Lesson 2 Primary Documents: Discrimination

Document No. 1

Publication: *North American and United States Gazette*
Date: July 1, 1863
Title: “The Colored Soldier”
Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The prejudice against [the colored soldiers] is still diminishing. The movements of the colored people here as a class have been most laudably prompt, though the government discriminates against them in the matter of pay. The white soldier receives $13 per month, the colored soldier but $10, or $10.50…

The prominent colored people express the opinion that the matter will not end here. They expect to raise another regiment beside this. If this regiment alone, they say, could move southward, it could be increased to a brigade by the accessions of refugees and contrabands.

Document No. 2

Letter
From Thomas Webster to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton
Thursday, July 30, 1863
Letters Sent, NARA Philadelphia

Philadelphia July 30th 1863

In raising a regiment in twenty seven days, the Committee took special care to inform each recruit that his pay would be but ten dollars per month from which three dollars per month would be deducted for clothing, but they were able at the same time, by the liberality of the Citizens Bounty Fund of Philadelphia, to pay Ten dollars bounty to each recruit.

Within the past few days, two other classes of recruits have been mustered in...drafted men who expect to be paid Thirteen dollars per month, without deduction for clothing, and a bounty the same as shall be paid to drafted white men, and a few substitutes for drafted white men…

Have not colored men been thus placed on the same level with white men so far as regards “military duty in the services of the United States” and as such entitled to the same pay bounty &c: This is most indubitable the common sense conclusion of the people who say, on all sides “if the colored man is to be a soldier, let him have the same pay, bounty, rations, and treatment, that white soldiers receive.
Document No. 3

**Publication:** *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
**Date:** August 26, 1863
**Title:** “The Colored Regiments”
**Location:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Recruiting at the head-quarters of the colored regiments is quite dull at the present time. This is supposed to be owing to the fact that colored men prefer waiting until the law regulating the compensation is altered in favor of the volunteer.

Document No. 4

**Publication:** *New York Herald Tribune*
**Date:** September 7, 1863
**Title:** “Intolerance in Philadelphia”

On Monday last, a flag painted by a colored man was presented to the colored regiment at Camp William Penn, near Philadelphia, on the eve of its departure for the South: but though a large number of colored people attended the ceremony, they were excluded from the ordinary city cars, and were compelled to hire special conveyances to get to the camp. Although these people gave their husbands, sons and brother to the war for the Union, they could not use the public conveyances of the city of Philadelphia to go out to camp and bid them farewell. When will such hateful intolerance cease?

Document No. 5

**Publication:** *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
**Date:** August 30, 1864
**Title:** “Cars for Colored People”

Complaints are made by many respectable colored persons of the poor accommodations provided for them to reach the Summit House Hospital, where there are confined at the present time about six hundred colored veteran volunteers, who have been wounded in battle. The wives and children of many of this class feel anxious to visit the hospital, but cannot for want of proper conveyances. The Directors of the Fifth and Sixth streets line of passenger cars run at given periods, cars for the special accommodation of colored persons who wish to visit their friends at Camp William Penn, and hundreds pass over the road daily to the camp. A similar move is suggested to the Directors of roads leading to the Summit House Hospital.

Questions

1. How much money did black soldiers receive per month versus white soldiers?
2. Why does the *Philadelphia Inquirer* believe that the pace of USCT enlistments had slowed by the late summer of 1863?

3. Using your knowledge of the Civil War and African American experience, list other reasons that black soldiers were increasingly unwilling to enlist in the USCT.

4. In what ways were the families of the Camp William Penn soldiers discriminated against?

5. Describe the relationship between Camp William Penn and discrimination.