

How do people fight for change?

What strategies did students in Farmville use to fight for change in Prince Edward County?

Subject:	History and Social Sciences, Language Arts
Grade Level:	Fourth Grade
Topic:	The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia; Brown vs the Board of Education
Guiding Questions:	How do people fight for change? What strategies did students in Farmville use to fight for change in Prince Edward County?
VA SOL:	VS.11 - The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the Civil Rights Movement in Virginia by A. explaining the social and political events connected to disenfranchisement of African American voters in Virginia in the early 20th century, desegregation, court decisions, and Massive Resistance, with emphasis on the role of Virginians in the Supreme Court cases, including, but not limited to Brown v. Board of Education...
Materials:	Primary source photo (Appendix A), newspaper article about the Farmville schools shut down (Appendix B), article jigsaw worksheet (Appendix C), envelopes, note cards, When the Schools Shut Down picture book by Yolanda Gladden and Dr. Tamara Pizzoli, paper/pencils.

Before you begin:

Create resource packets that students will use throughout the lesson. Print copies of the primary source photo (Appendix A) and tape to the outside of a long envelope. Inside the envelope, include copies of the newspaper article (Appendix B) cut into four sections, the article jigsaw worksheet (half sheet of Appendix C), four notecards, and a ½ sheet of blank paper.

Introduction

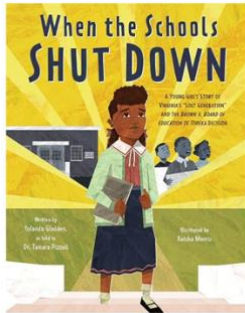
Ask students the guiding question for the lesson, “How do people fight for change?” Allow time for students to respond before engaging in the pre-reading activity.

Pre-Reading Activity

Arrange students in groups of four. Give each group an envelope (prepared as suggested above). As a class, look at the photograph and read the caption together (on the outside of the envelope). Then, ask students to take the four sections out of the envelope and distribute a section to each member of the group. Each student will read their section quietly to themselves, then summarize their section. Assign one student in each group to be the recorder and, in a sentence or phrase, record a summary of each section of the article on the group worksheet.

After completing this activity, let students know they will be reading a book. Show them the book, then ask students to share predictions about what they think the book will be about with the whole class.

Note: If the article provided seems too challenging for your students, consider modifying this assignment in some way. For example, you could retype the text in a more readable font, rewrite/summarize the content at an appropriate level for your students, number each section of the jigsaw-ed article and assign students to read a specific numbered section based on ability, or complete the activity as a whole class rather than in groups.



Read the Book

Now that students have been introduced to the topic, ask students the second guiding question, What strategies did students in Farmville use to fight for change in Prince Edward County? Ask students to look for the answer to this question as you read the book *When the Schools Shut Down* in its entirety.

Understanding through Quotes

After reading the book, ask students to share identify a quote they found particularly meaningful in *When the Schools Shut Down*. This activity will work best if you have a class set of books (at least one book per group of 4 students). Alternatively, if you have the technology available, you could have students look through the book virtually using a YouTube recording of the text (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJwMw4Y9Ng>)

Once they have identified a quote, they should record the quote with the page number on the note card provided in the envelope, then put their name on the note card.

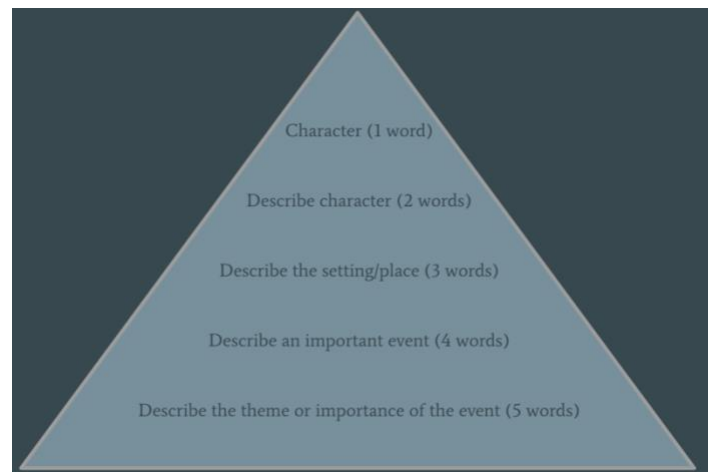
After all students have identified and recorded their quote, they will engage in discussion with/around the selected quotes. Still in groups of 4, students will put the notecards face down on the table, then randomly pick one to begin discussion. For each notecard, students will engage in conversation using the following questions to guide them.

- Why did the student pick it?
- How does it help us understand the story?
- What are the reactions of the quote to the group members?

Story Pyramid

Now that students have had the opportunity to reflect on what they read, they will have a chance to identify the key elements of the story to help them make sense of it by creating a story pyramid on the ½ sheet of paper included in the resource envelope.

Still in groups of four, ask each group to pick one student to act as the scribe. This



should be a different person than the student who wrote during the pre-reading activity.

To create the story pyramid, each group will choose a single character from the story. While many groups may choose Yolanda, they may also choose Yolanda's mom, Carrie Jefferson, Aunt Dorothy, Uncle Tank, or one of Yolanda's teachers. It is ok if groups choose the same character. On the ½ sheet of paper, students should record the name of the character in one word on the first line, as modeled in the included image.

On the following lines, students will use two words to describe the character, three words to describe the setting, four words to describe an important event, then five words to describe the theme of the book or the importance of the event they chose. After the poems have been created, each group should share their poems with the class.

Closing Discussion

End the lesson by engaging in conversation about the guiding questions, How do people fight for change? And What strategies did students in Farmville use to fight for change in Prince Edward County?

Optional Extension

- As a group or individually, on a sheet of paper, draft a short letter to the editor in response to the newspaper article you read earlier.
- Using events from the timeline included in the back of *When the Schools Shut Down*, ask students to organize events related to Brown vs the Board of Education and the desegregation of the American school system in chronological order.

Lesson Created by Amy Allen, Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at Virginia Tech.

Appendix A



Sandy Stokes walks down Main Street in Farmville to protest school closures in July of 1963. Source: VCU Libraries. Click image to see more photos.



Sandy Stokes walks down Main Street in Farmville to protest school closures in July of 1963. Source: VCU Libraries. Click image to see more photos.

Image retrieved from <https://images.socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/items/show/157>

Appendix B

Negro Pupils At Farmville Go on Strike

455 Protest School's 'Inadequate' Facilities

FARMVILLE, VA., April 24—(AP)—The entire student body of the R. R. Moton Negro high school walked out yesterday, protesting against "inadequate" facilities at the school, and were still on "strike" today.

Four hundred and fifty-five pupils left school shortly before noon after attending an assembly they said "was so overcrowded that breathing was difficult." One of the students said the school auditorium seats only 300, and the students who must stand in the aisles create a serious fire hazard.

School officials were slightly dismayed at the action, pointing out that a new \$800,000 high school is in the planning stage.

A member of the student "strike committee" complained that a new school building had been promised for five years, and "all we get is tar-paper shacks." Three temporary wooden buildings were erected to relieve overcrowding at the school. The student said that they are improperly heated, have leaky roofs and lack sanitary facilities. She said there are only two lavatories and four drinking fountains for the 455 pupils, all located in the main building.

Superintendent T. J. Mellwaine said negotiations were in progress for a site. In Richmond, Dowell J. Howard, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, said the State Education Department had approved the new school as part of Prince Edward County's four-year school development program.

Big Outlay Planned

The program also includes plans for three new Negro elementary schools. All told, the county intends to spend \$1,925,000 improving Negro school facilities, as against \$675,000 for white schools.

The new Moton school, which as now planned would take care of 700 pupils, was approved by the State Education Department January 25.

However, the county school board must submit another application for monetary help before any State funds can be released for construction of the school.

Mellwaine said the strike apparently was a protest against conditions at the present school and delay in the construction of the new school. He said he didn't know how much longer it would be before work started.

The superintendent said the walkout "seemed to be student-inspired." In answer to a query he declared it had "nothing in the world" to do with a recent rail crossing accident in which five Moton students were killed when a school bus was struck by a train.

Appendix C

Section 1:

Section 2:

Section 3:

Section 4:

Section 1:

Section 2:

Section 3:

Section 4:
