

Booker T. Washington - Rosenwald Schools

Critical Thinking & Discussion Questions

Select from the following critical thinking exercises. Younger students will benefit from guided discussions on the topics while those in grades 5-8 can answer questions independently or work in groups.

Booker T. Washington provided the vision for what the Rosenwald schools would look like and what they would teach.

- If you were designing a school what would be important to include in how the school looked?
- What would you want the school to teach?

The Rosenwald schools taught **work and life skills** as well as typical school subjects like reading and writing. (Teachers - Explain and give examples of work and life skills.)

- Why do you think these skills were important for children in the Rosenwald schools to learn?
- Do you think schools should still teach life skills today?

The Rosenwald schools were built with help from the communities around them.

- Do you think it is important for communities and local businesses to show school spirit and support their local schools? Why or why not?
- What are some ways that parents and communities can support schools today?

After segregation was declared illegal, the Rosenwald schools closed.

- Have you heard stories about the difficulties in integrating schools?
- What do you know about that time in American history?
- Do you think most schools are well integrated now? What improvements do you think can be made?

There are currently many efforts underway to preserve the Rosenwald school buildings.

- Do you agree with trying to preserve old Rosenwald buildings?
- What lessons do you think we can learn from remembering the Rosenwald schools?

Here is a list of Bob Woodson's 10 Principles:

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| Competence | Innovation |
| Integrity | Inspiration |
| Transparency | Agency |
| Resilience | Access |
| Witness | Grace |

Which do you think Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald most embodied in their lives?