

In Search of the American Dream: the USA, c.1917-96
Topic 2: The Quest for Civil Rights

Key Term	Meaning
Sharecroppers	White landowners provided the land, black sharecroppers provided the labour, and they shared the profits.
Jim Crow	An early 1830s' comic, black-faced minstrel character developed by a white performing artist and popular with white audiences. When the Southern states introduced laws that legalised segregation in the years following the Civil War and Reconstruction these were known as 'Jim Crow Laws.'
Segregation	Separation of people on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or culture.
Poll tax	Tax levied on would-be-voters that made it difficult for blacks to vote because they were usually poor. Mostly adopted by Southern states and in force from the late nineteenth century to 1964 (the 24 th Amendment).
Great Migration	Between c.1910 and c.1970, over 6 million black Americans migrated from the South to the North or the West.
Ghettos	Areas inhabited mostly or solely by (usually poor) members of a particular ethnicity, nationality or religion.
Ku Klux Klan	Racist organisation established by Southern whites after the American Civil War. It declined in the face of federal government disapproval in the late nineteenth century but was revived in 1915, when it added Catholics and Jews to its hate list.
Desegregation	Ending the separation of groups based on race.
Integration	Ending the separation of groups based on race, culture or religion.
Lynching	A mob taking the law into its own hands to punish someone for committing what was seen as a crime in the South. The victim was usually hanged although sometimes tortured and burned alive.
Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)	Black civil rights organisation established during the Second World War.
Sit-ins	Form of protest frequently used by black protesters, who refused to move until an institution or establishment changed its policies on race.
De jure	In law, as in de jure segregation
De facto	In fact if not in law.
White flight	The post-Second World War exodus of white Americans from inner-city areas that were then left to minorities such as African Americans.
Freedom Rides	In 1961, integrated groups of civil rights activists rode on interstate buses to defy segregation and monitor whether Supreme Court rulings against segregation were being ignored.

In Search of the American Dream: the USA, c.1917-96
Topic 2: The Quest for Civil Rights

Black Power	A vaguely defined 1960s black movement with varying aims (including separatism, black equality and more recognition of the importance of black culture and history) and greater assertiveness than the older civil rights movements.
Affirmative Action	Giving disadvantaged people extra opportunities in education and employment in order to compensate for previous unfair treatment.
Native Americans	Descendants of the original inhabitants of the North American continent, referred to as Indians or Red Indians before the later twentieth century.
Reservation	Lands allotted to Native Americans by the federal government in the late nineteenth century.
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)	Established in 1824, it had responsibility for Native Americans. From the later twentieth century, it focused more on advice and less on control.
Red Indians	White American term for Native Americans, popular until the later twentieth century.
Welfare dependency	From the time of Roosevelt's New Deal, the USA had a welfare safety net that helped the very poor, sick, unemployed and elderly in varying degrees. Many Americans believed in individualism and self-help and felt that people who were given welfare would lose the will to take care of themselves.
Hispanic	Person of Latin American origin, often Spanish speaking.
Assimilation	Full acceptance of and absorption into American society.
Barrios	Urban areas predominantly populated by Hispanic-Americans.
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	Federal agency established to deal with equal employment opportunities for ethnic minorities.
Chicano	People of Mexican descent in the USA who considered themselves culturally and politically distinct from Anglos (non-Hispanic Americans) and Mexicans in Mexico. Initially had derogatory connotations, but used proudly and assertively during the 1960s.
Mattachine	Name chosen for mid-twentieth century US gay societies, derived from secret medieval French societies of masked men critical of the establishment.
Busing	Supreme Court rulings to promote integrated education meant some white children were sent by bus to black schools and vice versa
Naturalisation	Becoming a citizen of a country to which one has immigrated.
Proposition 6	A law proposed in California in 1978 to ban gays, lesbians and supporters of their rights from working in state funded schools in California.

Expectation: You need to learn the spelling and definition of these key terms off by heart!

In Search of the American Dream: the USA, c.1917-96
Topic 2: The Quest for Civil Rights

Key Individual/ Group	Role, dates, importance etc
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)	
Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)	
Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)	
Marcus Garvey	
A Philip Randolph	
Rosa Parks	
Martin Luther King Jr	
Emmett Till	
Thurgood Marshall	
Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)	
Malcolm X	
Stokely Carmichael	
Cesar Chavez	
Harvey Milk	