

Jim Crow Laws

History's Mysteries—Solve the Crime of the Time



About the authors

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WELCOME TO JIM CROW LAWS!

In this hands-on investigative activity, students are given an authentic task: to think like criminalists and review mock forensic files of a historical event. Students gather, analyze, and interpret evidence, engaging in tasks such as examining physical objects (e.g., a model of a guillotine, bullets, a blood-spattered uniform), poring over photographs, analyzing documents, and reading maps and charts. A PowerPoint® presentation includes an introduction to the task, a coroner's report, and several types of sources from the "crime scene." Students then fill out a "forensic report" graphic organizer, hypothesize how the event took place, and conclude by reading a "Mystery Solved" handout that provides historical background on the "crime." Optional extension activities include having students create a "breaking news" TV report, write a front-page newspaper article, or compose a "news alert" text message. Grades 6–12.



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Purpose and Overview

Activity Introduction

Welcome to *History's Mysteries: Solve the Crime of the Time*. Included are investigative case files that cover some of the main areas of world history standards-based curriculum. The central purpose of these files is to spark interest and excitement in students for further study of a given unit.

A History Mystery is rooted in having students act like a criminalist whose job is to gather, analyze, and interpret forensic evidence. Real-life criminalists are skilled in studying everyday items, examining bullets, and analyzing documents. Likewise, in a history class a teacher's job is to help students develop critical thinking skills also based in gathering, analyzing and interpreting data.

In this hands-on investigative activity, students are given an authentic task—to think like criminalists and review mock forensic files of a historical event. Each file contains primary and secondary source replica/realia that students analyze in order to hypothesize how a given event took place.

This activity works best as an introduction to a world history unit, but it may also be used as a way to review before a DBQ based assessment at the end of a unit. Students are motivated to solve each Mystery both with accuracy and speed as the first student/team to do so correctly wins a "Criminalist of the Year" nameplate for classroom display.

How does a History Mystery work?

Students are given the task of reviewing a historical event case file and filling out a Forensic Report. Once this initial step is completed, students then read a ***Mystery Solved: Press Release*** that reveals all the accurate details of the real life History Mystery.

Each *History's Mysteries Case File* review and ***Forensic Report*** are completed in a single (60 minute) class session. The follow up ***Mystery Solved: Press Release*** reading and follow up activities (***Front Page News, Breaking News Report, or Text Message News Alert***) can take another half to full one hour class period.

Each unit comes with reproducible student analysis sheets, teacher directions, student directions, CD-ROM that allows students to view the files on a computer (or the entire class with an LCD projector).



Teaching tip

For more scaffolding and challenge to the activity, you can also add a step where students work on a ***Front Page News Article, Breaking News Report, or a Text Message News Alert*** in which students further synthesize what they believed took place in either an essay, short skit, or short summary form (for better language mastery, beginner or advanced writing skills, ELL and/or AP Students).

Daily Directions

Two Day Activity

Materials

- Computers, LCD projector.
- Reproducible copies of:
 - the **Forensic Report**
 - the **Criminalist of the Year Plaque**
 - the **Criminalist of the Year Name Plates**
 - the **Mystery Solved: Press Release**

Direction Notes

A day before you begin the activity, we must prepare for it by doing the following:

- Determine which method for displaying the case files works best for you (set of computers LCD projector printed out slides, etc.)
- Pull out the reproducible copies of the **Forensic Report** and **Student Directions** to make enough copies of them for class.
- Pull out the reproducible copies of the **Criminalist of the Year Plaque** and the **Criminalist of the Year Name Plates**.
- Pull out a reproducible copy of the **Mystery Solved: Press Release**, for the given case file, and make enough copies of them for class.

Teaching tip

Make one copy of the **Criminalist of the Year Plaque** and the **Criminalist of the Year Name Plates** each for every class that you have.



Daily Directions

Activity Day 1

Materials

- Copies of the **Forensic Report**
- **Case File**

Direction Notes

1. Pass out **Forensic Report** sheets to students.
2. Then depending on which method of case file viewing you are choosing, following the directions below.

LCD projector—Walk students through the directions and the case file by flipping through the slides.

Individual computer use—Walk students through how to flip through each page of the file as a class and then walk along the room to make sure students are on task and filling out the Forensic Report correctly.



Whole class



Individual

Forensic Report

Submitted by (Student/Teacher's Name): _____ Period: _____ Place: _____

FORENSIC REPORT

Directions: You are a **Forensic Analyst** responsible for gathering, analyzing, and documenting **Forensic Evidence** in order to solve the following mystery presented to you. At the top of the form, in each of the three areas: **Crime Scene, Police Report, and Detective's Research**, take notes and fill in each of the three boxes. Remember: the objective of forensic practice is to solve crimes. (Working evidence from previous evidence presented in a report's document is a given case.)

STAGE 1: REVIEW CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHS

Forensic Categories	Describe what you see in the Crime Scene photographs.
Objects: List out all of the objects you see in the photos.	
People: Describe what the people look like in the photos.	
Sensory Details: Describe the area in the photos. What is the setting, in the street, etc. How do you feel the scene?	

STAGE 2: REVIEW POLICE REPORT

Accident Report: Describe what happened.	
Accident Report: Describe who was involved.	
Accident Report: What type of accident was it?	

Report Review

<input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Crime Scene Photographs <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Police Report <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Detective's Research <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Forensic Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Correct Analysis &... <input type="checkbox"/> Close to Correct Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> 1 or 2 sections incorrect
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Whole class

Daily Directions

Activity Day 2

Materials

- Copies of ***Mystery Solved: Press Release***

Direction Notes

1. Ask the class if anyone would like to share their theory of what happened and why or what the motive behind the actions were.
2. After a couple of students have shared out ideas, explain that the real life historical event will be explained today as you start a new unit of study.
3. Pass out the ***Mystery Solved: Press Release*** and read it aloud in class. Begin class discussion.

Day 2 (3) Activity—Alternative

Materials

- Copies of:
 - ***Breaking News Report***or
 - ***Front Page News***or
 - ***Text Message News Alert***

Follow the “Activity Day 2” directions above and then...

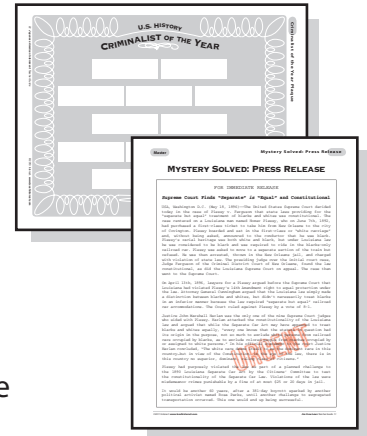
4. Pass out *Breaking News Report*/*Front Page News*/*Text Message News Alert*.
5. Read the directions from the top of the *given* sheet assignment aloud and have students begin the assignment.



Read or say

How does this activity end?

- Once you have completed review the entire file and have filled out all of the sections of the **Forensics Report**, look over your answers before you turn it in to your teacher.
- The first student (or team) who is the most accurate with their analysis for this History's Mystery will become the **"Criminalist of the Month"** and receive a name plate on the class plaque.
- Finally, once the entire class has turned in their reports, you will read a **Mystery Solved: Press Release** that will tell you the background behind the case you just finished reviewing.



Keep in mind that as you review the items in the file, you are acting as if you are a **Criminalist** responsible for *gathering, analyzing, and interpreting* forensic evidence. These actions are key to helping you solve the historical mystery presented in class.

GOOD LUCK!

MYSTERY SOLVED: PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Supreme Court Finds "Separate" is "Equal" and Constitutional

USA, Washington D.C. (May 18, 1896)—The United States Supreme Court decided today in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* that state laws providing for the "separate but equal" treatment of blacks and whites was constitutional. The case centered on a Louisiana man named Homer Plessy, who on June 7th, 1892, had purchased a first-class ticket to take him from New Orleans to the city of Covington. Plessy boarded and sat in the first-class or "white carriage" and, without being asked, announced to the conductor that he was black. Plessy's racial heritage was both white and black, but under Louisiana law he was considered to be black and was required to ride in the blacks-only railroad car. Plessy was asked to move to a separate section of the train but refused. He was then arrested, thrown in the New Orleans jail, and charged with violation of state law. The presiding judge over the initial court case, Judge Ferguson of the Criminal District Court of New Orleans, found the law constitutional, as did the Louisiana Supreme Court on appeal. The case then went to the Supreme Court.

On April 13th, 1896, lawyers for a Plessy argued before the Supreme Court that Louisiana had violated Plessy's 14th Amendment right to equal protection under the law. Attorney General Cunningham argued that the Louisiana law simply made a distinction between blacks and whites, but didn't necessarily treat blacks in an inferior manner because the law required "separate but equal" railroad car accommodations. The Court ruled against Plessy by a vote of 8-1.

Justice John Marshall Harlan was the only one of the nine Supreme Court judges who sided with Plessy. Harlan attacked the constitutionality of the Louisiana law and argued that while the Separate Car Act may have appeared to treat blacks and whites equally, "every one knows that the statute in question had its origin in the purpose, not so much to exclude white persons from railroad cars occupied by blacks, as to exclude colored people from coaches occupied by or assigned to white persons." In his official statement to the court Justice Harlan concluded, "The white race deems itself to be the dominant race in this country...but in view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens."

Plessy had purposely violated the law as part of a planned challenge to the 1890 Louisiana Separate Car Act by the Citizens' Committee to test the constitutionality of the Separate Car Law. Violations of the law were misdemeanor crimes punishable by a fine of at most \$25 or 20 days in jail.

It would be another 60 years, after a 381-day boycott sparked by another political activist named Rosa Parks, until another challenge to segregated transportation occurred. This one would end up being successful.

Submitted By (Criminalist's Name): _____ Period: ____ Final Score: ____/____

FORENSIC REPORT

Directions: You are a **Criminalist** responsible for *gathering, analyzing, and interpreting forensic evidence* in order to solve the historical mystery presented in class. As you view the items in each of the three areas (**Crime Scene, Police Report, and Detective's Research**) take notes and fill in each of the areas below.

Forensics—"The application of scientific practices within the legal process." Locating evidence that provides conclusive proof of a suspect's involvement in a given crime.



STAGE 1: REVIEW CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHS

Forensic Categories	Describe what you see in the Crime Scene photographs.
Objects: List out all of the objects you see in the photos.	
People: Describe what the people look like in the photos.	
Location Details: Describe the area in the photos, inside/outside/in a building, in the street, etc. <i>*Notes any date and/or time details.</i>	



STAGE 2: REVIEW POLICE REPORT

Incident Notes: Describe what happened.	
Incident Notes: Describe who was involved.	
Incident Notes: What type of incident was it?	



STAGE 3: REVIEW DETECTIVE'S RESEARCH

Your Notes—Write down any and all information that you feel may be relevant or useful later to fill out Stage 4 of your report.



STAGE 4: FORENSIC ANALYSIS

What crime took place?	
Who is responsible for the crime? (<i>Perpetrators.</i>)	
Who were the <i>victims or targets</i> of the action?	
Where did the crime take place?	
When did the crime happen? (<i>Time/exact date when available.</i>)	
How was the crime committed? (<i>How was the crime carried out?</i>)	
Why —What were the <i>motives or reason(s)</i> why this crime was committed?	

REPORT REVIEW

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Crime Scene Photographs | <input type="checkbox"/> Correct Analysis #_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Coroner/ME Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to Correct Analysis— |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Detective's Research | <i>1 or 2 sections incorrect</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Forensic Analysis | |

Texting Person's Name: _____ Period: ____ Final Score: ____/____

TEXT MESSAGE NEWS ALERT

(Summary)

Directions: In this activity you are acting as if you have been given the task of sharing what you just learned in class with all of your closest friends and family members via a text message. Use the basic information from the **Mystery Solved: Press Release** and your **Forensic Report** to fill out the information below.

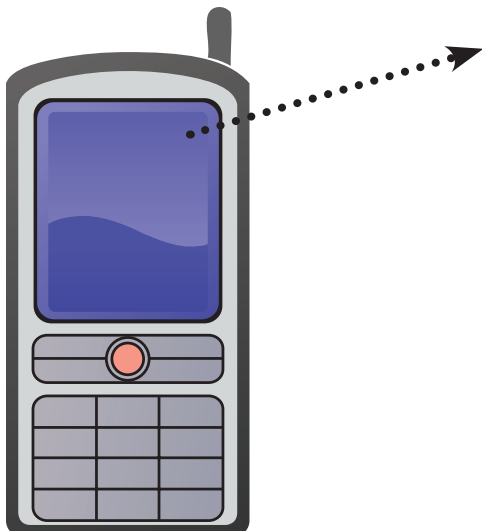
Step I. What information do you think is most important to share? (List 3 main ideas below)

1.

2.

3.

Step II. Now using 17 words or less, write in the screen on the right what your news alert text message would be about the event you just learned about in class.



(Essay)

Directions: You are now a newspaper journalist who has been given the front page article writing assignment. Take the basic information from the **Mystery Solved: Press Release** and write a news article about the event. Be sure to come up with a creative headline to catch the readers attention and to draw or cut and paste an image to accompany the article.

(Headline)

Patient Information	
First Name	
Last Name	
Address	
City	
State	
Zip	
Phone	
Insurance	
Physician Information	
Physician Name	
Physician Address	
Physician City	
Physician State	
Physician Zip	
Physician Phone	
Physician Insurance	
Referral Information	
Referral Number	
Referral Date	
Referral Type	
Referral Source	
Referral Reason	
Referral Status	
Referral Notes	
Referral History	
Referral Date	
Referral Type	
Referral Source	
Referral Reason	
Referral Status	
Referral Notes	
Referral Summary	
Referral Date	
Referral Type	
Referral Source	
Referral Reason	
Referral Status	
Referral Notes	

[illegible]

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Newspaper Editor Notes On Article Presented:

Reporting Group Members (Each Person's Name): _____

Period: _____

BREAKING NEWS REPORT

(Short Skit)

Directions: In this activity you are acting as if you are a television news station reporting on the information and crime you recently reviewed. Use the basic information from the **Mystery Solved: Press Release** and your Forensic Report to fill out the information below. Once you are finished filling this out please have your teacher review this sheet before you begin rehearsing your news report skit.

1. Television station you are reporting for: Channel _____

2. "On Location" reporter: _____

(This is one person reporting back to the news studio.)

3. "In Studio" anchor reporters: _____ & _____

(These are two individuals who will introduce the skit and introduce us to the "On Location" reporter for the report.)

4. Where is the "On Location" news report taking place?

"We are here live at: ☐ the courthouse ☐ the local police station ☐ the local History Museum ☐ the local school ☐ coroner's office ☐ other: _____ ,
where it was recently discover that _____

We found some people who would talk to us about this event and this is what they had to say.

5. You must speak with at least two different people during your report.

Interview #1: (Name) _____ (Occupation) _____

- What information will they share?

Interview #1: (Name) _____ (Occupation) _____

- What information will they share?

Submitted By (Criminalist's Name): _____ Period: ____ Final Score: ____/____

CRIMINALIST THEORY

(Graphic Organizer)

Directions: You are a **Criminalist** responsible for creating a written summary of what you believe took place during the presented crime. Using your **Forensic Report**, write a short descriptive story of what you think happened noting what **Area** helps to prove your ideas.

Plot the crime, what do you think happened? Draw the sequence of events below:

```
graph LR; R1_1[ ] --> R1_2[ ]; R1_2 --> R1_3[ ]; R1_3 --> R2_1[ ]; R2_1 --> R2_2[ ]; R2_2 --> R2_3[ ]; R2_3 --> R3_1[ ]; R3_1 --> R3_2[ ]; R3_2 --> R3_3[ ]; R3_3 --> Bottom[ ]
```


[illegible]

CRIMINALIST OF THE YEAR

CRIMINALIST OF THE YEAR NAME PLATES

Directions: Type in or write in the names and dates of your top student criminalists who will be honored on the plaque.

NAME:**MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:****NAME:****MONTH:**

TEACHER FEEDBACK FORM

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Please use the release form on the following page.

Your name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Interact unit: _____

Comments: _____

RELEASE FORM FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES

To Teachers:

To help illustrate to others the experiential activities involved and to promote the use of simulations, we like to get photographs and videos of classes participating in the simulation. Please send photos of students actively engaged so we can publish them in our promotional material. Be aware that we can only use images of students for whom a release form has been submitted.

To Parents:

I give permission for photographs or videos of my child to appear in catalogs of educational materials published by Interact.

Name of student: _____ (print)

Age of student: _____ (print)

Parent or guardian: _____ (print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

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