Overview:
The Clinton 12 were twelve high school students who paved the way for African American desegregated education in the South. Prior to desegregation, African Americans students in Anderson County who wanted a high school education had to be bused into Knoxville. Beginning in 1956 all schools in Anderson County were required to desegregate. The African American students were told they were no longer being bused to their high school in Knoxville and that they would be required to attend the local high school in Clinton.

Before 1956, Clinton High School was an all white school. Many locals, parents and students alike, opposed the integration of Clinton High School. The Clinton 12 suffered constant abuse and continuously battled hate and racism throughout their time at Clinton High School. This lesson plan traces the timeline of the desegregation of Clinton High School within the context of the larger Civil Rights Movement and explores the significance of the actions of the Clinton 12.

Understanding Goal:
- Students will understand the impact of the Clinton 12 on the modern Civil Rights Civil Movement.
- Students will understand how the desegregation of Clinton High School impacted future generations.

Objectives:
- Students will use prior knowledge of the modern Civil Rights movement to create a timeline of events, including the desegregation of the Clinton High School.
- Students will analyze and observe multiple primary sources (images, personal testimonies, newspaper articles, etc.) in order to better place the Clinton 12 in context with modern Civil Rights movement.

Investigative Question(s):
- How did the Clinton 12 impact in the modern Civil Rights movement in Tennessee?
- What role did the Clinton 12 have in the modern Civil Rights movement in the United States?
- Why is the desegregation of Clinton High School important to the modern Civil Rights movement?
Curriculum Standards:

High School U.S. History:
- US.80 Describe the significant events in the struggle to secure civil rights for African Americans, including: Montgomery Bus Boycott, Integration of Clinton High School in Clinton, TN, Integration of Central High School in Little Rock, AR, Freedom Riders, Tent City in Fayette County, TN, Marches, demonstrations, boycotts, and sit-ins (e.g., Nashville, March on Washington, D.C., Birmingham bombings of 1963, Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Highlander Folk School.

High School African American History:
- AAH.42 Summarize the Civil Rights Movement in Tennessee, including: the integration of Clinton High School, sit-ins in Nashville, and the activities of Diane Nash and Jim Lawson.

English Language Arts:
- W.RW 10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- W.PDW 4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials:
- Timeline (white board timeline or butcher paper)

Resources:
- PowerPoint
- Primary Source Analysis Sheet
- Beginning of a Movement Primary Source Set
- Dawn of the Modern Civil Rights Movement Primary Source Set
- The Clinton 12 (Video)
- Little Rock Nine Lesson Plan
- Tennessee4Me—Clinton students’ perspectives on integration
- Graphic organizer

Integration in Clinton, Tenn. — Natl. Guard town of Clinton; High School Classes [1956]
Lesson Procedure

Day 1:

Step 1: Estimated time—10 minutes

Pass out/introduce the Primary Source Analysis sheet to students before showing them the images. Ask students to record their observations of the two images. Using the PowerPoint, show students the two images of the monument commemorating the Clinton 12 (slides 2 & 3). Ask students what they think, what they know, and what the wonder. Discuss this image and student observations as a class.

Step 2: Estimated time—10 minutes

Explain to students that today they will be discussing segregation and the movement to desegregate a school in Tennessee. Ask students to define the terms segregation, desegregation, and integration in their own words. After students have had a few minutes to think and define the terms, ask them to share their thoughts and define the terms aloud. Definitions can be found on the PowerPoint for this lesson (slide 4).

Step 3: Estimated time—10 minutes

Have the students in small groups write down events, people, dates, etc. that are important to the modern Civil Rights Movement. Give student groups around 5 minutes for this task. After students have completed the initial brainstorm activity, ask one student to tape their group’s papers on the wall or white board. Ask student groups to share their top three things on their list. Use this time to discuss similarities and differences among the students brainstorming lists.

Step 4: Estimated Time—25 minutes

Draw a large timeline on the board or on butcher paper and start with 1954 (for Brown v. Board of Education) and start to place items from the students’ list on the timeline. Ensure that students understand that placing people on a timeline can be confusing. Explain to students that most people can be placed on the timeline multiple times. Ask students prompting questions: Why does this person belong in this specific spot on the timeline? What did they do to propel forward the modern Civil Rights movement? If students have access to technology, this might be a good time for them to utilize resources for accessing and dating primary sources. Teachers can find more primary sources for this task by visiting Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU’s page and viewing the following primary source sets: Beginnings of A Movement and Dawn of the Modern Civil Rights movement. If time allows, the teacher can distribute primary source sets and ask students select resources from the primary source sets to illustrate the timeline.

Step 5: Estimated time—10 minutes

After this timeline activity has been completed, introduce the students to the Clinton 12 and the efforts to desegregate Clinton High School by bringing the discussion back to the images of the monument. Discuss with students where on the timeline (1956) the desegregation of Clinton High School should be placed. The teacher should ask students to analyze the year and provide students with information surrounding the desegregation of Clinton High School for further contextualization as needed. Let students know they will be exploring the story of the Clinton 12 in more detail in the next class.
**Procedure:**

**Day 2:**

**Step 1: Estimated time—20 minutes**

The teacher will walk the students through the events of the desegregation of Clinton High School using the attached PowerPoint (slides 5-7). Ask students to take notes on the Clinton 12 and their impact on desegregating schools in Tennessee and in the southern states.

**Step 2: Estimated time—20 minutes**

After discussing the Clinton 12 using the PowerPoint, the teacher will share the story of the Little Rock Nine and the class will compare and contrast their stories with the stories of the Clinton 12. Use the Little Rock Nine Lesson Plan from TPS—MTSU’s website for background knowledge and primary sources on the Little Rock Nine desegregation attempt. The teacher can explain to students that the Little Rock Nine attempted desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas after the Clinton 12. Use the timeline activity from day one to place the Little Rock Nine on the timeline alongside the Clinton 12.

**Step 3: Estimated time—10 minutes**

After discussing the Clinton 12 and the Little Rock Nine, hand out “The Nine Who Dared” excerpt from Warriors Don’t Cry (available in the Little Rock Nine Lesson Plan) and the students’ reaction piece. In small groups, ask students to compare the experiences of both groups of high school students. You may wish to have students record their thoughts on this graphic organizer. Encourage students to discuss the experiences of both groups of students, how both attempts at desegregation ended, and the lasting impact of these events.

**Step 4: Estimated time—10 minutes**

Ask students to individually write a response to the lesson’s investigative questions:

- How did the Clinton 12 impact in the modern Civil Rights movement in Tennessee?
- What role did the Clinton 12 have in the modern Civil Rights movement in the United States?
- Why is the desegregation of Clinton High School important to the modern Civil Rights movement?
Extension Activity 1:

**Learning more about the Clinton 12:**

- Give students a handout or the links of the student bios (available through the [Green McAdoo Cultural Center website](https://www.greenmcadoo.org)) or provide students with the link and ask them to read through the bios.
- Next, the teacher will hand out the students’ reaction piece that details some of the Clinton 12’s experiences while attending Clinton High School.
- In small groups, ask students to pick one of the Clinton 12 and complete a quick research project about the student and their lives before, during, and after the desegregation attempt of Clinton High School.

Extension Activity 2:

**Creating a poem about the Clinton 12:**

- After discussing the Clinton 12 their role in the modern Civil Rights movement, task students to create a poem about the Clinton 12 detailing their significance to Tennessee history and the history of desegregation in the educational system in the southern states.
- Explain to the students that they will be graded using a rubric.
- A sample rubric is available.

Additional Links:

- [Clinton High School Homepage](http://www.clintonhighschool.org) — about the school/timeline
- [Green McAdoo Cultural Center](https://www.greenmcadoo.org)
- [Clinton Desegregation Conflict](http://tennesseeencyclopedia.org) — Tennessee Encyclopedia
- [Facts on how integration came to Clinton](http://tennesseevirtualarchives.org) — Tennessee Virtual Archives
- NPR [interview](https://www.npr.org) with the Clinton 12’s Bobby Cain
- [Clinton 12 students’ reactions](https://www.greenmcadoo.org)
- The Arizona Sun [reports](https://www.arizonasun.com) on the Clinton 12 enrolling at Clinton High School
- The Arizona Sun [reports](https://www.arizonasun.com) on the Clinton 12’s “return to terror”
- The Detroit Tribune [reports](https://www.detroittribune.com) on Clinton High School closing following an attack of minister
- The Detroit Tribune [reports](https://www.detroittribune.com) on pro-segregation leader John Kasper’s one year jail sentence
- The Detroit Tribune [reports](https://www.detroittribune.com) on school resuming at Clinton High School after the 1958 bombing
- Various Chronicling America [links](https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov) on the Clinton High School desegregation attempt.
Evaluation:

The students can be graded on their poem by using this sample rubric:

Name:__________________  Date:___________________

Instructions:
You will work individually to write a poem about the Clinton 12 and their contributions to Tennessee history and roles in the Civil Rights movement. Each person will share their finished poem with the class. All poems will be graded based upon the organization, grammar, and the historical accuracy/content included in your poem. Please use this rubric as your guide – it is how you will be graded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric for Clinton 12 Poem:</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization:</strong></td>
<td>Student poem is organized and the point of the poem is clear. A copy of the poem is submitted to the teacher by poem due date.</td>
<td>Student poem is somewhat organized and some clarification is needed in order to understand the point of the poem. A copy of the poem is submitted to the teacher by poem due date.</td>
<td>Student poem is not organized and listeners need a lot of clarification in order to understand the point of the poem. A copy of the poem is submitted to the teacher by poem due date.</td>
<td>No poem was submitted to teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar:</strong></td>
<td>The poem is grammatically correct throughout with 2 or less grammatical errors.</td>
<td>The poem is somewhat grammatically correct with 3-4 grammatical errors throughout the poem.</td>
<td>The poem has more than 5 grammatical errors.</td>
<td>No poem was submitted to the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Accuracy/Content:</strong></td>
<td>The poem is historically accurate and can be easily connected to the Clinton 12 and their importance to the modern Civil Rights movement.</td>
<td>The poem is historically accurate but the student has to provide clarification in order to connect the Clinton 12 and their importance to the modern Civil Rights movement.</td>
<td>The poem is somewhat historically accurate but the student struggles to explain the poem’s connection to the Clinton 12 and their importance to the modern Civil Rights movement.</td>
<td>Students cannot explain or connect their work to the Clinton 12, the content of their poem is not historically accurate, or they did not submit a poem to the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher’s Comments:  Grade: _____________