

# Where the Neighborhood Ends

## Lesson 5: Conversation in the Round

### Essential Questions

How did segregation affect the history of Chicago? How did Chicago's urban-renewal programs change the city? How does the history of housing segregation in Chicago manifest itself today?

### Desired Understandings

Students will understand the history of housing segregation in Chicago. They will understand that both race and class had a significant impact on the formulation of Chicago's urban-renewal programs. They will understand how Chicago's history of housing segregation still affects the city today.

### Knowledge

Students will know the methods and reasoning used to segregate African Americans in circumscribed Chicago neighborhoods. They will know that Chicago's urban-renewal programs reflected both positive intentions and negative stereotypes in their formulation.

### Skills

Students will use their analytical and language arts skills to summarize their positions and formulate questions for personal and collective inquiry. Students will develop historical empathy and learn to discern fact from fiction. They will use their writing skills to summarize their interpretations.

### Illinois Learning Standards

#### English Language Arts

- Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
- Goal 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas.
- Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
- Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
- Goal 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.

#### Social Science

- Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.
- Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

### In This Lesson

Through group discussion, students will be challenged to evaluate the history of housing segregation in Chicago and the legacy of segregation today. They will formulate and support their own opinions, both verbally and in writing. The story element of dramatic tension is addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Jackson Potter.



## Activity

If possible, have students arrange their chairs in a circle. Lead a class discussion about the various viewpoints of the story characters, as identified in the Lesson 3 historical head activity.

Conduct a conversation in the round on community change, gentrification, and segregation in Chicago. Encourage students to respond to each others' questions and ideas. Are there any positive benefits that have emerged in Chicago as a result of segregation (e.g. fostering ethnic pride, preserving traditions, great food)?

If possible, make a connection to any controversial current events that occur when you teach this lesson. (For example, many of Chicago's high-rise housing projects were being demolished at the time of this writing.)

### **Lesson 5 Home Connection**

Journaling assignment: Describe the income levels and racial demographics of your community. Why do you think it breaks down that way? If Chicago were totally integrated, both racially and economically, what do you think life would be like? In your opinion, what would be gained or lost in such a Chicago?

## Materials & Resources

- **Printouts of the *Where the Neighborhood Ends* narrative:**  
[http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Where\\_the\\_Neighborhood\\_Ends\\_by\\_Melody\\_Herr.pdf](http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Where_the_Neighborhood_Ends_by_Melody_Herr.pdf)

## Instructional Notes

Let students facilitate their own discussion as much as possible.

## Extension Activities

Have students view and discuss a documentary dealing with gentrification. It could be a segment from the *Chicago Tonight* series on housing, Chicago Public Radio's Leallen Jones on "Our America," the Chi Town Low Down production of "Stop the Land Grab," or another source of your choice.

Students could also read the short story *Barbie-Q* by Sandra Cisneros and discuss what happened to the Maxwell Street Market.