



## *Teach Us All*

### Synopsis

In September 1957, following the watershed Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education*, a group of African-American students known as the Little Rock Nine courageously attempted to defy the notion that skin color should determine educational access by integrating an all-white southern high school. Nearly 60 years after the “Little Rock Crisis,” disparities in access to quality education remain among the most urgent civil rights issues of our time. With its school district hanging in the balance following a state takeover in January 2015, contemporary Little Rock presents a microcosm of the inequities and challenges manifesting in classrooms all across America, which is seeing a re-segregation of its schools.

Through case studies in Little Rock, New York City, and Los Angeles, this feature-length documentary film seeks to bring the critical lessons of history to bear on the current state of U.S. education and investigate: **60 years later, how far have we come – or not come – and where do we go from here?**

Produced by the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes, *Teach Us All* is a documentary and social justice campaign on educational inequality. *Teach Us All* demonstrates powerful lessons from history within a timely context, emphasizing the need for unity and collective action to rectify the disparities among America’s children. The *Teach Us All* social justice campaign seeks to build the capacity of students and educators to take leadership in carrying forth the legacy of the Little Rock Nine while activating broader community engagement in today’s urgent need for educational equity. *Teach Us All* is written and directed by Sonia Lowman

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

*Helpful tips before starting discussion questions:*

- As with all discussion questions, you do not need to use all of the questions below.
- Pick and choose five or so for discussion in small groups, rotating questions if you plan to meet more than once.
- Plan at least 30 minutes for groups of six to give everyone about five minutes to share their answers.
- When facilitating, remind people they can choose to answer some or all of the questions.

1. How did the film make you feel about education in America?
2. What was the most memorable part of the film?
3. Is there a thought or feeling that has stuck with you that you'd like to share or discuss?
4. What is your relationship with education in your community/school?
5. How much prior knowledge about the Little Rock school crisis did you have before watching the film?
6. Have you ever experienced a scenario where people were practicing intolerance or bigotry in an overt way?
7. How can we stand up for tolerance and inclusion on our daily life?
8. How does the film tie tolerance and inclusion to challenges in racial segregation in school?
9. Was a particular student/parent/teacher's experience resonate with you as a viewer?
10. How can families and students contribute to equal school experiences across any city, how about in the city where you live?
11. What are the school resources like where you/your kids go to school?
12. Do you know if it's the same as other schools in your district?
13. Was a particular student/parent/teacher's experience resonate with you as a viewer?
14. Triple segregation affects students profoundly by limiting their exposure to immersion English language experiences, racial diversity and coursework keeping up with traditional classes when assigned to ESL classes. Does this issue affect your community? If so, how?
15. What are ways to promote student and parent activism in your community at the local, state and federal level?

16. Describe the idea of Tikkun Olam in your own words. What does this mean for your community and the country at large?
17. Are there examples ideas and strategies you can share from your own experience or someone you know that have been successful or unsuccessful in fighting for education equity?
18. What relationship do you have with your local schools now?
19. What kind of roles are open to you to participate more in the way your school community operates?
20. At the end of the film Senator Joyce Elliot urges those who are doing, in their eyes, what's best for their own children to also take "some responsibility for the whole." Is this possible? Altruistic? Realistic? If not now, how can our efforts make the environment change to make it so?

*Adapted from the Lowell Milken Center <https://www.lowellmilkencenter.org/>*