

Boston school desegregation

1974 | Grade 2 · Read & notice

Words to know

segregation — forced separation of people, often by race

equality — having equal rights or standing

access — a way to reach, enter, or use something

Look closely



Modern topic illustration created for Massachusetts History Explorers. It is not a historical artifact.

Read the story

A federal judge ordered changes after finding that Boston schools had been deliberately segregated. Busing became part of the response. Students and families experienced conflict, danger, and efforts toward fairer access.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. What happened in this reading? Tell one fact.
2. Who or what is this reading mostly about?
3. Choose a word from the word bank. Explain it in your own words.
4. Look at the picture and its caption. What does it help you notice? Is it from the time of the event?

Follow-up reading: DEC introduces the VAX

1977

Digital Equipment Corporation introduced the VAX-11/780 computer. The Massachusetts company was part of the region's growing technology industry. Computer systems helped researchers and businesses work in new ways.

How are the two readings alike or different? Tell a partner one connection. Which event came first?

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.2.1: ask and answer questions; RI.2.2: identify a main topic; RI.2.7: use images and words; W.2.2 and SL.2.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: A federal judge ordered changes after finding that Boston schools had been deliberately segregated. Busing became part of the response. Students and families experienced conflict, danger, and efforts toward fairer access. Judge W. Arthur Garrity's order addressed government responsibility for segregation. Resistance included racist violence. Study students' experiences and court evidence alongside debates about transportation.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: Original site illustration.

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.