

# Teacher's Guide

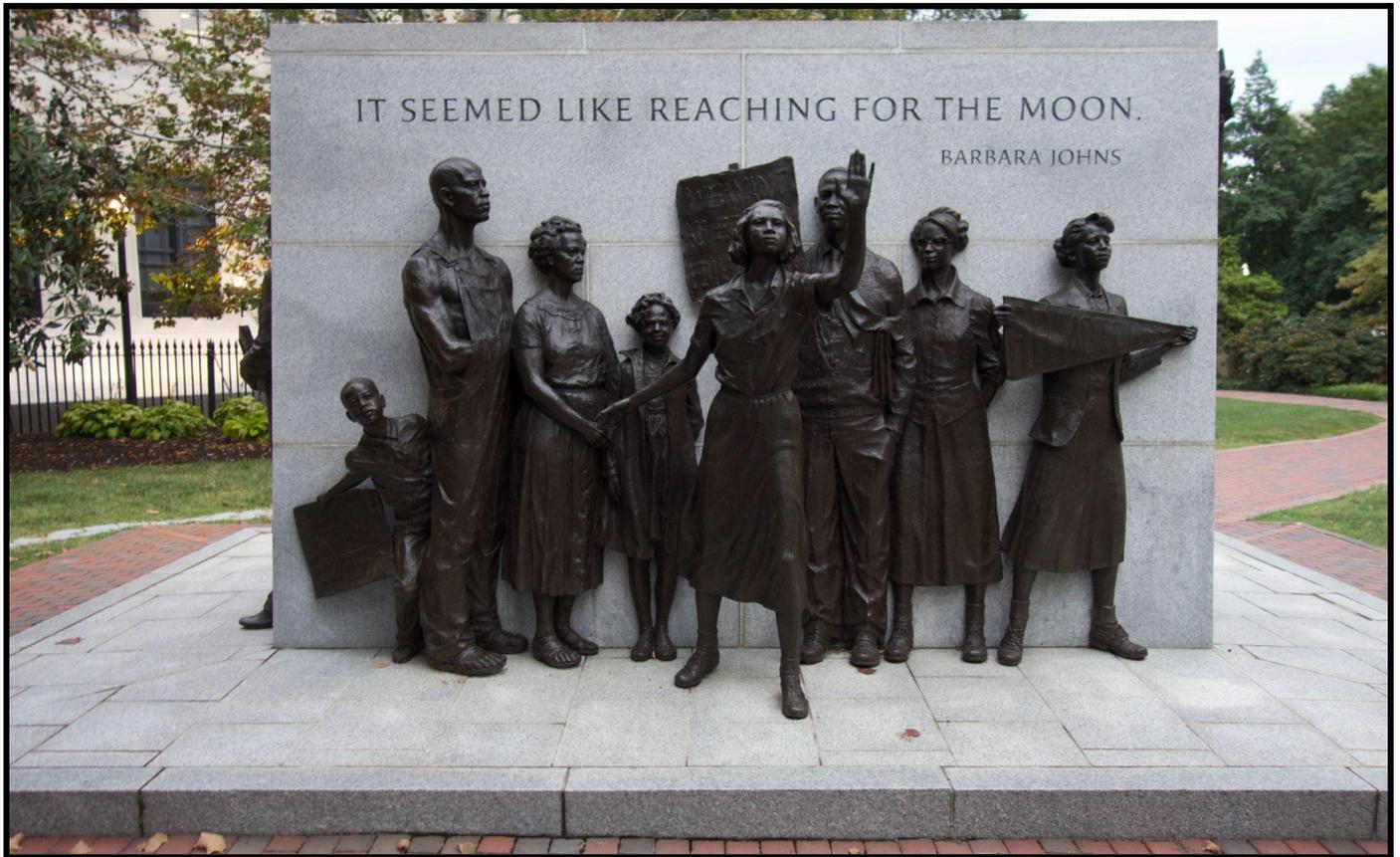
## THE BARBARA JOHNS STORY

An Interactive Documentary

<https://thebarbarajohnsstory.org>

Teacher's Guide: *The Barbara Johns Story*

# How can you seize *your* moment to make change?



*The Virginia Civil Rights Memorial on the grounds of the Virginia General Assembly – Richmond, VA*

## Supporting Questions

1. Who was Barbara Johns, and what was school like for her?
  2. What led Barbara Johns to take action?
3. How did Barbara Johns “seize her moment” and make change?

## Overview

### Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of youth-led social change through the story of Barbara Johns and R.R. Moton High School in Farmville, Virginia. We created the Teacher’s Guide inspired by the Inquiry Design Model blueprint (IDM; Grant, Swan, & Lee, 2017), but those familiar with the IDM will notice that we have adapted the blueprint to be used as a structure for all student learning activities throughout [The Barbara Johns Story interactive documentary website](#).

**Note:** This inquiry is expected to take four or five 50-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (e.g., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, featured sources, writing scaffolds, etc). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiry to meet the needs and interests of their students.

How can you seize <i>your</i> moment to make change?	
Standards and Content	<p><b>D2.Civ.5.9-12:</b> Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level</p> <p><b>D2.His.3.9-12:</b> Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context</p> <p><b>D4.7.9-12:</b> Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning</p>
Staging the Compelling Question	After watching the <a href="#">Prologue video</a> at the start of <b>Chapter 1</b> , have students use the <a href="#">four-quadrant graphic organizer</a> to reflect on themes of change, challenges, and “seizable moments.”

**CHAPTER 1**  
Supporting Question 1

**Who was Barbara Johns, and what was school like for her?**

Learning Activities

**Identity Iceberg:** This activity invites students to consider the ways identity influences people’s experiences and actions, further setting the stage for their consideration of Barbara Johns’ actions and legacy.

**Unequal Schools:** This **online activity** challenges students to compare and contrast the conditions at R.R. Moton High School for Black students to Farmville High School for White students.

**CHAPTER 2**  
Supporting Question 2

**What led Barbara Johns to take action?**

Learning Activities

**Moments Make Movements:** This activity asks students to read an excerpt from Barbara Johns’ memoir about a formative experience with segregation and identify and explain Barbara’s perspectives and feelings.

**The Making of a Leader:** This **online activity** asks students to apply their understanding of how Barbara Johns was influenced by three key figures in her life—her uncle, Reverend Vernon Johns; her grandmother, Ms. Mary Croner; and her music teacher, Ms. Inez Davenport.

**The Elam Crossing Tragedy:** This activity asks students to analyze an article from the Farmville Herald about the bus accident at Elam Crossing and consider authorship, perspective, and message.

**CHAPTER 3**  
Supporting Question 3

**How did Barbara Johns “seize her moment” and make change?**

Learning Activities

**Students on Strike!** This activity asks students to analyze the key factors behind the success of the 1951 Moton Student Strike by reading excerpts from Barbara Johns’ memoir, watching interviews with Student Strike Committee members, and recording insights in a graphic organizer.

**Taking Informed Action:** This activity asks students to examine nine events that factored into Barbara’s plan of action by writing one sentence next to each image that explains the most important aspect of the event as they learn about it in Chapter 3 of the website.

**Barbara Had a Plan:** This **online activity** asks students to complete a digital timeline at the end of Chapter 3, identifying key actions taken by Barbara Johns and the student strike leaders to highlight the multifaceted nature of civic action.

CHAPTER 1 Featured Sources	CHAPTER 2 Featured Sources	CHAPTER 3 Featured Sources
<p><b>Source A:</b> Photographs of Farmville High School and R.R. Moton High School</p>	<p><b>Source A:</b> Barbara Johns Memoir</p> <p><b>Source B:</b> <i>The Farmville Herald</i> Article</p>	<p><b>Source A:</b> Barbara Johns Memoir</p> <p><b>Sources B-D:</b> Student Strike Interview excerpts</p>

<p><b>Summative Performance Task</b></p>	<p><b>ARGUMENT:</b> How did Barbara Johns seize her moment to make change? Use evidence from the sources encountered throughout the website to support your argument.</p>
	<p><b>EXTENSION:</b> What change would you like to make? What could be your moment? How will you know when to seize it? Similar to how Barbara formed an action plan with a series of steps, the taking informed action portion of this inquiry will challenge students to identify a change they would like to see in the world in which they live. Download the <a href="#">summative task resource</a> to help students brainstorm an action plan for the change(s) they seek.</p>
<p><b>Taking Informed Action</b></p>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND:</b> Identify an issue in your world that you want to change to make it a better place.</p> <p><b>ASSESS:</b> Just as Barbara developed a clear action plan, your challenge is to identify a specific change you would like to see and outline at least three concrete steps to help achieve it.</p> <p><b>ACT:</b> Take the first step; self-reflect and reassess your action plan as needed.</p>