDIES GSE TO ADDRESS IN ACTIVITY:**

**SS4H6:** Analyze the effects of Reconstruction on American life.

**MAJOR CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY:**

- segregation
- integration
- perspective
- curiosity

**DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING (OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCAFFOLDING AND EXTENSION):**

**Scaffolds:**

If students don’t connect the opening activity to the lesson in the story immediately, this is fine. Eventually through class discussion, they will have organic moments of understanding.

Some students might be accurate in their assumptions of the story, and others might be way off. As you begin to read the text, the students will make better meaning of the story, based upon the picture walk.

**Extensions:**

Personification/Perspective Writing—Present this scenario to the students: If the two water fountains for White and Black people could talk to each other, what would they say to each other about what is going on in the story? What would they say to the people using them? What conversations would they have with each other? What things might they hear? Think back to the story and consider looking at things from the perspective of the water fountains.

Follow-up reading: *Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-ins* by Carole Boston Weatherford



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART

ATLANTA

# Picture the Dream

The Story of the Civil Rights Movement  
through Children's Books

## Grade 4 Social Studies TEACHER RESOURCE

Written by Lisa Rogers,  
Cobb County Schools

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### MATERIALS:

#### STUDENT SUPPLIES:

- Writer's notebook
- Pencil
- Chart paper for an activity at the end of the lesson

#### TEACHER SUPPLIES:

- *Picture the Dream* PPT resource (available at High.org)
- *White Water* by Michael S. Bandy and Eric Stein, illustrated by Shadra Strickland
- Two large pitchers
- Two labels with the letter A on one and B on the other
- Small Dixie bathroom cups, one for each student
- Chart paper
- Writer's notebook

### OPENING

### HOOK/INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY:

- Fill two large pitchers with water. Use the same water fountains to fill up both pitchers. Place a label with an A on it on the front of one pitcher and a label with a B on it on the front of the other pitcher. Distribute a sticky note and a small Dixie bathroom cup to each student. Tell the students that they will be conducting a taste test to see which water tastes best. Tell them that the water in pitcher A comes from the front office water fountain and the water in pitcher B comes from the water fountain by the gym.
- Pour water from one pitcher at a time into their cups. Tell them to make a note of how each sample of water tastes, looks, and any other details that come to mind.
- Present them with this scenario: The principal loves drinking water but will only drink water from the fountain by the front office that is in pitcher A. She refuses to drink water from the fountain by the gym.
- Allow the students to discuss and share why they think the principal will only drink water based upon the location of the fountain. Write the students' responses on the board. They should produce many different scenarios: *Is the water special? Why don't we get the special water? Is something wrong with the water by the gym?*
- Some will argue that the water tastes the same, and some may argue that the water tastes different. If the students say they don't taste any differences with the water, ask them why.
- The students should come to a consensus of why the principal doesn't drink from the water fountain by the gym. This revelation will be pivotal when the students make a connection at the end of the story.

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### WORK PERIOD

#### STUDENT AND TEACHER PROCEDURES:

- Before you read the story, write the quote below on the board for the students to see. Ask them to make assumptions about the quote such as what they think it is about or who the author is talking about.

*"When I finally got to town, I was scared to death. All kinds of things were running through my head. What if I get caught? What if I get hurt? What if they put me in jail forever? But I had to know what that white water tasted like."*

- Next, display the image of the two children drinking from separate water fountains from the *Picture the Dream* exhibition: *"After those first few sips, it tasted like nasty, muddy, gritty yuck."* (available in the PPT resource). Ask the students the following:
  - Does this picture help you understand the quote?
  - Does it give you more information about who the narrator might be or what the narrator is thinking of doing?
  - What do you see that makes you think that?
- Allow the students time to process the quote and the image; this will organically lead to in-depth conversations. For example, why was the boy in the story so fixated on finding out what the "white water" tasted like?
- Ask the students if they have ever heard the idiom "Never judge a book by its cover." Allow them to elaborate with their table groups on what this means. Explain to them that as they hear this story, they should consider how this quote relates to the story.
- Instead of reading the book, first try a different strategy. Explain to the students that before listening to the story, they will be "reading" the pictures, taking a picture walk, to create meaning of the story prior to hearing it. Explain that as you turn each page, they should pay careful and close attention to the colors on the pages, the characters, and what is being said nonverbally through the pictures. By only looking at the pictures, the students will be able to focus on meaningful details and draw inferences as to what may be happening in the story.
- Now read the book from beginning to end, still showing the students the pictures. Be ready to hear gasps and sighs as some will say their assumptions were accurate.
- After reading, ask the students what the significance of the water represents. Ask them to share their thoughts about the idea of two separate water fountains and how the book correlated with the opening activity. Were they able to make any connections? How has their perspective changed about the kind of water the principal drinks? What might be a good strategy to get the principal to understand that all the water in the building is safe to drink? Even if the water is the same, is it fair to have separate water fountains? Why or why not? Encourage students to find evidence to support their answers from the book (e.g., the boy in the book felt scared or left out). Connect to historical events of "separate but equal" laws and their abolition.

## CLOSING

### CLOSING ACTIVITY:

- Place students into groups of four. They will complete a Synectic. A Synectic is a problem-solving methodology that stimulates thought processes in which the subject may be unaware. This method was developed by George M. Prince and William J. J. Gordon, originating in the Arthur D. Little Invention Design Unit in the 1950s (see <https://www.creativity-innovation.eu/synectics/>). Students are made to compare two unlike objects while still identifying commonalities among them.

\*Students will need a large piece of paper folded into thirds. Chart paper works best. You should complete the first example as a class together. Then, allow the students to work on the second question with their table groups or with a partner.

- Synectic example to be completed as a whole group:
  - How is freedom like cool water?
  - How is segregation like a water fountain?
  - After folding the paper into thirds, on the top-left side of the page, write the word *FREEDOM*.
  - On the top-right side of the page, write *COOL WATER*.
  - In the top middle of the page, write *SAME*. This part of the page is where students will find commonalities between these two very different concepts.
  - Explain to students that as a class, you will be working together to complete the first Synectic activity.
  - Begin by having the students tell you all that they know about the word *freedom*, and write it on that side of the paper. Students might say that freedom means being free, that freedom is a birthright, or that freedom means the right to play with whomever they choose.
  - Students should then tell you what they know about *cool water* and write it down on the appropriate side of paper. They may say cool water is refreshing, can be icy, or can be purchased at the store.
  - Then, in the middle column, have the students write what these two terms have in common.

\*This activity is a great way for students to develop critical-thinking skills.



Lisa Rogers is a dedicated and enthusiastic educator preparing innovative leaders for tomorrow. She began her teaching career almost twenty years ago in the Cobb County School District. She has taught all grade levels ranging from kindergarten through eighth, as well as Special Education, and is now a Gifted and Talent Development teacher for grades K-5. Since 2003, she has shared her educational pedagogy at numerous educational conferences throughout the state of Georgia, and she has written curriculum for the State of Georgia and for Cobb County for well over a decade. She was filmed by Georgia Public Broadcasting Television, where she demonstrated how to get students excited and engaged in the art of inquiry. In September of 2014, she was awarded the Javits-Frasier Scholarship for Diverse Talent Development, which helped propel her into mentoring others on how to serve underrepresented groups in gifted and talent development as it relates to literacy and learning.





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**Shadra Strickland** (American, born 1977), "After those first few sips, it tasted like nasty, muddy, gritty yuck." *White Water: Inspired by a True Story*, 2011, written by Michael S. Bandy and Eric Stein, watercolor, ink, and gouache, collection of the artist, XL.2019.61.