2015 Curriculum Framework DBQ

Prompt

Analyze major changes and continuities in the social and economic experiences of African Americans who migrated from the rural South to urban areas in the North in the period 1910–1930.

Document 1

Source: Southern African American folk saying, 1910s

De white man he got ha’f de crop

Boll-Weevil took de res’.

Ain’t got no home,

Ain’t got no home.

Document 2

Source: Letter from a prospective African American migrant, April 27, 1917

New Orleans, La., 4/27/17

Dear Sirs:

Being desirous of leaving the South for the beterment [sic] of my condition generaly [*sic*] and seeking a Home Somewhere in Ill’ Chicago or some other prosperous town I am at sea about the best place to locate having a family dependent upon me for support. I am informed by the *Chicago Defender* a very valuable paper which has for its purpose the Uplifting of my race, and of which I am a constant reader and real lover, that you were in position to show some light to one in my condition.

Seeking a Northern Home. If this is true Kindly inform me by next mail the next best thing to do Being a poor man with a family to care for, I am not coming to live on flowry [*sic*] Beds of ease for I am a man who works and wish to make the best I can out of life I do not wish to come there hoodwinked not know where to go or what to do so I Solicite [*sic*] your help in this matter and thanking you in advance for what advice you may be pleased to Give I am yours for success.

Document 3

Source: Dwight Thompson Farnham, a northern White efficiency expert, article titled “Negroes as a Source of Industrial Labor,” *Industrial Management*, August 1918

A certain amount of segregation is necessary at times to preserve the peace. This is especially true when negroes are first introduced into a plant. It is a question if it is not always best to have separate wash rooms and the like. In places where different races necessarily come into close contact and in places where inherited characteristics are especially accentuated, it is better to keep their respective folkways from clashing wherever possible.

Document 4

Source: Jackson (Mississippi) *Daily News*, a southern white-owned newspaper, on the

race riot in Chicago, July 28, 1919

The only surprising feature about the race riot in Chicago yesterday is that it did not assume larger proportions.

Trouble has been brewing in that city for several months, and nothing short of exceptionally good work by the police department can prevent further clashes.

The native white population of Chicago bitterly resents the influx of negro labor, and especially the housing of blacks in white neighborhoods.

. . . . the decent, hard-working, law-abiding Mississippi negroes who were lured to Chicago by the bait of higher wages, only to lose their jobs, or forced to accept lower pay after the labor shortage became less acute, are hereby notified that they will be welcomed back home and find their old positions waiting for them.

Mississippi may lynch a negro when he commits the most heinous of all crimes, but we do not blow up the innocent with bombs, or explode sticks of dynamite on their doorsteps.

Document 5

Source: Lizzie Miles, African American singer, lyrics to the song “Cotton Belt Blues,”

1923

Look at me. Look at me.

And you see a gal,

With a heart bogged down with woe.

Because I’m all alone,

Far from my Southern home.

Dixie Dan. That’s the man.

Took me from the Land of Cotton

To that cold, cold minded North.

Threw me down. Hit the town.

And I’ve never seen him henceforth.

Just cause I trusted. I’m broke and disgusted,

I got the Cotton Belt Blues.

Document 6

Source: George Schuyler, an African American journalist, article in *The Messenger*, a

political and literary magazine for African Americans, August 1925

It is generally thought by both Negroes and whites that Negroes are the chief strikebreakers in the United States. This is far from the truth. The Negro workers’ part in strikes has been dramatized by virtue of the striking contrast of race which invariably provoked race riots. But the fact is that there are many more scabs among the white than black workers, partially because there are numerous industries in which Negroes are not permitted to work, which, too, are by no means one hundred percent organized. Out of twenty or more millions of workers in the United States, less than five million are organized. Note the potential for scabs!

Document 7

