

Name: _____

Date: _____

ACTIVITY FOR LEARNING

Chapter 18: The Civil Rights Movement in Modern Georgia Section 1: Georgia's Response to School Integration

***Brown v. Board of Education* – Primary Source Document**

Instructions: Read the excerpt from the *Brown v. Board* landmark Supreme Court decision. Use the information to answer the questions that follow.

The decision was unanimous. Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the opinion of the Court.

... there are findings below that the Negro and white schools involved have been equalized, or are being equalized, with respect to buildings, curricula, qualifications, and salaries of teachers, and other “tangible” factors. Our decision, therefore, cannot turn on merely a comparison of these tangible factors in the Negro and white schools involved in each of these cases. We must look instead to the effect of segregation itself on public education... Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society... Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms... To separate them [children in grade and high schools] from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of 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 to ever be undone... Whatever may have been the extent of psychological knowledge at the time of Plessy v. Ferguson, this finding is amply supported by modern authority... We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of “separate but equal” has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and other similarly situated... are... deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

1. What did Chief Justice Warren state was the most important function of state and local governments? _____
2. The opinion states that separation by race generates what kind of feeling?

3. What prior case is referred to in the opinion? _____
4. According to the opinion, what doctrine has no place in the field of public education?

5. How many of the nine Supreme Court justices voted in favor of overturning previous rulings about segregation in public schools? _____