Was President Theodore Roosevelt’s invitation to Booker T. Washington to dine at the White House a good idea?

Supporting Questions

1. What was Booker T. Washington’s stance on race relations?
2. What were Roosevelt’s goals in inviting Booker T. Washington to the White House?
3. How did the reactions of people in the north and south to Roosevelt’s invitation to Washington reflect attitudes and belief towards race?
**Was President Theodore Roosevelt’s invitation to Booker T. Washington to dine at the White House a good idea?**

**Inquiry Standard**
- D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

**Staging the Compelling Question**
Before any indication of content, use the Google Slides Zooming activity with the Booker T. Washington lithograph (Source C below). Second, examine the first two minutes John McCain’s 2008 speech (Video Source A and Transcript Source B) after he conceded the US Presidential Race to Barack Obama- America’s First African American President. Third, discuss the question, “Why should we care today?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Question 1</th>
<th>Supporting Question 2</th>
<th>Supporting Question 3</th>
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<td>What was Booker T. Washington’s stance on race relations?</td>
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**Formative Performance Task**
- Use SCIM to summarize Washington’s stance on race.
- Use SCIM-C to infer Roosevelt’s political goals for inviting Washington to dine.
- Use SCIM-C to make a claim with evidence about the differences between northern and southern reactions to the dinner.

**Featured Sources**
- Source A: Booker T Washington’s Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition Speech
- Source B: Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Albion Tourgee, November 8, 1901
- Source A: Bishop Grant Sees The President and Talks of the South
- Source C: Excerpts of newspapers printed in the Richmond Times, VA, 1901, October 19th
- Source D: Excerpts of newspaper article printed in the Philadelphia Public Ledger, PA, 1901, October 19th
- Source E: GO WAY BACK AND SIT DOWN

**Summative Performance Task**
**ARGUMENT**
Using the evidence you’ve gathered through SCIM-C, craft a response to the compelling question “Was President Theodore Roosevelt’s invitation to Booker T. Washington to dine at the White House a good idea?”

**EXTENSION**
After making written claims based on evidence the opportunities emerge for discussions regarding race relations today and how politicians and the media discuss and report on race and relations.

**UNDERSTAND**
Identify events in popular culture and politics today that share characteristics with the President Roosevelt and Booker T. Washington’s dinner.

**ASSESS**
Determine how conditions related to these events have changed or remains the same.

**ACTION**
Engage in an informed discussion with others about issues of race and race relations today.
Overview

Inquiry Description

The election of Barack Obama to the Presidency of the United States made front-page news around the world in 2008. As John McCain noted in his concession speech the election of an African American to the Presidency at the opening of the 21st century marked a watershed moment for all Americans, but the election held a special significance for African Americans. To highlight the significance of the election of Barack Obama to the Presidency, McCain referenced another “first” regarding an African American and his presence at the White House on October 16th, 1901. The White House dinner between the influential African American educator Booker T. Washington and President Theodore Roosevelt, during his first month in office, made newspaper headlines across the United States - but for very different reasons. This inquiry examines how the newspapers of the time- Mainstream Northern, Southern and African American- reported on and reacted to Booker T. Washington’s Dinner with Theodore Roosevelt at the White House in order to gain an understanding of the purpose and significance of the dinner itself, but also insights into race relations during the era of Jim Crow at the opening of the 20th century.

On October 16, 1901, a month after President William McKinley’s assassination, the new President Theodore Roosevelt invited the influential African American educator and author Booker T. Washington to dinner at the White House. While both men knew of the uniqueness of the dinner at the White House, neither anticipated the press reactions that would follow. Press coverage of Roosevelt’s first month in office was marked by praise for his bipartisan approach which included the appointment of Thomas G. Jones - the former governor of Alabama- as a federal judge (on the advice of Booker T. Washington and his solid leadership during a period of National crisis.

Structure

In this inquiry, students will investigate 3 supporting questions and complete 3 related tasks. After opening the inquiry with a recognition of the modern day influence of this event, students will examine a range of historic newspaper articles. There examination will focus on 1) Booker T. Washington’s stance on race and race relations, 2) Roosevelt’s goals for inviting Booker T. Washington to the White House, 3) the reactions of people (in the press) in the north and south to Roosevelt’s invitation to Washington and how those reactions reflected attitudes and belief towards race during the Jim Crow Era. The tasks are arranged in a logical sequential manner beginning with students summarizing, inferring, them making a single claim based on the evidence in order to compose and evidence based argument.
Staging the Compelling Question

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| Featured Sources    | • Source A: Video of John McCain’s Concession Speech (November 4th, 2008)  
• Source B: Transcript of John McCain Concession Speech November 8, 2008  
• Source C: Zoom In To History |

**Staging the compelling question**

John McCain’s concession speech refers to the importance of Roosevelt’s decision to bring Booker T. Washington to the White House - which connects directly to the compelling question. He clearly reveals there is a direct connection between historic decisions regarding race relations over time and space.
Excerpt

The first two minutes of John McCain’s concession speech evokes the memory of Roosevelt’s decision to invite Booker T. Washington to the White House. He specifically is focusing on the issue of race and race relations today and in the past.

John McCain Concession Speech November 4th 2008


Source:
The New York Times

Election Results 2008

Wednesday, November 05, 2008

My friends, we have come to the end of a long journey. The American people have spoken, and they have spoken clearly. A little while ago, I had the honor of calling Sen. Barack Obama — to congratulate him on being elected the next president of the country that we both love.

In a contest as long and difficult as this campaign has been, his success alone commands my respect for his ability and perseverance. But that he managed to do so by inspiring the hopes of so many millions of Americans, who had once wrongly believed that they had little at stake or little influence in the election of an American president, is something I deeply admire and commend him for achieving.

This is an historic election, and I recognize the special significance it has for African-Americans and for the special pride that must be theirs tonight.

I've always believed that America offers opportunities to all who have the industry and will to seize it. Sen. Obama believes that, too. But we both recognize that though we have come a long way from the old injustices that once stained our nation's reputation and denied some Americans the full blessings of American citizenship, the memory of them still had the power to wound.

A century ago, President Theodore Roosevelt's invitation of Booker T. Washington to visit — to dine at the White House — was taken as an outrage in many quarters. America today is a world away from the cruel and prideful bigotry of that time. There is no better evidence of this than the election of an African-American to the presidency of the United States. Let there be no reason now for any American to fail to cherish their citizenship in this, the greatest nation on Earth.

Sen. Obama has achieved a great thing for himself and for his country. I applaud him for it, and offer my sincere sympathy that his beloved grandmother did not live to see this day — though our faith assures us she is at rest in the presence of her Creator and so very proud of the good man she helped raise.

Sen. Obama and I have had and argued our differences, and he has prevailed. No doubt many of those differences remain. These are difficult times for our country, and I pledge to him tonight to do all in my power to help him lead us through the many challenges we face.

I urge all Americans who supported me to join me in not just congratulating him, but offering our next president our goodwill and earnest effort to find ways to come together, to find the necessary compromises, to bridge our differences and help restore our prosperity, defend our security in a dangerous world, and leave our children and grandchildren a stronger, better country than we inherited.

Whatever our differences, we are fellow Americans. And please believe me when I say no association has ever meant more to me than that.

Source:
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?story...
Excerpt

This link will open a Google Slide Presentation that can be used to State the Compelling Question. It is based on a TPS Northern Virginia Inquiry model called Zoom In to history. It presents students with a piece of an image at a time to interpret until all the pieces of the puzzle are visible. In this case, the image is a Lithograph of Booker T. Washington Dining in the White House with T.Roosevelt. On Slide 1, you will find a link to the Northern Virginia TPS instructions for creating such a Zoom-In Activity with a primary source.

Source:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1TtQC1RsneK..
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<th>What was Booker T. Washington’s stance on race relations?</th>
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<td>Use SCIM to summarize Washington’s stance on race.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Materials</td>
<td><strong>SCIM-CWorksheetQuestion1.docx</strong> (<a href="https://s3.amazonaws.com/idm-dev/u/b/1/a/3/794/b1a3b94f0b4a8b7cc63fefaeb30c0ccc8c14bf92.docx">https://s3.amazonaws.com/idm-dev/u/b/1/a/3/794/b1a3b94f0b4a8b7cc63fefaeb30c0ccc8c14bf92.docx</a>)</td>
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The question is designed to explore on source to provide insights into Booker T. Washington stance on race relations. His Atlanta speech can serve as a powerful entry point into this.

**Formative Performance Task**

SCIM-C is a strategy for interpreting history developed by David Hicks, Peter Doolittle, Tom Ewing at Virginia Tech. [http://historicalinquiry.com/](http://historicalinquiry.com/). For this formative task, students will be asked to complete the S and C parts of SCIM-C (Summarize and Contextualize).
Gentlemen of the Exposition, as we present to you our humble effort at an exhibition of our progress, you must not expect overmuch. Starting thirty years ago with ownership here and there in a few quilts and pumpkins and chickens (gathered from miscellaneous sources), remember the path that has led from these to the inventions and production of agricultural implements, buggies, steam-engines, newspapers, books, statuary, carving, paintings, the management of drug stores and banks, has not been trodden without contact with thorns and thistles. While we take pride in what we exhibit as a result of our independent efforts, we do not for a moment forget that our part in this exhibition would fall far short of your expectations but for the constant help that has come to our educational life, not only from the Southern states, but especially from Northern philanthropists, who have made their gifts a constant stream of blessing and encouragement.

The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.

In conclusion, may I repeat that nothing in thirty years has given us more hope and encouragement, and drawn us so near to you of the white race, as this opportunity offered by the Exposition; and here bending, as it were, over the altar that represents the results of the struggles of your race and mine, both starting practically empty-handed three decades ago, I pledge that in your effort to work out the great and intricate problem which God has laid at the doors of the South, you shall have at all times the patient, sympathetic help of my race; only let this he constantly in mind, that, while from representations in these buildings of the product of field, of forest, of mine, of factory, letters, and art, much good will come, yet far above and beyond material benefits will be that higher good, that, let us pray God, will come, in a blotting out of sectional differences and racial animosities and suspicions, in a determination to administer absolute justice, in a willing obedience among all classes to the mandates of law. This, coupled with our material prosperity, will bring into our beloved South a new heaven and a new earth.

Source:
### Supporting Question 2

<table>
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<th>Supporting Question</th>
<th>What were Roosevelt’s goals in inviting Booker T. Washington to the White House?</th>
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<td>Use SCIM-C to infer Roosevelt’s political goals for inviting Washington to dine.</td>
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| Featured Sources | Source A: Bishop Grant Sees The President and Talks of the South  
Source B: Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Albion Tourgee, November 8, 1901 |
| Additional Materials | SCIM-CWorksheetQuestion2.docx  
[https://s3.amazonaws.com/idm-dev/u/5/e/1/3/794/5e1369aed0996f6d684926ca709e281d38d8626f.docx](https://s3.amazonaws.com/idm-dev/u/5/e/1/3/794/5e1369aed0996f6d684926ca709e281d38d8626f.docx) |

This question is designed to investigate Roosevelt’s rationale for inviting Booker T. Washington to the White House. Understanding his goals will help move students to make claims regarding the compelling question.

**Formative Performance Task**

In this formative task, students will be using the SCI part of SCIM-C (Summarizing, Contextualizing and Inferring).

A SCIM worksheet for Supporting Question #2 is provided below.
Bishop Abraham Grant was in the city Sunday, Monday and Tuesday of this week. He spoke at the Metropolitan A. M. E. Church Sunday morning and evening to large congregations. He was invited to Washington by President Roosevelt, who wanted his opinion and advice on his Southern policy. The Bishop is one of the big men of the race. He has an accurate knowledge of the condition of the white and colored people of the South and is, himself a fine illustration of the possibilities of the American Negro. In his interview with the President, he gave most hearty approval of the appointment of Ex-Gov Jones, of Alabama, as a federal judge of that state. “Such appointments as that, Mr. President,” said Bishop Grant, “will guarantee justice to all and will give the colored man a greater sense of security than anything else” Gov. Jones used stronger language against lynching than any President ever used.

“My answer to lynching in some places,” answered the President, “was he appointment of Gov Jones.” The President went on to say that his reading the language of Gov Jones against lynching had as much to do with the Jones appointment as anything else.

Bishop Grant asked the President to confer with some conservative and intelligent colored leaders before definitely fixing upon a policy in Southern affair.

“Whatsoever is best to strengthen the friendship of the white and colored people of the South, I will favor,” said Bishop Grant. “The white people and the Negro must settle down and live together in peace. Our interests in the South are much greater than in the remainder of the country, and the President can and will do much to solve the question that confronts every President.”

Prof. Booker T. Washington, accompanied by his stenographer, Mr. N. Aunt, was in the city last Wednesday. They have been making a tour of Mississippi and the Gulf states. Mr. Washington dined pith President Roosevelt by special invitation Wednesday evening.

Source:
Excerpt

When I asked Booker T. Washington to dinner I did not devote very much thought to the matter one way or the other. I respect him greatly and believe in the work he has done. I have consulted so much with him it seemed to me that it was natural to ask him to dinner to talk over this work, and the very fact that I felt a moment’s qualm on inviting him because of his color made me ashamed of myself and made me hasten to send the invitation. I did not think of its baring one way or the other either on my own future or on anything else. As things have turned out I am very glad that I asked him, for the clamor aroused be the act makes me feel as if the act was necessary.

Source:
Supporting Question 3

<table>
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<th>Supporting Question</th>
<th>How did the reactions of people in the north and south to Roosevelt’s invitation to Washington reflect attitudes and belief towards race?</th>
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<td>Formative Performance Task</td>
<td>Use SCIM-C to make a claim with evidence about the differences between northern and southern reactions to the dinner.</td>
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**Featured Sources**

- **Source A**: A Barbarous Prejudice
- **Source B**: President Censured, Mr. Roosevelt Scored For Dining Booker Washington
- **Source C**: Excerpts of newspapers printed in the Richmond Times, VA, 1901, October 19th
- **Source D**: Excerpts of newspaper article printed in the Philadelphia Public Ledger, PA, 1901, October 19th
- **Source E**: GO WAY BACK AND SIT DOWN

**Additional Materials**

- [SCIM-CWorksheetQuestion3.docx](https://s3.amazonaws.com/idm-dev/u/a/f/a/e/794/afae3258efdfdb773349ce4f589e50c7d0359cf.docx)

This question allows students to examine a series of newspaper articles from various regions of the country in order to gather insights into any regional differences regarding peoples’ reaction to the dinner.

**Formative Performance Task**

In this formative task, students will be using all parts of SCIM-C (Summarizing, Contextualizing, Inferring, Monitoring and Corroborating).

A SCIM worksheet for Supporting Question #3 is provided below.
Excerpt

Booker T. Washington dined at the White House Wednesday and the exclusive society of Washington and southern people generally are said to be offended. The society people hardly know what course they will pursue if other colored men shall appear at social functions in the White House during the present administration, and the southerners are held to be offended that the president should give any sort of social recognition to any member of the negro race. Contrary as all this is to our republican theories of equality and our sympathy with Burns’ “a man’s a man for a’ that,” it cannot be denied that in the north, as well as in the south, there is a widespread objection to any kind of social intercourse between the two races. This feeling finds its most common manifestation in daily life in the frequent refusal of restaurants and hotels to entertain colored men and the resulting suits under the civil rights law.

Yet it does seem that any fair-minded person ought to be able to divest himself of all race prejudice in considering such a fact as President Roosevelt’s willingness to break bread with Booker T. Washington. That anyone should think of applying to this able, well-behaved, great man and American citizen a general rule even the president of all the American people can meet one of his fellow citizens man to man, because the citizen has a black skin is an astounding proof of how far we are from being either a Christian or an enlightened nation.

It requires no advocacy of social equality or intimacy between the two races to defend and even warmly commend President Roosevelt for receiving Booker Washington, just as he is from day to day receiving other representative men. Mr. Washington himself does not attempt to promote the social contact of the two races. He has never attempted to force himself or his people where they were not wanted. If there is one characteristic of President Roosevelt’s composition that is more marked than another it is his appreciation of a man who “does things,” of ability, virility and worth. That is why he is drawn to Mr. Washington, just as thousands of other people have come to entertain warm admiration and profound respect for the man of Tuskeegee.

The plain people care little what Washington society thinks about the president’s entertainment of Mr. Washington, but they are concerned about the attitude of the south. It is to be hoped that the first conjectures as to what the south will think are wrong and that Booker Washington at the White House will be viewed as Booker Washington the man, not Booker Washington, a mere unit in an inferior race. The president has shown a firm intention to deal considerately and helpfully with the south and the good impression he has already made in that section should not be affected by an absurd idea that he has erred in entertaining one of the south’s great men.

Source:
He Has Killed His Influence in the South by Setting an Example of Social Equality.

Washington Special to Atlanta Constitution

President Roosevelt shocked severely his recently acquired Southern friends and admirers by inviting Professor Booker T. Washington, the noted negro college president, to dine at the White House last night. Washington went there without other guests. There is a feeling of indignation among Southern men, generally that the President should in the face of his declaration of friendliness toward the people of the south, take this early opportunity to show such a marked courtesy and distinction to a negro.

There is but one similar instance within the recollection of the oldest inhabitant of the Capital City when persons of negro blood were dined at the White House by the President. That was during President Cleveland’s administration, when Queen Liliuokalani visited this country to resist the proposed annexation of the Hawaiian Islands. Then the royal party took dinner with the President.

Political and Social Equality

What effect the dining of Professor Washington by President Roosevelt is going to have upon his Southern policy remains to be seen. It is predicted that it will drive from him some of his new allies. A few days ago, when a delegation of Southern politicians called upon the President in connection with a Federal appointment, he took occasion to remark that the color of a man’s skin should not operate to his advantage or disadvantage in an appointment or a removal from office. President Roosevelt apparently intends to apply the same rule at his dinner table, and exercise his independence in the selection of his guests. Some of the men who have talked with the President on the situation in the Southern States have come away from the White House impressed by frankness and independence in speaking of the race question but at the same time many of them have also been convinced that he does not fully appreciate how difficult it is for the average white man of the South to place himself on a personal equality with the negro. It is for this reason that it has been more than once suggested to the President that, in the event of a change in the personnel of the cabinet it might be to his advantage to select a representative from the South to help solve the race problem. Southern men here tonight in commenting on the Washington incident declare that the President does not and cannot understand the bad effect his inviting the negro leader to dinner.

Source:

President Censured, Mr. Roosevelt Scored For Dining Booker Washington. The Montgomery Advertiser. (Montgomery, Ala), 19 Oct. 1901. https://scholar.vt.edu/access/content/group/a118e2..
RICHMOND, VA Oct. 19.—The “Times” of this morning says:

“President Roosevelt has said by this act that he is in favor of social equality between the races, and has further said, so far as an act may be expressive of one’s sentiments, that he believes that the negro should be treated as a social equal in all arts of the country. Carry that doctrine to its logical conclusion and we shall have in this country not only social equality, but intermarriage between the races. We do not believe that the people of the North are prepared to accept that doctrine and put it into practice; as for the people of the South, they will not tolerate it, and they have nothing but contempt for any man who advocates social equality and miscegenation. This is not a question of race prejudice; it is a question of racial instinct, which can be trusted when the strongest individual intellects are at fault.

The ‘Times’ argues that the proposition from a scientific point of view, is absurd and impossible, and speaks of the abhorrence of the white man or white woman to the bare thought of marrying a colored person, especially a negro; reiterates its wish that the black man shall be given all his rights under the law, and continues:

President Roosevelt has acted with folly or utter disregard for conditions that cannot and ought not to be ignored in setting this example, and if that is to be his policy he might as well abandon all hope of making friends of the Southern people. Social equality between the races, with all that relationship inevitably brings, is one thing which they will never tolerate.”

Source:
PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 19.—The “Ledger” this morning says:

“Because President Roosevelt saw fit in his good judgment to invite Booker T. Washington to dinner, strong words of disapproval are heard in the South. Mr. Washington is a colored man who enjoys the universal respect of all people in this country, black and white, on account of attainments, character, and deeds. As the President invited him to be his private guest, and did not attempt to force the companionship of a colored man upon anyone to whom the association could possibly be distasteful, any criticism of the President’s act savors of very great impertinence. But, considered in any light, the invitation is not a subject for criticism. Booker T. Washington is one of the most notable citizens of the country just because he has done noteworthy things. He is the founder and the successful executive of one of the most remarkable institutions in the United States, the Tuskegee Alabama Institute, which not only aims, but in fact does, educate and train the youth of the negro race to become useful, industrious, and self-supporting citizens.

Booker T. Washington is the embodiment of common sense, and, instead of inciting the members of his race to dwell upon their wrongs, to waste their time upon politics, and to try to get something for nothing in this life, in order to live without work, he has constantly preached the gospel of honest work, and has founded a great industrial school, which fits the young negroes for useful lives as workers and teachers of industry to others. This is the man who was justly called by President McKinley, after he has inspected Tuskegee, the “leader of his race,” and in the South no intelligent man denies that he is doing a great service to the whole population of both colors in this land. It is evident that the only objection that could be brought against association with such a man as that is color alone, and President Roosevelt will not recognize that prejudice.

Source:
GO WAY BACK AND SIT DOWN

"GO WAY BACK AND SIT DOWN."


<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85034438/>
Summative Performance Task

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<td>Extension</td>
<td>After making written claims based on evidence the opportunities emerge for discussions regarding race relations today and how politicians and the media discuss and report on race and relations</td>
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Argument

SCIM-C is a historical analysis tool that will allow students to summarize, contextualize, infer, and monitor their thinking with regard to specific sources and then corroborate across sources to develop a nuanced evidence based claim.

Extension

Given the current era - the election of Donald Trump- there will be many opportunities to discuss ongoing race relations and how politicians talk about race and race relations and how the media reports on such issues within and across communities.
### Taking Informed Action

<table>
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<th>Understand</th>
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<td>Action</td>
<td>Engage in an informed discussion with others about issues of race and race relations today.</td>
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Given the current era - election of Donald Trump - there should be a number of opportunities to make connections to issues of race and race relations today.