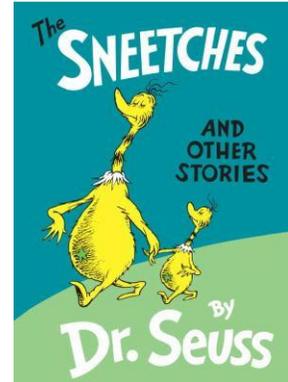


Leola Clement Robinson-Simpson

Greenville Civil Rights Leader

For this lesson, we are going to start with a story time from Dr. Seuss. Read along by clicking "The Sneetches" book image to the right.



DISCUSSION TIME:

What do you think the Sneetches learned from Sylvester McMonkey McBean? They learned that Sneetches were Sneetches no matter what was on the outside of their bodies. Sometimes people treat other people poorly because of what they have or do not have on the outside of their body. People can forget that people are people and the same on the inside. We are all beings.

America had a very sad period of time when people were treated badly just because of their skin, ethnicity or gender. During this time, laws did not allow everyone to live anywhere they wished, eat anywhere they wanted, or worship where they pleased. Even community swimming pools were closed to some. Some of those laws were called "Jim Crow" laws. What do you think, was this fair?

Across the country, and particularly in the South, we had "Jim Crow" laws that restricted where and what people were allowed to do. The main group of people that were affected by these laws were people of color. "Jim Crow" laws were unfair and led some people to believe that they were better just because of their outward appearance. If you'd like, dig a little deeper with online research to figure out where the name of "Jim Crow" came from and how it was connected with segregation laws. To segregate means to separate the races. While researching, you will also learn about the Black Codes.

What would you do if you were not allowed to do something you really wanted to do just because you were born with blue eyes? Would that be ok? Would you stand up for yourself and others with blue eyes?

Thankfully you do not have to worry about being discriminated against if you have blue eyes. But what about the people born during "Jim Crow" that were treated unfairly? Some decided that it was time to speak out and stand up for what was right. In Greenville, a group of young people, all teenagers and high school students, took the challenge and fought for justice. They were often referred to as "The Greenville Eight." Click on the image below to read an article about one of their Greenville protests.

The way they “fought,” or protested, was by being respectful citizens and attempting to do normal things, even if the “Jim Crow” laws forbid it. They saw these laws as unjust, so they protested. They held lunch counter sit-ins, sitting and hoping to be served at whites only lunch counters. They went to local libraries where African Americans were allowed, and simply took a book off the shelf and read in the library. They tried to go to the Greenville First Baptist Church to worship, but were turned away every Sunday. The problem was not with the young people, but with the laws that did not allow this because of their skin color.

Negro Students Wait To Be Booked After Sit-In



Let's talk about one particular activist of the “Greenville Eight,” Miss Leola Clement Robinson. She was born September 28, 1944, in Belton, South Carolina. One day she and some friends decided to “fight” against these unfair “Jim Crow” laws by going to church. Does that sound like something one should have to “fight” against? Let's hear from Leola Clement Robinson-Simpson (her married name) as she explains in her own words how she confronted prejudice.



Today with the efforts of Leola Clement Robinson-Simpson and other activists, young and older, black and white, the “Jim Crow” laws have been removed from our land. People, regardless of their skin color, can live, shop and worship where they please. Mrs. Robinson-Simpson is an author and since 2013 has been a politician. She is a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives from the 25th District. She would not have been afforded those opportunities without her “fight” to right the wrongs of our government. One additional thing to keep in mind in regards to the Civil Rights Movement, this was a “fight” for equality, to ensure everyone had the same rights and freedoms, but most importantly, to ensure that every American citizen had the right to vote and was able to freely exercise that right. The movement wanted to ensure every citizen had a political voice.

ACTIVITY:

Go back in time and research South Carolina's Senators, Representatives and even local council members during the early 1960s. Write a letter to them, arguing why you believe these "Jim Crow" laws to not only be unfair, but harmful to our society. Try to persuade them to grant equality for all.

For Parents: <https://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/BookModule/TheSneetches>

If you would like to learn more about Leola Clement Robinson-Simpson, purchase her book below. You will see the Greenville Civil Rights movement through her own personal experiences.

