What does the founding and early history of Asbury Park reveal about practices of segregation in the Northern United States?

In this lesson you will:

- The definition of “de facto” segregation
- The importance of Asbury Park to the history of American Popular music
- The history of segregation in Asbury Park
- The role music can play in bringing people together
Segregation: The separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group.

De Jure Segregation: The enforcement of segregation by governmentally-enacted laws.

De Facto Segregation: Practices of segregation that are not enacted or enforced by the law.
In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech addressing segregation at Monmouth University in West Long Branch, New Jersey.

Read EXCERPT 1 of Handout - Excerpts of Dr. Martin Luther King’s Speech at Monmouth University
Consider or ask a friend:

• What might Dr. King mean when he says Black people in the United States continue to be lynched “psychologically and spiritually”?

• What are the major areas of segregation Dr. King is addressing in this excerpt? How might these fall under the idea of “de facto” segregation?

• What, according to Dr. King, is the result of these aspects of segregation? What “conditions emerge” as a result of these forms of segregation?
A few miles from where Dr. King delivered his speech at Monmouth University lies Asbury Park, a small city that has its own history of segregation.

Watch Clip 1 - The Founding of Asbury Park
Then consider or ask a friend:

• Who founded Asbury Park? When was it founded?

• What was Bradley’s original vision for Asbury Park? Why did that vision change?

• According to the video, why was Asbury Park “A Tale of Two Cities”?

• Who generally inhabited the east side of the city? Who inhabited the West Side? In what ways might the two sides come into conflict?
In the late 1800s, there was a debate in Asbury Park over whether the Black community in the city should be able to access the beaches.

Skim through some of the newspaper articles and op-eds in Handout - Debate over Beach Segregation in Asbury Park, 1887.

Then consider or ask a friend:

• Who was the primary figure representing Asbury Park in the fight over beach access? Who represented the Black community?

• What principle arguments did the Black community make in asserting their right to visit Asbury Park beaches?

• What arguments did officials of Asbury Park make for forbidding the Black community access to Asbury Park beaches?
As a result of these debates, the city of Asbury Park created beaches reserved for tourists, and those reserved for residents – segregating the beaches of the city along racial lines.

Consider or ask a friend:

• How was the segregation of the beaches in Asbury Park an example of “de facto” segregation and not “de jure” segregation?
As a resort town, Asbury Park drew a lot of musicians and entertainers, both to the east and west sides of the city.

Watch **Clip 2, Music in Asbury Park**.

Consider or ask a friend:

- In what ways, according to the clip, did music help integrate the east and west side of Asbury Park?

- How might have racially integrated gatherings of musicians and audiences helped to highlight segregation in Asbury Park?

- What limits do integrated venues have towards confronting segregation? Consider, for example, the price of tickets to get to see one of these concerts: could people on the West Side afford them?
One of the musicians to come out of Asbury Park is musician, actor, and activist Steven Van Zandt.

Watch *Clip 3, Steven Van Zandt on Music.*

Consider or ask a friend:

- What might Van Zandt mean when he says music is the “universal language”? What example does he give supporting this idea?

- Van Zandt mentions that music has the ability to communicate outside “government” and “formality.” How might this make music a powerful means of spreading a message?

- How might music act as a “common ground” for a diversity of audiences?
Read EXCERPT 2 of Handout - Excerpts of Dr. Martin Luther King’s Speech at Monmouth University.

Consider or ask a friend:

• What “myth” does Dr. King introduce in this excerpt? Why does he describe it as a “myth”?

• To Dr. King, what is the purpose of legislation? What is it capable of doing, and what is it incapable of doing?

• How does Dr. King differentiate between legislation and morality?

• Consider Van Zandt’s comments on music. Where might music fit into Dr. King’s thinking in terms of change and legislation?
SUMMARY

• “De jure” segregation is segregation enforced by governmental law
• “De facto” segregation is segregation that occurs without specific governmental law
• While the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s made significant progress in eliminating “De jure” segregation, “de facto” segregation remains an issue even today
• Asbury Park is a case study of how segregation occurs in the Northern United States, even if there are no laws officially mandating segregation
• Music provides an opportunity of integration, and a criticism of segregation
BE CREATIVE

Reread excerpt 1 from the Handout - Excerpts of Dr. Martin Luther King’s Speech at Monmouth University. Choose one of the issues Dr. King mentions in this part of the speech, and write an exploratory essay on the ways music might be a way to positively address it.
Asbury Park has been referred to as “the Jim Crow of the North.” Research what “Jim Crow” refers to, and write a short response on why Asbury Park might have been given such a description.
CONNECT

Share it with us! Either you or an adult in your life can share your work with TeachRock on Instagram or Facebook, email to info@teachrock.org, or Tweet it to @TeachRock
Visit us at teachrock.org for hundreds of other free arts-rich resources for every age range and classroom.

Please check back to teachrock.org/distancelearning frequently as we will update the material weekly!