

# Where the Neighborhood Ends

## Lesson 2: Reader's Theater

### Focus Questions

Was Chicago a racially integrated city in the 1950s? How did housing segregation manifest itself in Chicago? How did Chicago's urban-renewal programs change the city? Were the intentions of Chicago's planning officials good or bad?

### Core Understandings

Students will understand the history of housing segregation in Chicago. They will understand that both race and class had a significant impact on the formulation of Chicago's urban-renewal programs. They will understand how housing discrimination affected the lives of both poor and affluent African Americans.

### Knowledge

Students will know the methods and reasoning used to segregate African Americans in circumscribed Chicago neighborhoods. They will know the variety of perspectives regarding public housing within the African American community of the 1950s. They will know that Chicago's urban-renewal programs reflected both positive intentions and negative stereotypes in their formulation.

### Skills

Students will use their language arts skills to interpret the past and their analytical skills to discern fact from fiction. They will summarize their interpretations in writing.

### Common Core ELA Standards

CCSSR1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.SL.1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### ISBE Social Science Standards

Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the US.

Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the US, and other nations.

Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the US.

Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the US.

### ISBE Fine Arts Standard

Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

### In This Lesson

Through a reader's theater performance of *Where the Neighborhood Ends*, students will develop empathy for the people of the past and an understanding of the complex forces affecting Chicago's urban-renewal programs of the 1950s. The story elements of setting, character, and problems/conflicts are addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Jackson Potter.



## Activity

As a bell-ringer activity, have students share their reflections about housing segregation in Chicago from the Lesson 1 Home Connection.

Distribute individual copies of *Where the Neighborhood Ends* to students. [http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Where\\_the\\_Neighborhood\\_Ends\\_by\\_Melody\\_Herr.pdf](http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Where_the_Neighborhood_Ends_by_Melody_Herr.pdf) Tell students they will be doing a reader's theater performance of the story.

Break students into five small groups. Have each group focus on a different chapter of the narrative. Give students about 20 minutes to read and assign roles for their chapter. Then re-group as a class and have students perform their chapters in sequence.

### **Lesson 2 Home Connection**

Have students answer the reading-comprehension and critical-thinking questions for *Where the Neighborhood Ends*. [http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/questions/Neighborhood\\_Reading\\_Questions2.pdf](http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/questions/Neighborhood_Reading_Questions2.pdf)

## Materials & Resources

- **Printouts of the *Where the Neighborhood Ends* narrative:**

[http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Where\\_the\\_Neighborhood\\_Ends\\_by\\_Melody\\_Herr.pdf](http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Where_the_Neighborhood_Ends_by_Melody_Herr.pdf)

## Instructional Notes

Feel free to supply props to enhance the performance. If you do not have enough students to fill all the roles, you may choose to serve as the narrator. For more tips on facilitating reader's theater, see the Classroom Activities section of the *Great Chicago Stories* website.

<http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/classroom/reader.php>

It may be a good idea to model the first scene with some hand-picked students to show the class what you are looking for.

## Extension Activities

Have students write an additional chapter for *Where the Neighborhood Ends* focusing on what they think happened to Lane at the end of the story.