What about Your Neighborhood?

Research whether your town/city increased or decreased in population during the great migration (1915–40).

Research the racial makeup of your town’s population. Has it changed over the years? If so, hypothesize why.

Were there factories or other industry in your town during 1920–50? Were they located near a transportation network? Do these businesses exist today? Have new businesses opened up? Where? Has transportation influenced the businesses’ location, and their success or failure? Why or why not? How?

Do you have family members who traveled during 1920–50? Interview them and find out what type of transportation they took. What year did they get their first car? Did they ride trains before that? Ask them to share their memories.

Resources

U.S. Historical Census Data Browser (http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/)
Using the census, find out how the population of your community changed throughout time. Compare different time periods by selecting different years in the left margin. Select “Total Population,” then your state, to find your county’s population.

Find a map of your town or city from the unit time period and compare it to today. Determine the relationship between industry and transportation and see how it has changed. Select “Cities and Towns” and then “Geographic Location Index” to find a map of your area.

Association of African American Museums (http://www.blackmuseums.org)
Listings of African American museums throughout the United States. Select “Museum Links” and then your state to find a museum near you. Contact your local African American museum for more information about the great migration and other history in your community.

Association of American Railroads (http://www.railfanclub.org)
Offers free resources to teachers of grades K–12, including books, videos, CD-ROMs, maps, safety brochures, activity sheets, and supplies. Select “Teacher Resources.”