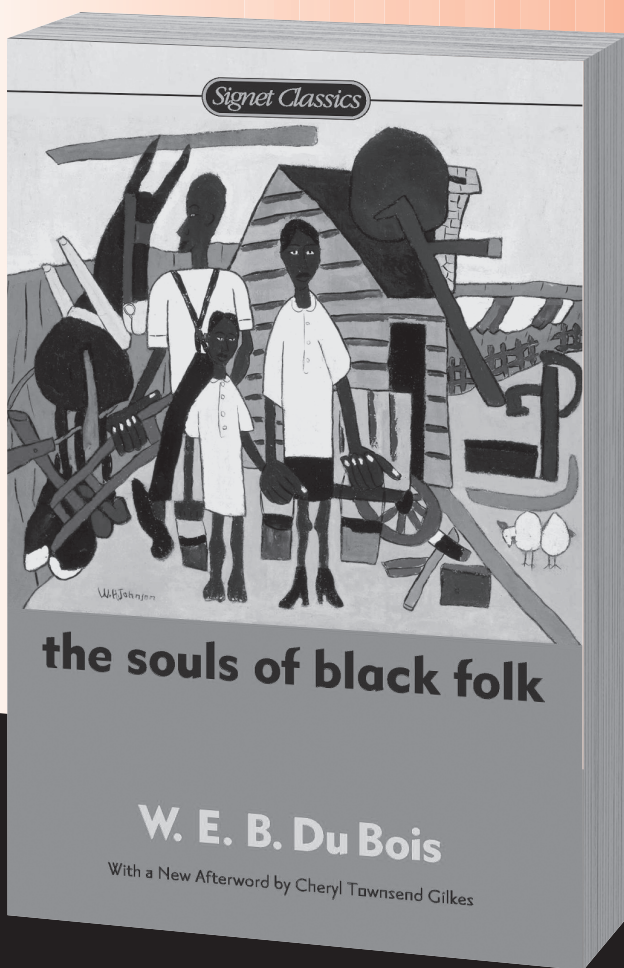


TEACHER'S GUIDE

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO

# THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK

BY W. E. B. DU BOIS



BY MEGHAN MANFRA AND CYRSTAL SIMMONS

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## INTRODUCTION

Equally appropriate for the English language arts and social studies classrooms, *The Souls of Black Folk* is a series of essays (some of which had been previously published) in which William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (pronounced due bóyss), 1868-1963, presents his argument about a path toward progress for African Americans: enfranchisement, political power, and education. This book, both a primary source and a literary work, provides insight about the experiences of African Americans in the early twentieth century. W.E.B. Du Bois discusses segregation and “color lines” and chronicles the “double consciousness” experienced by African Americans — “this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others.” He provides case studies from the Jim Crow South and he presents portraits of men who embody life “behind the veil.” He is critical of Booker T. Washington’s vocational education and accommodationist approach to segregation and racial prejudice and alludes to his faith in a “Talented Tenth” of well-educated African Americans who would overcome the “the problem of the color line.”

*The Souls of Black Folk* provides an excellent opportunity to engage students with a non-fiction, informational text. Students can learn about argumentative and persuasive writing while also understanding literary and historical allusions. In the “Forethought” of *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois provides an overview of the organization of the essays in this book. Teachers can follow Du Bois’s guidance for assigning groups of chapters from the text, as the themes of each chapter often overlap or build on each other. In this guide we have followed his organizational structure to create thematic units, providing discussion questions and teaching activities for each unit. Selected quotes can be used to spark student discussion and response writing.

## BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

### EXPLORING W.E.B. DU BOIS’S BIOGRAPHY

Ask students to read and analyze on-line biographies of W.E.B. Du Bois, using a graphic organizer to map important events that contribute to an understanding of the social context, experiences, and accomplishments of Du Bois. Two useful biographies are:

- [http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/dubois/?page\\_id=861](http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/dubois/?page_id=861) and
- [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_people\\_dubois.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_people_dubois.html)

Personal events (family, friends, education)	Historical context (historical events that may have influenced Du Bois)	Accomplishments (work, career, publications, other significant events)	Experiences with racism, discrimination	Influence on others

Once students have listed as many events as possible, ask students to review their lists, placing a star next to five of the most important biographical elements in W.E.B. Du Bois’s life. Ask students to consider these questions as they review their lists: Why is this particular event important to W.E.B. Du Bois as a man, educator, leader? How does this event help us understand his experiences, motivations, and influence on others? Students can share their choices in pairs or small groups.

Next students should identify the single most significant event in W.E.B. Du Bois's life from the list they created. Ask them to write a brief rationale explaining their choice. After reading *The Souls of Black Folk*, students can return to their graphic organizers to add more details. They may also decide to change the event that they identified as most significant and/or revise/expand their rationale paper.

## MAPPING W.E.B. DU BOIS'S TIMELINE

Provide students with a blank map. Outline maps available for reproducing can be found at: <https://geography.byu.edu/pages/resources/outlinemaps.aspx>. Ask students to direct their browser to the timeline at [http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/dubois/?page\\_id=860](http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/dubois/?page_id=860) to identify key geographical locations relevant to W.E.B. Du Bois's life and work. Then students should label the location and relevant date(s) on the map, including a brief description of biographical information. For example: Great Barrington, Massachusetts, birthplace of W.E.B. Du Bois, February 23, 1868.

## RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

In this RAFT activity, students select a role, an audience, format, and topic to demonstrate their knowledge of one of the reconstruction amendments. Divide the class into three groups and assign each student in the groups to read the Thirteenth, Fourteenth or Fifteenth Amendments. Assign students to work individually or in pairs to read and clarify their understanding of their assigned amendment. Then students are ready to complete their own RAFT assignments by choosing a role, audience, and format from the list below.

The full list of Amendments to the U.S. Constitution can be found at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/GPO-CONAN-1992/pdf/GPO-CONAN-1992-7.pdf>

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Freedmen	Future U.S. Citizens	Diary Entry	Thirteenth Amendment
Northern Senator	Southern States	Newspaper Editorial	Fourteenth Amendment

## AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE JIM CROW SOUTH

To learn about the socio-cultural and political realities of the Jim Crow era, assign students to explore the resources available from The Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/what.htm>. Ask students to first read the summary "What was Jim Crow?"

Other web-based resources to explore include:

- Rise and Fall of Jim Crow at <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories.html>
- The Constitutional Rights Foundation's Brief History of Jim Crow at <http://www.crf-usa.org/black-history-month/a-brief-history-of-jim-crow>

Bring the whole class together to discuss the characteristics that defined the Jim Crow era and how cultural objects of the time depict racial prejudice. Students can also be encouraged to consider manifestations of the Jim Crow era that persist to this day. For ideas, see <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/news/jimcrow/dontstop.htm>.

## UNIT I: EMANCIPATION AND ITS AFTERMATH

### “THE FORETHOUGHT”

Du Bois states that “the problem of the color line” is the problem of the twentieth century and his collection of essays is his attempt to describe the lived experience of blacks in America. He then provides an overview of the organization of his essays.

### CHAPTER I “Of Our Spiritual Strivings”

Du Bois describes the double-consciousness experienced by blacks, the conflicting identities of being black and American in a society dominated by racial strife and conflict. Du Bois argues for the training and development of intellectual talents so blacks can gain acceptance in America while adding to American ideals and culture.

### CHAPTER II “Of the Dawn of Freedom”

Du Bois summarizes historical events relevant to African Americans in the period immediately following the Civil War (1865-1872). He focuses on the creation of the Freedmen's Bureau, which served an important role in providing assistance to newly freed blacks and argues that the greatest achievement of the Freedmen's Bureau was the establishment of free common schools. Despite this success, the Bureau was unable to adequately provide judicial services and protection for African Americans in the South. Fraudulent activity and mismanagement of financial savings and funds at the Freedmen's Bank eventually led to the demise of the Bureau. According to Du Bois, the Fifteenth Amendment which prohibited state and federal governments from denying citizens the right to vote based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude” was the “child” of the Freedmen's Bureau.

### SELECTED QUOTATIONS/READER RESPONSE PROMPTS

“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,— an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (p. 9).

“It was the ideal of ‘book learning’; the curiosity, born of compulsory ignorance, to know and test the power of the cabalistic letters of the white man, the longing to know. Here at last seemed to have been discovered the mountain path to Canaan; longer than the highway of Emancipation and law, steep and rugged, but straight, leading to heights high enough to overlook life” (p. 12).

“...it [the Freedman's Bureau] failed to begin the establishment of good-will between ex-masters and freedmen, to guard its work wholly from paternalistic methods which discouraged self-reliance, and to carry out to any considerable extent its implied promises to furnish the freedmen with land” (p. 35).

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to Du Bois, what are the “spiritual strivings” of black folks and how do these strivings affect their sense of “double-consciousness”?
2. Du Bois identifies “book learning” as a new powerful movement replacing the “dream of political power.” What arguments does Du Bois use to suggest that education can lead to

social mobility and racial progress?

3. In Chapter II, Du Bois defines the government's actions of emancipating the slaves as a "tremendous undertaking." What evidence does Du Bois provide through his historical analysis of Reconstruction and the Freedmen's Bureau that the "Emancipation Proclamation seemed but to broaden and intensify the difficulties; and the War Amendments made the Negro problems of to-day"? (p. 18)
4. What are the accomplishments and failings of the Freedmen's Bureau, according to Du Bois?
5. Near the end of the essay, Du Bois states, "That is the large legacy of the Freedmen's Bureau, the work it did not do because it could not" (p. 39). What is this work? Based on Du Bois's assessment, why did the Freedmen's Bureau fail? What had to happen for its work to succeed?

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Tracking Du Bois's Argument

In Chapters I and II, Du Bois lays out some of his most well-known arguments regarding the double-consciousness of blacks in America and the failure of Reconstruction, in particular the Freedman's Bureau. To help students track Du Bois's major arguments and the supporting evidence/examples he provides, ask students to record them on a graphic organizer. Below is a format students can use.

Once the students have completed their graphic organizer individually, ask them to share their ideas with a partner and refine their notes on the graphic organizer. In class discussion students can determine Du Bois's major arguments and supporting evidence, ultimately answering the question of whether he effectively makes his point.

Major argument 1: <i>Write this in sentence form in your own words.</i>	Major argument 2: <i>Write this in sentence form in your own words.</i>
Supporting evidence: <i>Cite at least 3. You may use direct quotes or summarize Du Bois's major points.</i>	Supporting evidence: <i>Cite at least 3. You may use direct quotes or summarize Du Bois's major points.</i>
Evaluation: <i>Overall do you feel that Du Bois effectively made his argument? Explain. What were the strengths? What did you want to know more about?</i>	Evaluation: <i>Overall do you feel that Du Bois effectively made his argument? Explain. What were the strengths? What did you want to know more about?</i>

### Reaction to the *Emancipation Proclamation*

Ask students to read the *Emancipation Proclamation*, by retrieving the transcript at: [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured\\_documents/emancipation\\_proclamation/transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html) Then have students analyze a series of primary sources documenting the reaction to the *Emancipation Proclamation* using the document analysis worksheets created by the National Archives.

- For Written Documents use: [http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/written\\_document\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/written_document_analysis_worksheet.pdf)
- For Photo Documents use: [http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf)
- For Cartoons use: [http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet.pdf)

Selected newspaper articles and illustrations can be accessed on the following websites:

- Editorial on Emancipation Proclamation-Harpers Weekly 1863 (Jan. 10, 1863 Harpers Weekly pg. 18 col. 1-2) <http://goo.gl/dJoAxL>
- The Decree of Emancipation-Leslies Illustrated 1863 (Jan. 17, 1863 Leslie's Illustrated pg. 288 col. 3-4) <http://goo.gl/viflrk>
- Emancipation-Harpers Weekly 1863 (Jan. 24, 1863, Harper's Weekly p. 55, col. 3-4 & pp. 56-57, col. 1-4) <http://goo.gl/EN3mN7>
- The Emancipation Proclamation: Image Exhibit <http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/emancipation-150/the-emancipation-proclamation.html>
- "The effects of the proclamation—Freed negroes coming into our lines at Newbern, North Carolina." Harpers Weekly, 1863 <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/ncc/pcoll/civil-war/80-426.JPG>
- Watch Meeting: Waiting the Hour (1863) and Reading the Emancipation Proclamation (1864) <http://lincolncottage.org/black-reaction-to-the-emancipation-proclamation/>

After analyzing the documents, ask students to write a one page reflection, describing the differences they detect in how the North, South, and the slaves responded to the *Emancipation Proclamation*, providing examples from the resources they have examined to support their analysis.

## Field-Order #15

Du Bois references Field Order #15 in Chapter II. Students can download a digital copy of Field Order #15 at <http://www.freedmen.umd.edu/sfo15.htm>. Ask students to complete the document analysis sheet from the National Archives (<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/document.html>) and discuss their answers. Focus whole group discussion on the following questions: How did Field-Order #15 compare with other policy and military actions undertaken during and after the Civil War as described by Du Bois? What might have been problematic in these approaches?

## UNIT II: DU BOIS DISAGREES WITH BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

### CHAPTER III "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others"

Chapter III stands alone as a strong indictment against Booker T. Washington who believed that blacks would gain the respect of whites when they turned all their attention to economic goals. He advocated training for blacks in vocational trades where they could focus on skills such as farming and the industrial arts, skills which would enable them to be self-sufficient. Labeled an accommodationist, Washington believed that blacks should refrain from seeking integration and their civil rights. Du Bois disagrees with Washington and identifies a "triple paradox" in his ideology and approach to racial progress: how can a people have rights without suffrage; how can people have self-respect while being submissive; how can students be trained without teachers prepared in the institutions of higher learning? He counters Washington by providing a history of black leaders with different approaches. One group wants only "revolt and revenge" while another group demands that color-prejudice be recognized for its debilitating effects. Du Bois vehemently believes that Washington is to blame for whites shifting "the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders" (p. 54).

## SELECTED QUOTES/READER RESPONSE PROMPTS

"It startled the nation to hear a Negro advocating such a programme after many decades of bitter complaint; it startled and won the applause of the South, it interested and won the admiration of the North; and after confused murmur of protest, it silenced if it did not convert the Negroes themselves" (p. 41).

"...Is it possible and probable, that nine millions of men can make effective progress in economic lines if they are deprived of political rights, made a servile caste, and allowed only the most meagre chance for developing their exceptional men? If history and reason give any distinct answer to these questions, it is an emphatic No" (p. 48).

"His doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical and rather pessimistic spectators; when in fact the burden belongs to the nation... (p. 54).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were Du Bois's main criticisms of Washington? Explain your answer with supporting evidence from the chapter.
2. Considering the time period, was Washington or Du Bois more persuasive in his arguments concerning equality? For example, who would have appealed to Southern whites, Southern blacks and why?
3. In Chapter II, Du Bois wrote about the failed, and now lost, promises of the government in providing "forty acres and a mule" to the newly freed slaves. Had the freedmen received the land or the opportunity to become landowners, do you think Du Bois would have agreed with Washington's advocacy for vocational training and self-sufficiency? Why or why not?

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### "Atlanta Compromise"

Use the Imagine, Elaborate, Predict, and Confirm (IEPC) Strategy to engage students in analysis of Washington's speech, also known as the "Atlanta Compromise," before the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta in 1895. Ask students to follow along in this activity using a graphic organizer. The steps are outlined below.

Imagine	Elaborate	Predict	Confirm

1. **Imagine**—ask students to imagine they are in Atlanta about to hear Washington speak by setting the scene of a world's fair or international exposition. Ask students to describe the images they see in their minds in the "imagine column." What do they see, hear, smell? (One image of the fairgrounds is available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piedmont\\_Park#mediaviewer/File:Piedmont\\_park\\_worlds\\_fair.gif](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piedmont_Park#mediaviewer/File:Piedmont_park_worlds_fair.gif))
2. **Elaborate**—model strategies for going deeper into their first images to build on prior knowledge, personal experiences, and details. Ask students to write these ideas in the "elaborate column."



3. **Predict**—discuss students' predictions for the text by asking what they think Washington might say in a speech given at this time and place. Ask students to list their predictions.
4. Then ask students to read the "Atlanta Compromise," available at: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/39/>
5. **Confirm**—after reading, ask students to return to their graphic organizers to use the final column to add new information to their initial predictions.

Then as a whole class, discuss the major points raised in the speech and return to Du Bois's chapter to discuss his criticism of Washington. Discuss: What are Du Bois's criticisms of Washington's ideas in the "Atlanta Compromise" speech? Does he present a coherent argument against Washington's proposed agenda for blacks?

## Black Leaders Prior to Washington & Social Media

In Chapter III, Du Bois provides a history of black leaders throughout various points in history. He categorizes these leaders based on three attitudes: 1) revolt and revenge, 2) adjustment of thought and action to the greater good, and 3) self-realization and self-development. In groups of three, ask students to pick a leader from each "attitude" below (total of three), conduct research to gather information about his/her important contributions and achievements, and then create either a Twitter and/or Facebook page for each leader. Direct students to the following templates to complete the "social media" profiles for their chosen leaders:

- Facebook / "Fakebook" Template at <http://www.classtools.net/FB/home-page>
- Twitter Template at <http://ichooseawesome.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/faketwittertemplate.pptx>

(Students will need to delete the information on William Shakespeare to begin their profile). To complete each leader's profile page, students can select a picture and factual information from their research to fill in the respective spaces on each template.

Revolt and Revenge	Adjustment of Thought and Action to Greater Good	Self-realization and Self-development
Gabriel Prosser Denmark Vessey Nat Turner David Walker	Robert Purvis Harriet Forten Mary Ann Shadd James Barbadoes	Sarah Parker Remond William C. Nell William Wells Brown Frederick Douglass

## UNIT III: TWO WORLDS WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE VEIL

### CHAPTER IV "Of the Meaning of Progress"

Du Bois retells his experiences of teaching in the hills of Tennessee. He begins the story describing his efforts to establish a school and then reminisces about the friendships he made with the members of the community. He speaks of the poverty, low wages, and poor land that exist as a result of the "Veil" that limits and separates the members of the community from prosperous opportunities. Upon his return to the town ten years later, Du Bois finds his old log school house has been replaced by a "jaunty board house" and some of his students have died, moved away, and married.

## CHAPTER V “Of the Wings of Atalanta”

The antithesis of Alexandria, TN is the progressive city of Atlanta, GA. Du Bois characterizes Atlanta as a city “turned resolutely toward the future.” However, Du Bois cautions the city not to focus on wealth, “Atlanta must not lead the South to dream of material prosperity as the touchstone of success.” Instead, Du Bois promotes the growth of universities in the city which would reinforce the ideals and values of the black world instilled by preachers and teachers. He states that the end of education is to develop “workers who work” and “thinkers who think” and both who hold to inspiring ideals.

## CHAPTER VI “Of the Training of Black Men”

In an historical analysis of Southern education post-Civil War, Du Bois highlights the struggles and inferiority of education for newly freedmen. He argues that common schools and industrial training schools did very little to equip all people with the knowledge to combat racial injustices. The training of black men in colleges and universities, according to Du Bois, would provide the necessary skills, knowledge, and philosophy to elevate black society and, in turn, improve race relations between blacks and whites.

## SELECTED QUOTATIONS/READER RESPONSE PROMPTS

“I have called my tiny community a world, and so its isolation made it; and yet there was among us but a half-awakened common consciousness, sprung from common joy and grief... from a common hardship in poverty, poor land, and low wages; and, above all, from the sight of the Veil that hung between us and Opportunity” (p. 62).

“Today it makes little difference to Atlanta, to the South, what the Negro thinks or dreams or wills. In the soul-life of the land he is to-day, and naturally will long remain, unthought of, half forgotten; and yet when he does come to think and will and do for himself,—and let no man dream that day will never come,—then the part he plays will not be one of sudden learning, but words and thoughts he has been taught to lisp in his race-childhood” (p. 71).

“The Wings of Atalanta are the coming universities of the South. They alone can bear the maiden past the temptation of golden fruit” (p. 76).

“The function of the Negro college, then, is clear: it must maintain the standards of popular education, it must seek the social regeneration of the Negro, and it must help in the solution of problems of race contact and cooperation. And finally, beyond all this, it must develop men” (p. 95).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When Du Bois returns to Alexandria, TN he describes the “progress” of the town: “My log schoolhouse was gone. In its place stood Progress; and Progress, I understand, is necessarily ugly” (p. 64). Explain the irony in Du Bois’s use of the term “progress.” What message is Du Bois conveying to his readers?
2. Towards the end of Chapter IV, Du Bois states, “How hard a thing is life to the lowly, and yet how human and real! And all this life and love and strife and failure,—is it the twilight of nightfall or the flush of some faint-dawning day?” (p. 67). Evaluate this statement. Does Du Bois seem optimistic or pessimistic about progress?
3. How does the myth of Atalanta apply to the city of Atlanta according to Du Bois, and what implication does he draw for the universities of the South?

4. Du Bois states, “teach workers to work...teach thinkers to think” (p. 77). Summarize and evaluate Du Bois’s belief in training men for life.
5. Describe the three streams of thought and afterthought regarding the problem of “training men for life.”
6. What values and attitudes should characterize the man educated by the Negro college as envisioned by Du Bois?

## LEARNING ACTIVITY

### History of Black Colleges & Universities

Ask students to create a Glogster (<http://edu.glogster.com>) to present the history of one historically Black College or University (HBCU). Allow students to select an HBCU from the list below to research or assign students different schools to cover the range of institutions: Howard University, Fisk University, Atlanta University, Lincoln University, Hampton University, Morehouse College, Spellman College, Tuskegee Institute, Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, or other institutions in your geographical area.

Ask students to include the following in their Glogster presentation:

- Location and dates founded
- Overall history of the college or university
- Rationale/Purpose of the University (i.e. training and courses provided); its mission
- Famous graduates
- Interesting facts about the institution and its current enrollment, including any changes in its mission

The following websites provide an overview of HBCUs:

- <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/fromswastikatojimcrow/blackcolleges.html>
- <http://www.thurgoodmarshallfund.net/about-tmcf/about-hbcus>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/hq9511.html>
- <http://www.edonline.com/cq/hbcu/alphabet.htm>

After students have shared their Glogster presentations, engage the whole class in a discussion about the extent to which the HBCUs meet Du Bois’s call for a high quality education for African Americans. Discuss: What opportunities or limitations are presented? What characteristics distinguish across the institutions? Does the institution exist today? If so, are the same training and courses provided? How has the institution changed in response to modern issues? Is there still a need for HBCUs?

## UNIT IV: THE “BLACK PEASANTRY” AND THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONDITIONS OF JIM CROW SOUTH

### CHAPTER VII “Of the Black Belt”

Du Bois takes his readers along on his countryside travels of “the Black Belt of Georgia,” the center of the Negro problem. On the roads below Macon, Du Bois encounters black families and individuals farming the lands after the prosperity of the region has long passed. Du Bois reveals the poverty and hardships of tenant farming and the effects these conditions have had on the black laborers.

## CHAPTER VIII “Of the Quest of the Golden Fleece”

In this chapter, Du Bois turns his sociological gaze towards the people living and working in the cotton fields of Dougherty County, Georgia. He is particularly concerned here with “King Cotton” which continues to deny basic financial freedom to the black workers so dependent on it for a livelihood. He blames this in part on the fluctuating price of cotton and institutionalized racism. Most problematic, Du Bois describes in detail the impoverished living conditions of the sharecroppers and the “broken households” they frequently experienced. Du Bois argues that freedom from slavery did little to change the lives of blacks in the South because neither social structures nor attitudes changed.

## CHAPTER IX “Of the Sons of Master and Man”

Du Bois offers the South as a perfect setting for the analysis of the color lines drawn in the U.S. which include geographical segregation along with economic disadvantages and political disenfranchisement. He is sharply critical of the lack of economic, educational, and social support offered to freed slaves after the Civil War. In response he lays out his vision of leadership coming from within the African American community. He argues, however, that black leadership had been severely limited by disenfranchisement and intimidation at the polls. This in turn has led to a host of issues including black crime and the defunding of public education for black students.

## SELECTED QUOTATIONS/READER RESPONSE

“So the Cotton Kingdom still lives; the world still bows beneath her sceptre” (p. 118).

“...[O]utside the carelessness of the nation in letting the slave start with nothing, is the widespread opinion among the merchants and employers of the Black Belt that only by the slavery of debt can the Negro be kept at work” (p. 129).

“It is, then, the strife of all honorable men of the twentieth century to see that in the future competition of races the survival of the fittest shall mean the triumph of the good, the beautiful, and the true; that we may be able to preserve for future civilization all that is really fine and noble and strong, and not continue to put a premium on greed and impudence and cruelty” (p. 141).

“...I will not stop to ask whose duty it was, but I insist it was the duty of someone to see that these workingmen were not left alone and unguided, without capital, without land, without skill, without economic organization, without even the bald protection of law, order, and decency,—left in a great land, not to settle down to slow and careful internal development, but destined to be thrown almost immediately into relentless and sharp competition with the best of modern workingmen under an economic system where every participant is fighting for himself, and too often utterly regardless of the rights or welfare of his neighbor” (pp. 144-145).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the general condition of the tenant farmer Du Bois observed in his riding of the roads near Macon, Georgia?
2. Du Bois documents structural (legal, economic) and more subtle, but not less lethal, social hindrances, to black economic progress in the South. He also describes black responses or resistance to those systems. Review Chapter VIII and create a list of hindrances and responses. Do any stand out to you as being particularly detrimental or significant? Explain.
3. What evidence does Du Bois provide about the color barrier or color line and its impacts? Taken collectively what type of picture does he create about life in the Jim Crow South?

4. Du Bois discusses “the imperative demand for trained Negro leaders of character and intelligence” (p. 147). What does Du Bois envision to be the role of black leaders? What advantages or limitations might there be to his ideas?

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Dougherty County, Georgia Today

Ask students to conduct research about contemporary Dougherty County, Georgia in order to answer the following questions: What is Dougherty County like today? What are current economic conditions? To what extent do you see evidence of the long term impact of racial discrimination on the county?

Students can begin their research by reviewing key characteristics of Dougherty County as described by Du Bois, individually or as a whole class. Next, direct students to the U.S. Census information website about the county at: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/13095.html>. This site provides demographic information for the county and juxtaposes it with demographic information for the state in general. Teachers may direct students to pay particular attention to statistics that might reveal the socio-cultural characteristics of the county, e.g. racial distribution, occupations, and educational level. Students can also explore the official website of the county at: <http://www.albany.ga.us/content/1800/default.aspx> and the Albany newspaper: <http://www.albanyherald.com/>

Then lead the class in discussion about whether there is evidence of the color line in the county today. Ask students to consider whether markers of the color line that Du Bois cited (e.g., geographical distribution of population, crime and violence, and lack of educational opportunities) are still apparent.

## UNIT V: FAITH, SPIRITUALITY, AND LOSS

### CHAPTER X “Of the Faith of the Fathers”

Du Bois opens this chapter with a scene from a “Southern Negro revival” which, he says, points to three key characteristics of the religion of the slave: the preacher, the music, and the “frenzy.” He emphasizes religion as a key to understanding the development of black culture and identity and describes how central the church is to the everyday lives of African Americans, especially since Emancipation. Du Bois provides evidence of changes in African American religious practices over time, identifying critical episodes during slavery, the rise of the abolition movement, and emancipation from slavery.

### CHAPTER XI “Of the Passing of the First Born”

In this poignant chapter, Du Bois recounts the death of his son. Devastated by the death and in mourning, Du Bois can’t help but wonder whether it is better that his son has escaped “the Veil.”

## SELECTED QUOTATIONS/READER RESPONSE PROMPTS

“The Negro church of to-day is the social centre of Negro life in the United States, and the most characteristic expression of African character” (p. 164).

“Nothing suited his [the slave’s] condition then better than the doctrines of passive submission embodied in the newly learned Christianity. Slave masters early realized this, and cheerfully aided religious propaganda within certain bounds” (p. 169).

“But ...still broods silently the deep religious feeling of the real Negro heart, the stirring, unguided might of powerful human souls who have lost the guiding star of the past and seek in the great night a new religious ideal. Some day the Awakening will come, when the pent-up vigor of ten million souls shall sweep irresistibly toward the Goal, out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, where all that makes life worth living—Liberty, Justice, and Right—is marked ‘For White People Only’” (p. 175).

“Within the Veil was he born ... and there within shall he live,—a Negro and a Negro’s son. Holding in that little head—ah, bitterly!—the unbowed pride of a hunted race, clinging with that tiny dimpled hand—ah, wearily!—to a hope not hopeless but unhopeful, and seeing with those bright wondering eyes that peer into my soul a land whose freedom is to us a mockery and whose liberty a lie” (p. 177).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to Du Bois, why were religion and the church so important to African Americans during slavery and after emancipation?
2. How did the ethics of the black man in America change from slavery to abolition?
3. What were the two ethical tendencies of blacks at the beginning of the twentieth century, according to Du Bois?
4. In Chapter XI, Du Bois evokes powerful images of his experience of losing his son. Choose one example from the text that creates a clear impression on you about what Du Bois experienced and witnessed and then describe what emotions and images are depicted.
5. Why did Du Bois choose to include this chapter about a deeply personal experience in his book? How does Chapter XI connect to the larger themes and arguments of the text? Explain.
6. Du Bois seems intent on juxtaposing his son’s innocence with his own experiences as an adult who has suffered from racial prejudice and discrimination. Identify an example of this from the text. Ultimately how do we respond to the implicit question of this chapter about whether or not Du Bois’s son was better off dying young rather than suffering life “within the Veil”?

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Routes of Resistance

Historically, people have argued for either armed or peaceful resistance to oppression. Du Bois briefly refers to Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner in Chapter X as examples that proved “the present hopelessness of physical defence” (p. 173). Display this quote from Du Bois and ask students to write a brief journal entry detailing their opinions about the best means to resist oppression. How does Du Bois’s discussion about deception connect with other arguments he is making in this chapter?

Next provide students with access to the following web-based resources which focus on violent rebellion of the time:

- [http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/people/denmark\\_vesey.html](http://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/people/denmark_vesey.html)
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part3/3p2976.html>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part3/3p1518.html>
- <http://sites.uci.edu/slaverebellionswinter2011/david-walkers-appeal-and-a-call-for-unity/>

As they review the websites, ask students to collect images, quotes, or descriptions of events and copy/paste them onto a word document to either support or refute Du Bois’s contention about “the present hopelessness of physical defence.” After completing this activity, students can return to their journal entry to expand or amend their initial ideas.

**UNIT VI: CASE STUDIES OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE****CHAPTER XII “Of Alexander Crummell”**

Du Bois writes with evocative, literary images from both classical literature and Judeo-Christian teachings to create a portrait of an African American minister, Alexander Crummell. Using the narrative framing of three temptations, Du Bois paints a portrait of a deeply religious and moral man who suffered racial prejudice and discrimination from within his own church. Ultimately Du Bois decries that Crummell was little known in his time (and today), despite his great potential and his leadership within the black community.

**CHAPTER XIII “Of the Coming of John”**

Du Bois creates a fictional “tale twice told,” a tragic portrait of an educated African American man. John, a young black man from southeast Georgia, leaves home with great promise to go to school at the Wells Institute. Du Bois describes his slow, almost painful evolution from an easy going, good-natured young man into a serious thinker. Ironically, his coming of age is paralleled with that of a white playmate also named John, whom he encounters later in life with tragic results. This story depicts the impact of the color line and the inescapable racial discrimination and injustice that black men encounter.

**SELECTED QUOTES/READER RESPONSE**

“And if you find that riddle hard to read, remember that yonder black boy finds it just a little harder; if it is difficult for you to find and face your duty, it is a shade more difficult for him; if your heart sickens in the blood and dust of battle, remember that to him the dust is thicker and the battle fiercer” (p. 191).

“His name to-day, in this broad land, means little, and comes to fifty million ears laden with no incense of memory or emulation. And herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that men are poor,—all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked,—who is good? not that men are ignorant,—what is Truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men” (p. 192).

“...yet it was singular that few thought of two Johns,—for the black folk thought of one John, and he was black; and the white folk thought of another John, and he was white. And neither world thought the other world’s thought, save with a vague unrest” (p. 197).

“Every step he made offended some one. He had come to save his people, and before he left the depot he had hurt them. He sought to teach them at the church, and had outraged their deepest feelings. He had schooled himself to be respectful to the Judge, and then blundered into his front door. And all the time he had meant right,—and yet, and yet, somehow he found it so hard and strange to fit his old surroundings again, to find his place in the world about him. He could not remember that he used to have any difficulty in the past, when life was glad and gay. The world seemed smooth and easy then” (p. 206).

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Outline Alexander Crummell’s experiences that show how he struggled with hate, despair, and doubt. In what ways does Crummell overcome these trials? How does his experience fit with the line from Tennyson that opens Chapter XII: “Around a king returning from his wars.”
2. The story of John depicts his painful alienation when he returns home. What factors contributed to this alienation? What are the implications of this portrait for understanding the challenges for education and social change in the Jim Crow South?
3. What do you think was Du Bois’s purpose or message in presenting these two portraits of Crummell and John? How do they illustrate arguments he makes in earlier chapters of the text?

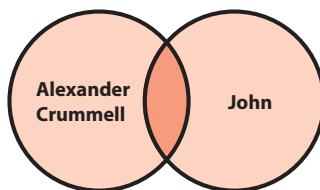
## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Compare and Contrast Alexander Crummell and John

Using a Venn diagram ask students to compare the background and experiences of Alexander Crummell and John as described by Du Bois.

After completing the Venn diagram as a class or individually, ask students to connect their notes from the intersection of the two spheres with larger themes in Du Bois's text, including evidence of racial discrimination, the color line, and possibility of social uplift for African Americans.

Then ask students to create a found poem using words and phrases from the two chapters contrasting the lives of the two men.



### Who was Alexander Crummell?

Ask students to conduct research about Crummell and then write an opinion piece or editorial describing his significance in American history. Students can use the following web-based resources on Crummell's life:

- <http://www.biography.com/people/alexander-crummell-37889>
- [http://www.episcopalarchives.org/Afro-Anglican\\_history/exhibit/leadership/crummell.php](http://www.episcopalarchives.org/Afro-Anglican_history/exhibit/leadership/crummell.php)
- <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/alexander-crummell/>

## UNIT VII: NEGRO SPIRITUALS AND THE AFTERTHOUGHT

### CHAPTER XIV "Of the Sorrow Songs"

This chapter focuses entirely on Negro spirituals which Du Bois argues represent a major contribution of African Americans to American culture.

### SELECTED QUOTATIONS/READER RESPONSE

"And so by fateful chance the Negro folk-song—the rhythmic cry of the slave—stands to-day not simply as the sole American music, but as the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas" (p. 213).

"I know little of music and can say nothing in technical phrase, but I know something of men, and knowing them, I know that these songs are the articulate message of the slave to the world" (p. 215).

"Through all the sorrow of the Sorrow Songs there breathes a hope—a faith in the ultimate justice of things" (p. 221).

"Our song, our toil, our cheer, and warning have been given to this nation in blood-brotherhood. Are not these gifts worth the giving? Is not this work and striving? Would America have been America without her Negro people?" (p. 223).

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### The Fisk Jubilee Singers and Negro Spirituals

Before each chapter in this book of essays, Du Bois provides "a bar of the Sorrow Songs,—some echo of haunting melody from the only American music which welled up from black souls in the dark



past” (p. 6). Ask students to visit a variety of websites to learn about the history of Negro Spirituals, the various types of spirituals, and the success and contributions of the Fisk Jubilee Singers in presenting the powerful message of these spirituals to the world. Provide students with the following URLs:

- History of Negro Spirituals  
<http://www.negrospirituall.com/history.htm>  
<http://www.authentichistory.com/1600-1859/3-spirituals/>
- List of Negro Spirituals  
<http://www.negrospirituall.com/news-song/>
- History of Fisk Jubilee Singers  
[http://www.fiskjubileesingers.org/our\\_history.html](http://www.fiskjubileesingers.org/our_history.html)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQfuts4cxOE>
- Done What You Tole Me (old recording)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naFcHO9KBnQ&list=PLBD1753C9DBC131BB&index=2>

As students explore these resources, ask them to respond to the following questions: How did Negro Spirituals serve as a form of resistance for those enslaved? How would you evaluate the success and impact of the Fisk Jubilee Singers?

## Negro Spiritual Listening Activity

Listening to the songs of a people can give us insight into their history, values, and culture. Ask students to listen to and analyze the lyrics of four Negro songs from the ones Du Bois lists in Chapter XIV, pp. 216-221. Students can research the songs online and ask the following questions: What is the message of each song? In what ways do the songs express emotions? What emotions dominate the songs they have selected? How did the songs serve blacks, both as slaves and freedmen?

## AFTER READING ACTIVITIES

After students have read *The Souls of Black Folk*, they can respond to one of the synthesizing questions or engage in one or more of the following activities to help them clarify their understanding about the ideas and impact of W.E.B. Du Bois and the history of the period in which he wrote as well as to make contemporary connections.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND ESSAYS

1. When Du Bois wrote about his views of progress and the role of education, the United States was experiencing a period of time known as the Progressive Era. To what extent did his views about progress and education typify the thinking of the time? (See for example: <http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/teaching/glossary/progressive-era.cfm>)
2. According to Martin Luther King, Jr., “History cannot ignore W.E.B. Du Bois because history has to reflect truth and Dr. Du Bois was a tireless explorer and a gifted discoverer of social truths. His singular greatness lay in his quest for truth about his own people. There were very few scholars who concerned themselves with honest study of the black man and he sought to fill this immense void. The degree to which he succeeded disclosed the great dimensions of the man.” This was Dr King’s last major speech before his assassination. See: <http://pmeaye.tripod.com/kingondubois.pdf> for full transcript. Ask students to discuss how King’s assertion applies to Du Bois by collecting evidence from their reading to provide support for their conclusions and connections.

## GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

### The Artwork of William H. Johnson and the Black Experience in the U.S.

The cover of the Signet Classic edition of *The Souls of Black Folk* features the work of African American artist, William H. Johnson (1901-1970), who was born in Florence, SC. Between 1919-1926 he worked in New York City during the Harlem Renaissance. Unrecognized for his talent as an artist during his life, his works were discovered after his death and displayed by the Smithsonian and regional museums in the South. A concise biography of Johnson can be found at: <https://www.usca.edu/aasc/johnson.htm>

Ask students to explore Johnson's work using the Smithsonian virtual gallery: <http://americanart.si.edu/education/johnson/> Direct students to the on-line gallery focused on "Scenes of City Life and Country Life" <http://americanart.si.edu/education/johnson/story.html>. These scenes are narrative in scope, "each suggesting an event or a story." Students can examine the paintings to describe the emotions/stories conveyed using the art viewing and response sheet at [http://www.nwmissouri.edu/dept/frosh/pdf/Activities/Art\\_Gallery\\_Viewing\\_.doc](http://www.nwmissouri.edu/dept/frosh/pdf/Activities/Art_Gallery_Viewing_.doc) Or students can create a digital scrapbook of their favorite Johnson paintings, including their own commentary and response to the paintings.

### W.E.B. Du Bois and Other African American Leaders and Intellectuals of His Time

Three black leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are often compared, W.E.B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, and Marcus Garvey. The biographies of all three provide insight about race relations in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. Their unique experiences and responses to racism challenge our notions of a homogeneous black experience in America, while also forcing us to confront compelling evidence about institutionalized racism and white supremacy in the United States. The responses of these thinkers to the challenges of their times continue to provide insight into contemporary issues.

Direct students in partners or individually to study the following resources in order to fill out the information chart. Students can report their findings to the whole group and as a class identify areas of agreement and disagreement in the thinking of these African American leaders.

- W.E.B. Du Bois: <http://www.biography.com/people/web-du-bois-9279924#awesm=~oEOrfdx218dZeO>
- Booker T. Washington <http://www.biography.com/people/booker-t-washington-9524663#awesm=~oEOrFYICUavrDI>
- Marcus Garvey <http://www.biography.com/people/marcus-garvey-9307319#awesm=~oEOp4iOYHoSPPI>

Discuss with students: Are there modern equivalents to the ideas of each of these leaders in the contemporary fight for civil rights?

	<b>W.E.B. du Bois (1868-1963)</b>	<b>Booker T. Washington (1856-1915)</b>	<b>Marcus Garvey (1887-1940)</b>
<b>Biographical and educational background</b>			
<b>Major accomplishments</b>			
<b>Approach to [philosophy of] race relations in America</b>			
<b>Important quotes</b>			

## W.E.B. Du Bois and 20th Century Civil Rights Leaders

While it is difficult to precisely pinpoint the impact of W.E.B. Du Bois's work and writings on contemporary civil rights leaders, it is important to understand that he was a prominent intellectual in what has often been described as the "long civil rights" movement. Ask students to examine several resources and key quotes from Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Nelson Mandela to search for common themes in the philosophies of these leaders. Ask students to consider: What do these leaders have in common? In what ways are their messages for racial equality, peace, and freedom similar or different? Is there any evidence of Du Bois's ideas in their philosophies? How are their leadership styles similar or different from that of Du Bois?

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

<http://www.thekingcenter.org/king-philosophy>

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-power-of-non-violence/>

- Malcolm X

<http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/231/the-x-factor-how-malcolm-x-internationalized-the-civil-rights-movement>

<http://www.pbs.org/godinamerica/people/malcolm-x.html>

- Nelson Mandela

<http://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/biography>

<http://www.nelsonmandelamuseum.org.za/history/the-legacy>

## Quotes

***Martin Luther King, Jr.***

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

### **Malcolm X**

"We need more light about each other. Light creates understanding, understanding creates love, love creates patience, and patience creates unity."

"I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who it is for or against. I'm a human being, first and foremost, and as such I'm for whoever and whatever benefits humanity as a whole."

### **Nelson Mandela**

"People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than the opposite."

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning."

## **Structured Academic Controversy (SAC): The Talented Tenth vs. the Atlanta Compromise**

Introduce students to this activity by displaying the following quotation from Du Bois's "Talented Tenth" (1903) on the board or projector: "The Talented Tenth of the Negro race must be made leaders of thought and missionaries of culture among their people. No others can do this work and Negro colleges must train men for it. The Negro race, like all other races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men." Ask students to discuss what Du Bois means in this statement.

Then divide students into groups of four to research two alternative views about education for African Americans at the turn of the twentieth century. Within the groups assign pairs to read either Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" or Du Bois's "Talented Tenth" (see: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-talented-tenth/>). Ask students to jot down major points/notes to outline the position of the author they read.

Begin the SAC by asking pairs to present the opinions of Washington and Du Bois (2-5 minutes). The other pair should jot down notes throughout the presentations and ask clarifying questions. After both sides have presented, pairs should change advocacy roles and defend the views of the opposite leader, using their reading and information from the presentation. Finally, students drop their advocacy roles and draft a consensus statement with an appropriate historical argument about the best approach to African American education after the Civil War.

Note: For more information about structured academic controversy see the multiple resources online, including: [http://curry.virginia.edu/uploads/resourceLibrary/nagc\\_struct\\_acad\\_cont.pdf](http://curry.virginia.edu/uploads/resourceLibrary/nagc_struct_acad_cont.pdf)

## **W.E.B. Du Bois and President Barack Obama**

President Barack Obama has been favorably compared to Du Bois for the similarities in their personal biographies (both had absent fathers), their educational backgrounds (both attended Harvard), and their experiences as black leaders. Ask students to read the "Afterword" to *The Souls of Black Folk*, along with the work of other historians comparing the two men and write a response paper to the prompt: What is similar and distinct about the lives and philosophies of W.E.B. Du Bois and Barack Obama? Provide evidence to support your response.

Resources:

- Blum, Edward J. "What Barack Obama (and the Democratic Party) Can Learn About Religion from W.E.B. Du Bois" at: <http://hnn.us/article/40530>.

- Lee, Carol D. (2008). "From Du Bois to Obama: The Education of Peoples of African Descent in the United States in the 21st Century." *The Journal of Negro Education*, 78(4), 367-384.

## **The Crisis**

In 1910, Du Bois created *The Crisis*, the magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP), documenting the struggle for civil rights and highlighting the traditions and culture of African Americans. Ask students to examine the archives of *The Crisis* from its inception in 1910 through the first decade, 1920 at [http://www.modjournal.org/render.php?view=mjp\\_object&id=crisiscollection](http://www.modjournal.org/render.php?view=mjp_object&id=crisiscollection)

Students may examine all the issues in each volume or may choose one from each. Students should take note of the topics and issues presented in the various volumes and consider the following questions:

- What topics/issues were covered throughout the first decade of *The Crisis*?
- What stance/viewpoints did the authors/editors take on these issues?
- In what ways were the arts, culture, and traditions of African Americans portrayed in *The Crisis*?
- After reviewing the various issues, why would Du Bois and the NAACP refer to this magazine as *The Crisis*? Provide evidence to support your answer.

## **Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Durham, NC**

During the early 1900's Durham's Hayti district was home to several black-owned businesses, restaurants, funeral homes, grocery stores, movie theaters, printing companies and prominent social institutions. The establishment of these social institutions reflected the desire and need for African Americans in Durham to unite and combat against the racial injustices of Jim Crow. Both Washington and Du Bois found the success of blacks in Durham uplifting for the future goals and aspirations of blacks living in the South. After their visits to Durham both Washington and Du Bois spoke and wrote about their experiences and observations of the city.

Ask students to read the commentaries of Washington and Du Bois and using a Venn Diagram document the similarities and differences in their assessment of black Durham. Students may consider the following questions when reading the articles:

- How did Du Bois and Washington describe the city of Durham?
- According to both, what contributed to the success of blacks in Durham?
- How were local whites characterized?
- In what ways did Du Bois and Washington agree in their analysis of Durham? Differ?
- How did the philosophical beliefs and ideologies of each man impact their examination and analysis of Durham?

## **SUGGESTED RESOURCES:**

- Du Bois, W.E. B. (1912). "The Upbuilding of Black Durham. The Success of the Negroes and Their Value to a Tolerant and Helpful Southern City." *World's Work*. Vol. 23, pp. 334-338. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/dubois/dubois.html>
- Washington, B. T. (1911). "Durham, North Carolina, A City of Negro Enterprises." *The Independent*. Vol. 70, pp. 642-650. Durham: A City of Negro Enterprises

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