**Aim:**

**Topic: Civil Rights Movement**

1. **Segregation in the South**

After 13th, 14th and 15th amendments were passed in 1865 which ended slavery and made it illegal to deny minorities civil rights, Southern States created State Laws known as “Black Codes” to create segregation – keeping blacks and whites separate (this was done for transportation, schools, restrooms and even water fountains). In 1896, a man named Homer Adolph Plessy took a seat in a “whites only car” in a Louisiana train. When Fergusson, the train conductor told him to move he refused to go to the car reserved for blacks and was arrested. Plessy took Ferguson to court in the case ***Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)***. The Supreme Court said that the state law was constitutional and declared segregation (separation of races) legal. The Supreme Court stated that this was legal as long as it was **“separate but equal.”** This meant that it was okay to keep blacks and whites separate as long as both groups are given equal facilities. This segregation lasted into the middle of the 1950’s, until another case went to the Supreme Court.

**1) Why did Southern States create “Black Codes?”**

**2) What does “separate but equal” mean?**

**3) Why do you think the Supreme Court ruled “separate but equal” was legal in 1896?**

**4) What were the repercussions (consequences) of the Plessy v. Ferguson ruling?**

**B. Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, 1954**

Close to 60 years have gone by since “separate but equal” was ruled Constitutional, but what would change it, is not a government amendment but rather a little girl. In Topeka, Kansas, a little girl named Linda Brown had to ride the bus five miles to her black school each day even though a white public school was only four blocks from her house. Even though she met all of the requirements and the school was not full, she still could not attend because of Kansas’ black codes. In 1954, Linda Brown’s parents and twelve other parents, and with the help of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) sued in the Supreme Court to challenge the Topeka Kansas Board of Education’s segregation policy.

The court ruled in a 9-0 decision to **“overturn”** the 1896 Supreme Court’s ruling of Plessy v. Ferguson decision of “separate but equal” is legal.

Chief Justice Earl Warren:

*“Segregated schools are not equal and cannot be made equal, and therefore are deprived of the equal protection of the law. Does segregation of children in public schools solely based on race, even though the facilities may be equal, deprives the children of the minority group of equal education opportunities – WE BELIEVE IT DOES! To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely based on their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone.”*

**1) Why did the parents of Linda Brown challenge the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas?**

**2) What does it mean that the Supreme Court overturned the decision of “separate but equal”?**

**3) What are two reasons that Chief Justice Warren says why “separate but equal” are illegal?**

**4) What do you think the repercussions of Brown v. Board of Education will be?**

**C. Southern reaction to the Brown Decision**

**C1. Governor of Alabama, George Wallace**

*“We believe that the decision of the Supreme Court in the school case is an abuse of power by the court. The original constitution does not mention education . . . It is destroying the friendly relations between the races that have developed over the last 90 years . . . We are committed to use all lawful means to reverse this decision which is against the constitution and to prevent the use of force when the decision is enforced. I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny and I say segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever!”*

**1) Why does Governor George Wallace believe that the Supreme Court is abusing its power and acting “tyrannical”? To what extent do you agree or disagree? Explain.**

**C2.** **Governor of Arkansas, Orville Faubus and “The Little Rock Crisis”**

Many Americans were shocked by the Brown decision. In the South, whites began campaigns of “massive resistance” to public school **desegregation**. Although the Supreme Court had ordered that school integration go forward “*with all deliberate speed*”, many school systems openly went against the ruling. In Little Rock, Arkansas, 9 African American students (**“The Little Rock 9”)** were chosen to attend Central High School (which was once an all white HS). However the governor of Arkansas, Orville Faubus ordered the National Guard to prevent the students from entering Central High School. President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered the National Guard to stop and called in 1,000 paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Regiment to protect the Little Rock Nine from angry White mobs. One year later, Arkansas closed down all of its public schools instead of integrating and only one of the Little Rock Nine got to graduate.

**1) What did Governor Faubus and Arkansas citizens do to fight against integration?**

**2) What did President Eisenhower do to stop Arkansas?**

**3) How is this an example of Federalism? Do you think this represents a success or failure of Federalism?**