

Unit 2: Race in America.

How far has the country moved beyond its racial past?

I- The struggle for racial equality in the US (1619 – 1965)

1. Slavery: 1619–1865

Document 1: video: The Legacy of Slavery

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYsNhK6GFTE&t=234s>



a) What sort of video is it?

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b) How many people were enslaved in the US during that period?

c) How did they travel from North to South?

d) How were they sold?

e) Fill in the blanks: “Slavery was violent, people were _____ and _____,
beaten and abused.”

f) What was illegal for them?

g) What sort of work did they do?

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h) How many people died enslaved in the US?

i) When were they emancipated?

j) Does the man suggest that Blacks and Whites are equal today? Justify by quoting the
video.....

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Essential facts

- Enslaved Africans were brought to the English colonies in North America from the **early 17th century**.
- Slavery expanded dramatically, particularly in the **Southern states**, where enslaved people were forced to work on plantations.
- Enslaved people had virtually no legal rights and were treated as property.
- The **US Constitution (1787)** did not abolish slavery and contained provisions that protected the institution indirectly.
- The **Civil War (1861–1865)** was fundamentally connected to slavery and the conflict over its expansion and survival.

- **Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (1863)** declared enslaved people in the rebelling Confederate states free.
- The **13th Amendment (1865)** abolished slavery throughout the United States, except as punishment for a crime.

2. Segregation: c. 1877–1960s

After Reconstruction, Southern states introduced laws and practices that enforced racial separation and discrimination. This system became known as **Jim Crow**.

- Black Americans were legally and socially separated from White Americans in many areas of life.
- They could be excluded from **schools, public transport, restaurants, shops and other public facilities**.
- The Supreme Court's **Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)** decision upheld racial segregation under the doctrine of “**separate but equal**.”
- In practice, facilities and opportunities for Black Americans were frequently unequal.
- Black Americans were also subjected to **voter suppression**, including literacy tests, poll taxes and intimidation.
- **Lynchings and racial violence** were used to enforce racial domination.
- The system was challenged by Black activists and organisations, including the **NAACP** (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), founded in 1909.

3. The Civil Rights Movement: 1950s–1960s

- **1954 – Brown v. Board of Education**
The Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional.
- **1955–56 – Montgomery Bus Boycott**
After **Rosa Parks** refused to give up her seat, Black residents of Montgomery boycotted segregated buses for more than a year.
- **1960 – Sit-ins**
Black students staged peaceful protests against segregation in restaurants and other public places.
- **1963 – March on Washington**
Around 250,000 people gathered in Washington, D.C. **Martin Luther King Jr.** delivered his famous “*I Have a Dream*” speech.
- **1964 – Civil Rights Act**
Prohibited discrimination and segregation in important areas of American public life.
- **1965 – Voting Rights Act**
Strengthened federal protection of Black Americans' voting rights and targeted discriminatory voting practices.
- **1968 – Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated**

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TEST YOURSELF – Write a caption for each image. Indicate what period they illustrate

