

Lesson Six: Civil Rights in a Post-War World

Objectives:

Students will continue to explore the changes and challenges faced by Mississippians during the post-war years, including the dichotomy of civil rights that were fought for during World War II but unattainable to many in the United States. Research skills are practiced as students gain an introduction to Mississippi veterans who go on to become leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

Materials: *Civil Rights at Home and Abroad*; *No War Work Left: Cause and Effect*; Lesson Six Quiz.

Procedures:

Activity One: Civil Rights at Home and Abroad

1. Distribute *Civil Rights at Home and Abroad* or project/draw a venn-diagram on the board.
2. Individually, in small groups, or as a class, have students brainstorm about civil rights violations that occurred during the World War II period both within the United States and the world.
3. Conduct a class discussion on the violations and the ethics of sending Americans to fight for civil rights abroad when many did not have civil rights within their own country.

Activity Two: The Consequences of a Post-War Economy

1. Distribute *No War Work Left: Cause and Effect* to students.
2. Using their social studies textbook or any other appropriate resources, have students complete the worksheet for a better understand of the changes that took place to the economy after the war years.

Activity Three: Mississippi Civil Rights Leaders Emerge

1. Many of the early leaders of the Civil Rights Movement were World War II veterans. Break the class into groups of two to four students each and assign each group one of the below civil rights activists:
 - Medgar Evers
 - Clyde Kennard
 - William Winter
 - Aaron Henry
 - Amzie Moore
2. Students should conduct research to locate background information on their activist as well as discover how his World War II experience influenced his later involvement in the Civil Rights Movement.
3. Have students present their findings to the class. If time allows, have students create a multi-media presentation with images, film, or audio clips.

Extension Activities:

Executive Order 9066: Visit *A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and the U.S. Constitution*, an online Smithsonian exhibit at <http://amhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/index.html> to explore the reasons why the U.S. government imprisoned 120,000 American citizens and the conditions they faced during their imprisonment in camps across the country.

Executive Order 9981: Visit the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum online at http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/desegregation/large/index.php?action=chronology View a timeline of events associated with Truman's decision to desegregate the United States military troops, as well as documents, photographs, and oral histories from the time period.



No wonder Johnnie is puzzled, for Johnnie has lived in this world only during the past eleven years—years exclusively devoted by one Adolph Hitler to exporting hate from Nazi Germany, in a mad effort to enslave the world.

Hitler's days are ended by the might of the Allied Armies. But the poison of bigotry that he has fed through traitorous channels into the minds of men in all lands—including our own—may linger on to inflame another generation.

We have won the war. But we may lose the peace, unless we can resolve Johnnie's problem. For the fruit of Hitler's carefully calculated efforts to set neighbor against neighbor, creed against creed, in his vain effort to conquer the world, is beyond the range of bullets. It is the sickness of intolerance among the weak, the ignorant and the uninformed, that furnish a rank food for the growth on another unprinciples demagogue. That illness must be rooted out now—on the Home Front.

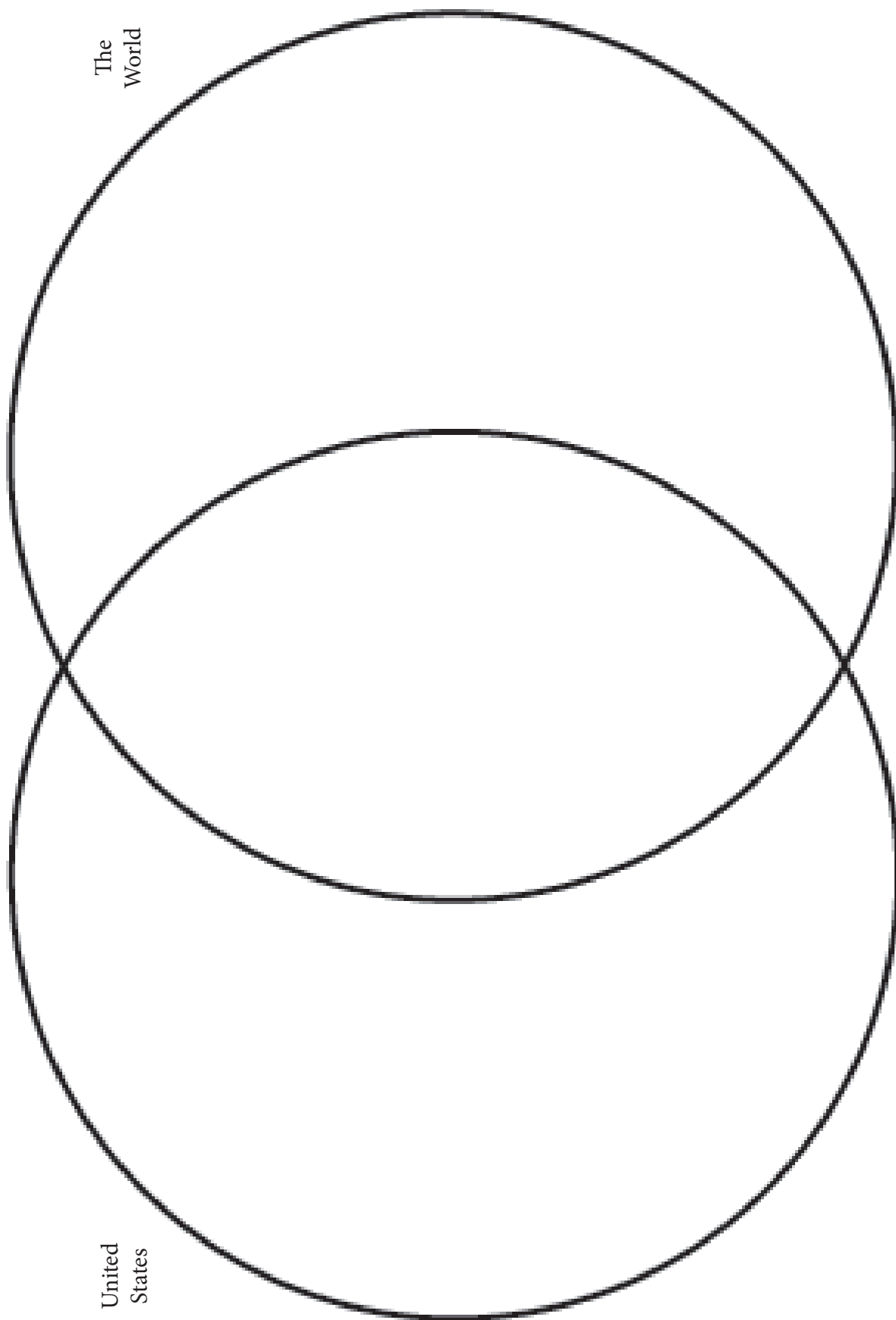
Tolerance, Johnnie, is the simple essence of Democracy which enables men to rise above their latent prejudices and substitute the worth of an individual instead of his religious beliefs or racial origins, as a standard of merit. It is the quality you may understand best as "fair play."

Should your right to play on the team be determined by the church to which your dad and mother send you? Would you deny Mickey O'Connor or Abie Cohen the same privilege because Mickey's grandfather was born in Ireland, and Abie Cohen goes to a synagogue?

Men like Hitler would say all three of you are inferior because your blood isn't like theirs. But, our older Mickeys and Abies and Johnnies, fought the Nazis overseas, know better. They've tested it in battle. They know that the blood flowing in their veins is just Human Blood given to them by the same God whose son proclaimed that all men are brothers.

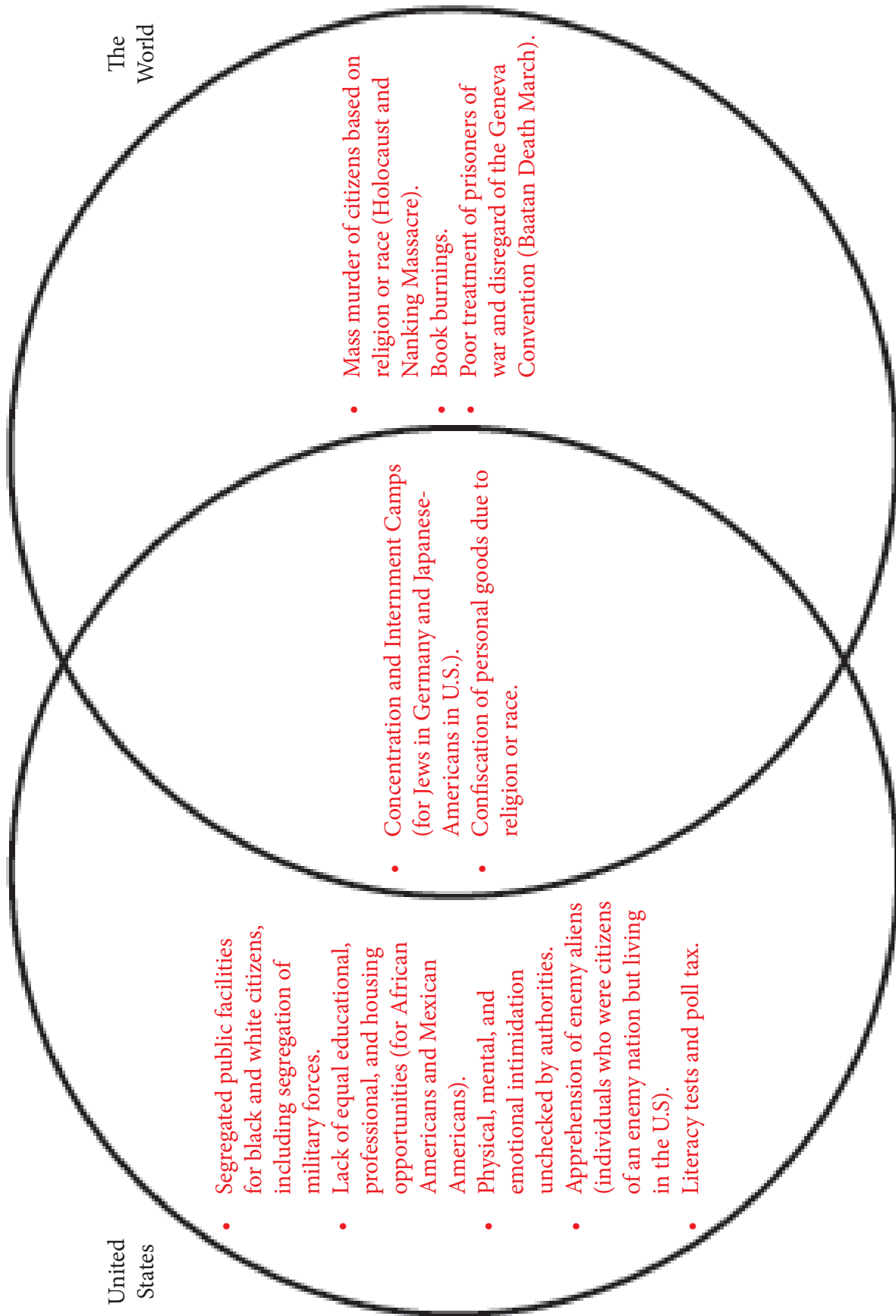
Civil Rights at Home and Abroad

Use your social studies text book or any other resource approved by your teacher to fill in the venn-diagram with civil rights violations that occurred during the World War II period within the United States and the world.



Civil Rights at Home and Abroad *Answer Key*

Use your social studies text book or any other resource approved by your teacher to fill in the venn-diagram with civil rights violations that occurred during the World War II period within the United States and the world.



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

No War Work Left: Cause and Effect

Match the appropriate effect on the right with its correct cause.

Cause

1. Because the war was over, _____
2. Because many Mississippians had re-located to other cities for war work or military obligations, _____
3. Because African Americans had had some opportunities to perform skilled jobs in industry and the military, _____
4. Because of new technology such as the mechanical cotton picker, _____
5. Because many women joined the work force during World War II and continued to work after the war, _____
6. Because the U.S. government had anticipated a dramatic change in the work force after the war and they wanted to reduce unemployment to the best of their ability, _____
7. Because African Americans and other minorities had fought to protect the civil rights of others overseas, _____
8. Because people became more better, _____

Effect

- A. they created the GI Bill to encourage veterans to go to college.
- B. they did not want to return to menial labor with low-paying wages.
- C. their daughters considered it normal for their mothers to work outside the home and to work outside the home themselves.
- D. many women and African Americans were suddenly pushed out of the workforce.
- E. more people became white-collar professionals in the middle class.
- F. fewer jobs were available in agricultural industries.
- G. many never returned to their home state.
- H. they began a concentrated effort to obtain equality for themselves at home.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

No War Work Left: Cause and Effect ***Answer Key***

Match the appropriate effect on the right with its correct cause.

Cause

1. Because the war was over, D
2. Because many Mississippians had re-located to other cities for war work or military obligations, G
3. Because African Americans had had some opportunities to perform skilled jobs in industry and the military, B
4. Because of new technology such as the mechanical cotton picker, F
5. Because many women joined the work force during World War II and continued to work after the war, C
6. Because the U.S. government had anticipated a dramatic change in the work force after the war and they wanted to reduce unemployment to the best of their ability, A
7. Because African Americans and other minorities had fought to protect the civil rights of others overseas, H
8. Because people became better educated, E

Effect

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- B. they did not want to return to menial labor with low-paying wages.
- C. their daughters considered it normal for their mothers to work outside the home and to work outside the home themselves.
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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Lesson Six Quiz: Civil Rights in a Post-War World

Choose the best answer from the multiple choice questions below.

1. Identify the groups who experienced violations of their civil rights within the United States during World War II.
 - a. Japanese Americans
 - b. Jews
 - c. African Americans
 - d. a and c
2. In Mississippi, German POWs could enter restaurants that this group could not.
 - a. U.S. service members
 - b. African Americans
 - c. women
 - d. none of the above
3. After the war, many _____ lost their jobs to returning servicemen.
 - a. women
 - b. African Americans
 - c. men
 - d. a and b
4. Because so many women worked during the war, their _____ wanted to work too.
 - a. husbands
 - b. mothers
 - c. daughters
 - d. sons
5. World War II helped industrialize the U.S. Thus, after the war fewer jobs were available in
 - a. factories
 - b. agriculture
 - c. businesses
 - d. retail
6. To help decrease unemployment after the war, the GI Bill encouraged veterans to
 - a. go to college
 - b. start a business
 - c. immigrate
 - d. none of the above

7. What year did President Harry Truman desegregate the American military?
 - a. 1940
 - b. 1945
 - c. 1948
 - d. 1951
8. What did Executive Order 9066 do?
 - a. place Japanese Americans in internment camps
 - b. deport Japanese Americans
 - c. place German Americans in internment camps
 - d. deport German Americans
9. African American veterans from World War II returned to the U.S. determined to get their
 - a. veteran's benefits
 - b. old jobs back
 - c. civil rights
 - d. none of the above
10. Who is not a World War II veteran from Mississippi?
 - a. Medgar Evers
 - b. Aaron Henry
 - c. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - d. Clyde Kennard

Use a separate sheet of paper to complete the short answer questions below.

1. How did the end of World War II impact the roles of African Americans and women in the workforce?
2. Examine the "What is tolerance?" newspaper. What groups of people does this advertisement advocate tolerance for? What groups are not mentioned?
3. How did World War II lay the foundation for the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi?
4. What skills and tools did leaders of the Civil Rights Movement learn during their military service that they applied to the Civil Rights Movement?

Lesson Six Quiz: Civil Rights in a Post-War World **Answer Key**

1. **D**
2. **B**
3. **D**
4. **C**
5. **B**
6. **A**
7. **C**
8. **A**
9. **C**
10. **C**