



THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Teacher's Guide

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**TEACHER'S GUIDE
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Materials in the Unit

- The video program [The Civil Rights Movement](#)
- Teachers Guide

This teacher's guide has been prepared to aid the teacher in utilizing materials contained within this program. In addition to this introductory material, the guide contains suggested instructional procedures for the lesson, answer keys for the activity sheets, and follow-up activities and projects for the lesson.

- Blackline Masters

Included in this program are ten blackline masters for duplication and distribution. They consist of, classroom activities, information sheets, take-home activities, Pre-Test, Post-Test, and the text to the Video Quiz.

The blackline masters are provided as the follow-up activities for each lesson. They will help you determine focal points for class discussion based on the objectives for the lesson.

The blackline masters have a three-fold purpose: to reinforce the program; to provide an opportunity for the students to apply and analyze what they have learned from the program; for use as diagnostic tools to assess areas in which individual students need help.

Introduction and Summary of Series

America in the 20th Century is a comprehensive series designed to provide a clear overview of the people and events that distinguished the 20th century. Rare archival footage and photographs, authentic recordings, and other primary source documents, bring history to life, while stunning graphics and engaging narration lend context and clarity to the subject.

The series has been developed specifically for classroom use. It is organized around established standards and thoughtfully divided into chapters, with each volume functioning well as a full-length program or as focused support for specific study areas.

Introduction and Summary of Program

Produced by Media Rich Learning, The Civil Rights Movement is part of the award-winning educational documentary series, America in the 20th Century. The program presents a concise,

balanced account of the movement to eliminate racial intolerance and segregation that had been in place for centuries. The story is dramatic, poignant and, at times, troubling.

The Civil Rights Movement, focuses primarily on the Southern campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s. Through archival film footage, and cogent narration, it documents the civil rights struggle beginning with its roots during the Reconstruction era. It traces the evolution of the movement through the twentieth century, exploring such historical events as the Montgomery Bus Boycott, sit-ins, Freedom Rides, Birmingham Childrens' campaign, Mississippi Freedom Summer, the Selma Voting Rights campaign and the rise of the Black Power Movement.

The importance and lasting impact of Civil Rights Movement cannot be overstated. Perhaps at no time in our history have the actions of so many "ordinary" men and women made such a dramatic impact on the political and social fabric of American society. The echo of these distant events resonate--and sometimes rumble--still, in our "post racial" culture of the 21st century.

A brief word on usage: Today, the most widely accepted term used when referring to Americans of African heritage is "African American." This has not always been the case. For nearly a century, following the Civil War, the most common term used by African Americans for self identification was "negro." Figures such W.E.B DuBois, A. Philip Randolph, and Martin Luther King, Jr. referred to themselves as negroes. Beginning in the mid-1960s, a younger generation, riding the wave of "black power" self-identified as "black." The term "African American" emerged in the 1980s, not as a means of distinguishing superficial differences in skin color, but as a means of indicating a person's ethnicity while emphasizing our shared heritage - in much the same way that labels such as Irish-American and Italian-American came into popular use in the early 20th century. Throughout this program, we use the terms negro, black and African American to refer to individuals of African heritage. In each instance, we have chosen the term deemed most suitable to the historical and social context.

The program is subdivided into several chapters:

- Chapter 1: From Reconstruction to Redemption—The American Civil War helped bring an end to slavery in the United States, but it failed to secure lasting freedom and equality for African Americans. In the courts and on the streets, Southern "Redeemers" sought to win back what had been lost on the battlefield. By the end of the 1800s two societies existed side by side: one black, one white, separate and unequal.
- Chapter 2: The Road to Brown—The road to Brown v. Board of Education was long and arduous--a methodic process of dismantling segregation in education piece by piece in the nation's highest courts. The Court's decision--that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal"--galvanized opponents and set the stage for Civil Rights battles in schools and colleges throughout the South.
- Chapter 3: Integration—The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the first large-scale and enduring protest for Negro rights. It was the signal event that launched the modern Civil Rights

Movement and elevated the names of Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King into the pantheon of American heroes.

- Chapter 4: Bending Toward Justice—In response to segregation, intolerance and racial violence a new generation of activists arose to confront Jim Crow. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the first large-scale and enduring protest for Negro rights. It was the signal event that launched the modern Civil Rights Movement and elevated the names of Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King into the pantheon of American heroes.
- Chapter 5: Shock Troops of the Revolution—In 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, four freshmen college students walked into a Woolworth’s Drug Store and sat down at a lunch counter reserved for whites. They were refused service, but they remained seated in silent protest until the store closed. The “sit-in” movement swept the South as young African Americans—impatient with the pace of change—embraced the cause of Civil Rights.
- Chapter 6: Freedom Rides—In 1961, the “Freedom Rides” were the Movement’s boldest initiative to date—a descent into the deep South, by bus, to test compliance with Supreme Court rulings barring segregated interstate travel. The explosive violence that resulted captured the attention of the media and the nation.
- Chapter 7: Confrontation 1963—In 1963, the SCLC launched “Project C” in Birmingham, Alabama. The “C” stood for the confrontations civil rights leaders hoped would bait local officials into outrageous action. They were not disappointed. High pressure water hoses and snarling police dogs compelled the President to finally address the issue of race relations head-on.
- Chapter 8: March on Washington—In 1963, a quarter of a million participants—some say even more—converged on the mall in Washington D.C. Their objective was to galvanize support for Civil Rights legislation and send a strong message to representatives in Congress.
- Chapter 9: Mississippi Burning—In 1964, three civil rights workers disappeared while working to register Black voters in the South. The FBI investigation that ensued—code-named “Mississippi Burning”—unveiled the cauldron of racial intolerance, hatred and violence that infected 1960s Mississippi.
- Chapter 10: Civil Rights to Selma—The 1965 Selma to Montgomery march marked the high water mark in the Civil Rights Movement. But even with the prospect of sweeping voting rights legislation on the horizon, factional infighting between young and old threatened to splinter the movement itself.
- Chapter 11: Black Power—The Civil Rights Movement had dismantled the Southern system of segregation, but it had ignored the insidious racism that festered elsewhere. Poverty,

unemployment, police harassment, unfulfilled expectations...had created a tinderbox, ready to explode on the streets of inner-city ghettos.

Viewed in its entirety, The Civil Rights Movement will provide an excellent overview of the period. Individually, the chapters can be used to facilitate more focused study of their subjects. Several other America in the 20th Century programs may provide additional context for this period, including The Cold War, Vietnam, The Post-War Years, and The Sixties.

Standards

Era 9: Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)

STANDARD 4:

The struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties.

Standard 4A

The student understands the “Second Reconstruction” and its advancement of civil rights.

Benchmarks:

Grade level: 7-12

Explain the origins of the postwar civil rights movement and the role of the NAACP in the legal assault on segregation. [Analyze multiple causation]

Grade level: 5-12

Evaluate the Warren Court’s reasoning in *Brown v. Board of Education* and its significance in advancing civil rights. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

Grade level: 5-12

Explain the resistance to civil rights in the South between 1954 and 1965. [Identify issues and problems in the past]

Grade level: 7-12

Analyze the leadership and ideology of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X in the civil rights movement and evaluate their legacies. [Assess the importance of the individual in history]

Grade level: 7-12

Assess the role of the legislative and executive branches in advancing the civil rights movement and the effect of shifting the focus from de jure to de facto segregation. [Evaluate the implementation of a decision]

Grade level: 5-12

Evaluate the agendas, strategies, and effectiveness of various African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Americans, as well as the disabled, in the quest for civil rights and equal opportunities. [Explain historical continuity and change]

Grade level: 9-12

Assess the reasons for and effectiveness of the escalation from civil disobedience to more radical protest in the civil rights movement. [Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances]

Instructional Notes

It is suggested that you preview the program and read the related Suggested Instructional Procedures before involving your students in the lesson activities. By doing so, you will become familiar with the materials and be better prepared to adapt the program to the needs of your class.

You will probably find it best to follow the program and lesson activities in the order in which they are presented in this teacher's guide, but this is not necessary.

It is also suggested that the program presentation take place before the entire class and under your direction. The lesson activities focus on the content of the programs.

As you review the instructional program outlined in the Teacher's Guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, deletions, or additions to fit the specific needs of your students.

Read the descriptions of the Blackline Masters and duplicate any of those you intend to use.

Suggested Instructional Procedures

To maximize the learning experience, teachers should:

- Preview the video [The Civil Rights Movement](#)
- Read the descriptions of the blackline masters.
- Duplicate any blackline masters you intend to use.

Students should be supplied with the necessary copies of blackline masters required to complete the activities. By keeping students informed of current events, teachers can extend any of the lessons on the program.

Student Objectives

After viewing the program [The Civil Rights Movement](#) and participating in the follow-up activities, students will be able to:

- Describe the effects of World War II on the United States home front for war preparations
- Explain the war hysteria after the attack on Pearl Harbor and its effect on Japanese-Americans
- Identify the changes made to everyday life for United States citizens at home during the war
- Compare and contrast the turning points and military campaigns utilized throughout the war in Europe and the Pacific, including the atomic bomb
- Outline the consequences and responsibilities established following World War II.

Follow-Up Activities

The following activities may be used to expand student understanding of the concepts and events presented in the video program. These links are to external resources and should be thoroughly reviewed prior to implementing them for classroom use. The accuracy and efficacy of the lessons are not governed by Media Rich Learning.

[Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nonviolent Resistance](#)

[Black Separatism or the Beloved Community? Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

[Dr. King's Dream](#)

[Ordinary People, Ordinary Places: The Civil Rights Movement](#)

[Birth of a Nation, the NAACP and the Balancing of Rights](#)

[Let Freedom Ring: The Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

[NAACP's Anti-Lynching Campaigns: The Quest for Social Justice in the Interwar Years](#)

[Picturing Freedom: Selma to Montgomery March, 1965](#)

[The Battle Over Reconstruction](#)

[The Kennedy Administration and the Civil Rights Movement](#)

Suggested Resources

X, Malcolm, and Alex Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1989.

Klibenoff, Hank, and Roberts, Gene. *The Race Beat*. New York: Random House, 2006.

Branch, Taylor. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-1963*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988.

Branch, Taylor. *Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years 1963-1965*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

Branch, Taylor. *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965-1968*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006.

Perstein, Rick. *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America*. New York: Scribner, 2008.

Reynolds, David. *America, Empire of Liberty: A New History of the United States*. New York: Basic Books, 2009.

Lemann, Nicholas. *Redemption: The Final Battle of the Civil War*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006.

Halberstam, David. *The Children*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1999.

Lewis, John and D'Orso, Michael. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*. New York: Mariner Books, 1999.

Williams, Juan. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. New York, Viking Penguin, 1987.

Arsenault, Raymond. *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2006.

Linder, Douglas O.: *Bending Toward Justice: John Doar and the Mississippi Burning Trial*. Mississippi Law Journal Volume 72, No. 2, Winter 2002

Internet

<http://crdl.usg.edu/?Welcome>

Civil Rights Digital Library

<http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>

Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University

<http://www.civilrightsteaching.org/>

Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching

<http://www.crmvet.org/>

Civil Rights Movement Veterans

Answer Key

Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 11. A |
| 2. B | 12. C |
| 3. B | 13. B |
| 4. B | 14. D |
| 5. A | 15. A |
| 6. B | 16. A |
| 7. B | 17. A |
| 8. D | 18. C |
| 9. C | 19. C |
| 10. B | 20. B |

Blackline Master #3: Post-Test

- | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|
| 1. A | 11. A | 21. D | 31. C | 41. A |
| 2. A | 12. A | 22. A | 32. C | 42. C |
| 3. A | 13. B | 23. A | 33. C | 43. D |
| 4. B | 14. B | 24. D | 34. D | 44. D |
| 5. A | 15. B | 25. B | 35. D | 45. A |
| 6. A | 16. A | 26. B | 36. C | 46. Stokely Carmichael |
| 7. A | 17. A | 27. A | 37. D | 47. Roy Wilkins |
| 8. B | 18. A | 28. A | 38. A | 48. Lyndon Johnson |
| 9. B | 19. B | 29. B | 39. D | 49. George Wallace |
| 10. A | 20. B | 30. B | 40. C | 50. Martin Luther King, Jr. |
| | | | | 51. Theodore Parker |
| | | | | 52. Harry Truman |

The following answers may vary.

Blackline Master #4: Discussion Questions

Answers will vary. Possible answers follow.

1. Discuss the successes and failures of the Civil Rights Movement.

Successes: passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 - two immensely important laws that codified the most pressing demands of the Civil Rights Movement; desegregated the South and dismantled the system of White supremacy; awakened the nation to the cause of racial equality; ended disenfranchisement of black voters in the South which, in turn, led to increased participation by African Americans in politics and government. Failures: did not "finish" what was begun; infighting between Civil Rights organizations; failed to successfully address issues of poverty, economic disparity, discrimination in housing; failed to convince fellow Americans that racial discrimination continues and remains a critical problem.

2. What role did the media play in the evolution of the Civil Rights Movement?

Many demonstrations were designed to elicit violent, newsworthy, response from segregationists. Civil Rights leaders believed it was critical for Americans to see these events in newspapers and on television in order to gain response for the cause. Violent events such as those in Birmingham in 1963 and Selma in 1965 made a very strong impression on the American public.

3. Compare and contrast the NAACP, the SCLC, and the SNCC. Which organization do you think was the most successful in desegregating the South? Why?

The NAACP worked toward desegregation primarily through the nation's legal system; the SCLC, led by Dr. King, pioneered "direct action" in the form of non-violent demonstration and passive resistance; SNCC had its roots in non-violent protest but as a group it was younger, more impatient and daring. SNCC volunteers worked in the most intolerant parts of the south. Later, beginning around 1966, SNCC embraced a doctrine of "black power" and threat of violence that was shunned by the NAACP and SCLC.

4. Defend this statement: The Civil Rights Movement was a continuation of the struggle for racial equality begun during Reconstruction.

Following the Civil War, the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments awarded the "blessings of liberty" to former slaves and their descendents. African Americans enjoyed a measure of social, civil and political equality on par with most white Americans. This all changed with the end of Reconstruction. Southern states began to roll back the gains achieved by African Americans during the previous decade. The Civil Rights Movement, in effect, continued the struggle that was suspended following Reconstruction.

Chapter 1 - Reconstruction to Redemption

5. What were "Jim Crow" laws. Provide specific examples.

Jim Crow laws were legal and social restrictions that separated African Americans from white Americans for nearly a century beginning in the late 1800s. The laws were first introduced following the Civil War when the Federal government began returning power to State governments of the former Confederacy. Jim Crow resulted in African Americans being forced to use separate sections of buses and trains, sit in separate sections of restaurants, and attend separate schools than white Americans.

6. Why do you think the South resorted to Jim Crow measures and disenfranchisement in the late 19th century?

For generations, Southern society had been segregated - socially and economically. Following the Civil War, many Southerners feared the changes that would inevitably transform their society. Many resisted the integration of black and white that they felt was being forced upon them by the federal government during Reconstruction.

7. Were African Americans better off before or following Reconstruction?

With the passage of the "Reconstruction Amendments" African Americans were in a better position socially and politically than at any time in the nation's history. Following Reconstruction the rights they had been awarded were quickly eroded away by Jim Crow Laws and disenfranchisement.

Chapter 2 - The Road to Brown

8. The NAACP focused on a legal approach to ending segregation. Do you think this was the best strategy for the time?

Answer will vary.

Chapter 3 - Integration

9. Following the Brown v. Board of Education decision, the Supreme Court directed schools to integrate with "all deliberate speed." Why do you think the court used such vague language? Do you think this ultimately helped or hurt the cause of integration?

While the court, as a whole, felt that segregated education was legally and morally wrong, they were sensitive to the inevitable backlash that they're decision would inspire. Within the context of ordering integration, they wanted to provide as much flexibility to the States as possible insofar as HOW integration would be implemented. While it is debatable whether this ultimately helped or hurt integration, it is certain that Southern segregationists used the vague language as a loophole to resist integration as long as possible.

- 10. The program suggests that the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* galvanized segregationist and intensified Southern white resistance to racial change. Do you agree with this assessment?**

Answers will vary.

- 11. In the program, President Eisenhower is quoted as saying that his appointment of Earl Warren to be chief justice of the Supreme Court was the, "...biggest damn fool thing I ever did."**

Eisenhower, a Republican, anticipated that Warren, also a Republican, would be a moderate Supreme Court justice. In fact, the Warren court was very liberal in social matters. Decisions such as those in *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Reynolds v. Simms*, *Gideon v. Wainwright* and others made the Warren court the subject of much contemporary and historical controversy.

- 12. Different groups reacted in different ways to the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. How did African Americans react? How did white Americans react?**

The multi-faceted African American response to the decision was articulated throughout the black press and in editorials published in official publications of national black organizations. Founded in 1910, *The Crisis* magazine, shown here, is the official organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In response to the decision, a special issue of *The Crisis* was printed to include the complete text of the Supreme Court decision, a history of the five school cases, excerpts from the nation's press on segregation ruling, and the text of the "Atlanta Declaration," the official NAACP response and program of action for implementing the decision. Many white Southern liberals welcomed the moderate and incremental approach of the *Brown* implementation decree. Ralph McGill, the influential editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, wrote in praise of the Court's decision to have local school boards, in conjunction with Southern court judges, formulate and execute desegregation orders. Certain that "the problem of desegregation had to be solved at the local level," he told Chief Justice Warren that the Court's ruling was "one of the great statesman-like decisions of all time," exceeding all previous decisions "in wisdom and clarity." Challenges to legal and social institutions implicit in the *Brown* decision led to adverse reactions in both Northern and Southern states. U.S. Solicitor General Simon Sobeloff forwarded to Chief Justice Warren this letter from an official of the New York chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. The official attributed the impetus behind the Court's action to "the worldwide Communist conspiracy" and claimed that the NAACP had been financed by "a Communist front."

Chapter 4 - Bending Toward Justice

- 13. How did the goals and strategies of the Civil Rights Movement change beginning in the mid-1950s?**

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century the NAACP focused on a legal strategy to end segregation. Beginning with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Civil Rights Movement focused on direct action: non-violent civil disobedience and passive resistance. Examples of

this later strategy might include bus and business boycotts, sit-ins, sidewalk demonstrations and other public demonstrations.

14. Explain the difference between "de jure" segregation and "de facto" segregation.

De jure segregation is the separation of people on the basis of race as required by law. The Jim Crow laws passed, beginning after the Civil War resulted in de jure segregation. Racial segregation that exists as a matter of custom, rather than law--such as predominantly white or black neighborhoods--is known as de facto segregation. While de jure segregation has been declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court, de facto segregation continues to exist, legally, in American society.

15. Who was Rosa Parks and what role did she play in the Civil Rights Movement? Who was Rosa Parks and what role did she play in the Civil Rights Movement?

Rosa Parks was a department store seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama. She was also a member of the NAACP and had been trained in civil disobedience at the Highlander Folk School. In 1955, she was arrested for refusing to surrender her seat to a white man. The event inspired the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the first large scale and enduring protest of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

Chapter 5 - Shock Troops of the Revolution

Chapter 6 - Freedom Rides

16. Why do you think the Kennedys were initially so reticent to embrace the issue of race?

In the 1960 election, John F. Kennedy was elected president by among the slimmest margins ever. He rightfully feared that embracing Civil Rights would alienate Southern Democrats and hurt his chances for reelection in 1964. Also, the Kennedys were typical of the time and their blue-blooded upbringing. They had not been raised in an integrated setting and were unaware of the true plight of African Americans, especially in the South, during the era. Also, there were many other pressing concerns on the presidential agenda: the Cold War, including the Cuban Missile Crisis, a military commitment to South Vietnam and an ongoing standoff with the Soviet Union over Berlin; the economy and implementing other domestic programs of the President's "New Frontier" among them.

17. What were the Freedom Riders trying to accomplish?

The Freedom Riders were testing compliance with federal laws banning segregation in interstate travel. In other words, there were good laws on the books that required train and bus terminals and other "facilities" to be intergrated. The Freedom Riders and others knew that these laws were not being abided in parts of the deep South.

18. How did the Civil Rights position of President Kennedy evolve during his time in office.

John F. Kennedy was elected president in 1960 in part because of strong support from African Americans. However, once in office, the President and his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy sought to distance themselves from the contentious racial struggle emerging in the South--largely for political reasons. Violent events, such as the Freedom Rides and the integration crisis at Mississippi State University, forced the Kennedys to confront Civil Rights head on. In 1963, violent events in Alabama inspired the President to act. At brother Bobby's urging, the President addressed the nation on national television and called upon Congress to pass federal civil rights legislation. Although, the President was killed in November 1963, this event led eventually to the sweeping Civil Rights Act of 1964, the first meaningful civil rights legislation since Reconstruction.

Chapter 7 - Confrontation 1963

19. In the 1963 Birmingham Childrens' Campaign, children were placed in the dangerous position of facing-off against police dogs and fire hoses. Do you think that civil rights leaders exploited young people by doing this? What do you think was their motivation?

There was a contentious debate within the movement itself surrounding this question. Many felt that it was wrong to allow children to march - even though the children were willing participants. Advocates of the idea felt that arresting kids would elicit the same public outcry as arresting adults, without jeopardizing the job and other responsibilities of the family breadwinner.

Chapter 8 - March on Washington

Chapter 9 - Mississippi Burning

20. In the program, FBI Director Hoover informs President Johnson that those responsible for the murder of three civil rights workers in rural Mississippi included, the sheriff, the deputy sheriff and the justice of the peace - among others. Were you surprised to hear this? What do you think this says about the race relations in rural Mississippi in 1964?

Answers will vary. Students may be outraged to hear this type of racial intolerance existed - even at that time. However, Mississippi was not unique in this regard. Many public officials were members of the Ku Klux Klan and/or White Citizens' Councils. As a Texan, President Johnson was probably not surprised when he learned of the violent conspiracy related by Director Hoover.

Chapter 10 - Civil Rights to Selma

Chapter 11 - Black Power

21. In the program, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam are categorized as "fringe" elements. What do you think this means and do you feel it is a fair assessment?

Answers will vary.

- 22. Do you think Black Power was a legitimate strategy to advance the interests of African Americans? Why or why not?**

Answers will vary.

- 23. In his memoir, "Lay Bare the Heart," James Farmer of CORE writes: "It should be no surprise to anyone that Malcolm X was not a member of the Big Six [civil rights organizations]. He was not a civil rights leader; he was a black nationalist leader. His objective was the building of a black nation, not the integration of blacks into the American nation." Do you agree with Farmer's characterization? Why or why not?**

Answers will vary.

- 24. Discuss the philosophies of Malcolm X. How did they compare to those of "mainstream" civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King, Jr?**

Both men exerted a great influence on black Americans, in part because of their captivating rhetoric. MLK had a more positive message - believing that through peaceful demonstration and engagement blacks could achieve equality. Malcolm X did not believe equality was possible. He advocated separatism and black nationalism.

- 25. Discuss the factors that contributed to the rise of the Black Power Movement.**

Answers will vary, but may include the following: impatience of younger members of the Civil Rights Movement - they were tired of "waiting" for equality; growing rift between SNCC and other "mainstream" civil rights organizations, including SCLC; inability of the mainstream Civil Rights Movement to remedy the problems of northern blacks, including economic disparity, inequality in housing, industry; Northern blacks felt alienated by Southern movement; general sense of disempowerment

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT—SCRIPT OF PROGRAM NARRATION

SEGMENT 1 - RECONSTRUCTION TO REDEMPTION

In all of America's history no war has been as divisive, as bitterly fought or as costly as the American Civil War.

The question of slavery—above all others—defined the conflict between the Union North and Confederate South.

Through four long years, men fought and died to determine the future of slavery—and the fate of the union itself.

President Lincoln declared that, on New Years Day, 1863, all persons held as slaves—within any rebellious State—“..shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.”

Lincoln’s “Emancipation Proclamation” did not end slavery everywhere, but it marked a turning point in the war. Thereafter, every advance, was a step toward Union victory....and freedom for all who were enslaved.

That victory came on April 9, 1865 when Union commander Ulysses S. Grant accepted the surrender of Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

Five days later, John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Lincoln. The man who had fought so passionately to preserve the Union would not live to help bind-up its wounds. That task would prove to be nearly insurmountable.

The Civil War had ravaged the South. Southern cities like Richmond and Atlanta were literally reduced to rubble. And while buildings and bridges would rise again, the ideas and institutions of the “old South” would not.

The last will and testament of a confederate officer named John Seargent Wise exposed the anxiety that plagued many Southerners.

Sgt. Wise (Character Voice): And now, having experienced a death to Confederate ideas and a new birth unto allegiance to the Union, I depart...I see what has been pulled down very clearly. What is to be built up in its place I know not. It is a mystery.

What had been pulled down was a “way of life” built on the bondage and exploitation of others. But following Union victory, during what is known as the “Reconstruction Era,” three new amendments to the U.S. Constitution extended to former slaves the blessings of liberty:

- freedom
- citizenship
- the right to due process and equal protection under the law

- and the right to vote.

Pennsylvania Congressman Thaddeus Stevens feared that laws alone would be inadequate.

Stevens (Character Voice): “The infernal laws of slavery have prevented [Negroes] from acquiring an education, understanding the common laws of contract, or of managing the ordinary business of life...if we leave them to the legislation of their late masters, we had better have left them in bondage.

The concern was prescient.

For die-hard confederates reconstruction and racial integration were bitter pills. Through intimidation and terror they sought to redeem what had been lost on the battlefield. Seething resentment towards Northern “invaders” fueled the growth of vigilante groups, like the Ku Klux Klan or KKK. Clad in white robes and bearing torches, Klan posses terrorized the South.

One former-slave recalled a Klan lynching:

Slave Narrative (Character Voice): “I never will forget when they hung Cy Guy...they comed after him a hundred strong. They tries him there in the woods, an’ with Cy’s blood they writes that he shall hang ‘tween the heavens and the earth till he is dead, dead, dead. Well sir, the next morning there he hung, swinging in the wind...”

By 1877, Reconstruction had succumbed to bitter opposition and backroom politics. Federal Troops then occupying the South, were withdrawn, and white supremacists were left to reestablish the racial hierarchy that had existed before the war.

Across the former confederacy, informal practices of racial discrimination were written into law.

States instituted poll taxes, literacy tests and other requirements that disenfranchised negroes.

They passed “Jim Crow” laws—which imposed segregation and other restrictions on blacks. A few blacks challenged the system of legal discrimination. In New Orleans, a man named Homer Plessy deliberately defied the Louisiana State law requiring separate rail cars accommodations for blacks and whites. He was arrested and jailed. But the incident led eventually to the Supreme Court case Plessy vs. Ferguson.

Plessy argued that the law infringed on his 14th amendment right to equal protection. But, the majority of justices disagreed. The court’s opinion read, in part:

SCOTUS (Character Voice): “Legislation is powerless to eradicate racial instincts, or to abolish distinctions based upon physical differences...If one race be inferior to the other socially, the constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane.”

The Court affirmed that segregation was constitutional as long as accommodations were “separate but equal.” It also left it up to the individual states—not the Federal government—to guarantee equal standards.

As the lone dissenting opinion, Justice John Marshall Harlan, wrote:

Justice Harlan (Character Voice): “The thin disguise of “equal” accommodations...will not mislead anyone, nor atone for the wrong this day done.”

Plessy versus Ferguson became a landmark decision. It sanctioned a system of institutionalized racism that would persist for decades. One that would require a second period of reconstruction to overcome.

SEGMENT 2 - THE ROAD TO BROWN

In 1917, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson committed the nation to World War I in order that the world “...might be made safe for democracy.” 400,000 black Americans would serve during the war—fighting abroad for freedoms they were denied at home; dying for an country where discrimination was widespread; where Southern Jim Crow laws relegated them to attend inferior schools, to drink from separate fountains, ride in separate streetcars; and where poll taxes, literacy tests and intimidation prevented the vast majority of blacks from exercising their right to vote.

Many negroes fled the South during the period to find work in the factories and shipyards of the North. They found better jobs, higher wages, a brighter future...

...and, in many areas, venomous racism.

Competition for jobs between blacks and whites led to violence in many cities. Newspapers christened the summer of 1919 “Red Summer of Hate” for the national frenzy of race riots and lynchings that gripped the country.

Discrimination was endemic in the U.S. military as well. One young army officer named Charles Hamilton Houston later recalled his experience during World War I:

HOUSTON (CHARACTER VOICE): "The hate and scorn showered on us Negro officers by our fellow Americans convinced me there was no sense in my dying for a world ruled by them... I made up my mind...that if I got through this war, I would study law and use my time fighting for men who could not strike back."

Houston lived and, true to his word, took up the fight for social justice. He accepted a position as legal counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1934 and joined the battle to overthrow the Southern system of segregation.

Founded in 1909, the NAACP was a tireless crusader against racial violence. It focused on a legal approach to ending discrimination—fighting in the nation’s courtrooms, rather than in the streets. In 1919, the organization waged a high-profile campaign against the racist motion picture—“The Birth of a Nation.” The film’s director, D.W. Griffith, portrayed Southern Whites as the victims of lascivious blacks and carpetbagging Northerners. Klansmen were cast as valiant heroes.

The NAACP criticized the melodrama as “three miles of filth,” but to no avail. It was fabulously popular and shaped a romanticized, yet widely accepted view of the Reconstruction South that persisted for decades.

Taking a cue from “Birth of a Nation” Charles Houston and his team harnessed the power of the motion picture to document the disparity between black and white education in South Carolina.

The visual record they compiled anchored a new, three-step legal strategy to overturn Plessy versus Ferguson: Demonstrate that separate educational facilities were seldom equal. Make “equality” too expensive for States’ to maintain. And finally, attack the very principal of “separate but equal.”

Under the guidance of Houston, the NAACP legal team, filed case after case—slowly chipping away at the legal foundation of segregation.

At the same time, the current of social progress was eroding the racial caste system.

In 1947, Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball. The next year, President Harry S. Truman issued executive orders to end segregation in both the federal workforce and the military.

PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN (JUNE 29, 1947):

"...but we cannot any longer await the growth of a will to action in the slowest state or the most backward community. Our national government must show the way."

Truman’s public support for civil rights prompted a fierce backlash from Southern democrats.

STROM THURMOND:

"...these uncalled for and these damnable proposals he has recommended under the guise of so-called civil rights."

As the NAACP prepared for its final assault on school segregation, Southern segregationists dug-in and prepared for battle.

GEORGIA DELEGATE CHARLES J. BLOCH:

“In the words of the Great Commoner of a generation ago: ‘You shall not crucify the South on this cross of civil rights.’”

SEGMENT 3 - INTEGRATION

“We may not win today or tomorrow,” Charles Houston wrote in 1947, “But the storm gathers, and all the pride and power [of prejudice] will be swept away.”

Houston did not live to see legal segregation abolished. But the fight continued following his death, in 1950. In fact, it was time to test the final phase of his strategy. It was time to put the concept of “separate” on trial.

The NAACP filed suit on behalf of the Reverend Oliver Brown and a dozen other families living in Topeka, Kansas. Brown’s daughter, Linda, was forced to walk twenty-one blocks to the nearest “black” school, while there was a comparable “white” school only seven blocks away. Their case was consolidated with four other cases of school segregation and came before the United States Supreme Court bearing bearing one name: Oliver Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.

On behalf of the plaintiffs, Thurgood Marshall argued that it was not enough to have “equal” public schools. He produced evidence that suggested segregation itself branded black children with a stamp of inferiority that affected their ability to learn.

For the defendants, Attorney John W. Davis based his argument on the 1896 precedent of Plessy versus Ferguson. He asserted that negroes should not throw-away the "equality that existed between black and white schools simply to achieve prestige."

For seventeen months, the nation waited.

Finally, on May 17, 1954 the Court handed down its opinion.

Before a hushed courtroom, Chief Justice Earl Warren read the unanimous decision:

CHIEF JUSTICE EARL WARREN (CHARACTER VOICE):

“In the field of public education, the doctrine of separate but equal has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.”

The news resounded in every quarter of American society.

The (negro-run) Chicago Defender newspaper wrote:

CHARACTER VOICE:

“Neither the atom bomb nor the hydrogen bomb will ever be as meaningful to our democracy as the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court - Chicago Defender, May 18, 1954

Few Southerners welcomed the Brown decision. The most venomous critics predicted a new racial war:

CHARACTER VOICE:

“Human blood may stain Southern soil...but the dark red stains of that blood will be on the marble steps of the United States Supreme Court building.”

The progressive newspaperman Hodding Carter, Jr. saw it differently:

HODDING CARTER, JR. (CHARACTER VOICE):

“For 75 years we sent Negro kids to school in hovels and pig pens. [We must] replace trickery and subterfuge...with an honest realization that every American child has the right to an equal education.”

The initial Brown decision did not mandate immediate desegregation. But a year later, in a group of cases known collectively as “Brown II,” the Supreme Court urged that school districts make a “...prompt and reasonable start toward full compliance...” and that negroes be admitted to previously all-white public schools with “...with all deliberate speed.”

The Court had spoken—and many school districts willingly complied with its decision. But other Southerners—including some at the highest level of government—remained defiant.

South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond drafted an official battle cry for states’ rights known as the “Southern Manifesto.” Over one-hundred members of Congress pledged their support for the document, which called on all Southerners to “resist integration by any lawful means.”

Americans looked to President Eisenhower for moral leadership and to unite the country on the issue of civil rights. But the President did not favor the sweeping changes mandated by Brown.

PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (SOT):

“I personally believe that if you try to go too far too fast in laws, in this delicate field that has involved the emotions of so many millions of Americans, you’re making a mistake. I believe we’ve got to have laws that go along with education and understanding and I believe if you go beyond that at any one time you cause trouble rather than benefit.”

Off the record, the President went further. He called his appointment of Chief Justice Warren “...the biggest damn fool thing I ever did.”

Eisenhower’s feeble public support for civil rights encouraged some Southerners to openly challenge court-ordered desegregation.

Following the Brown decision, the Little Rock, Arkansas school board developed a plan to integrate its public schools. Nine negro students—who would become known as the “Little

Rock Nine”—were scheduled to begin the 1957 school year at the previously all-white Little Rock Central High.

Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus had publicly supported integration. But, at the last minute, he changed his position.

GOV. ORVAL FAUBUS (SOT):

I have therefore in accordance oath of my office taken the follow action: Units of the national guard have been and are now being mobilized with the mission to maintain or restore the peace and good order of this community. Advance units are already on duty on the grounds of Central High School.

The campus was swarming with segregationist protesters on the first day of school. National guardsmen were drawn-up in formation to prevent any negro students from entering the building.

Elizabeth Eckford later recalled her terrifying experience:

ELIZABETH ECKFORD (CHARACTER VOICE):

"Somebody started yelling, 'Lynch her! Lynch her!' I tried to see a friendly face...I looked into the face of an old woman and it seemed a kind face, but when I looked at her again, she spat on me."

Every day for the next three weeks, hundreds of sign-toting protesters stood vigil at the high school.

But if these elements represented the entrenched prejudice of the past, some of Central High's white students symbolized hope for the future.

REPORTER (SOT):

"Do you think that the trouble is with the students here in the high school where is the trouble."

Girl #1:

"I think its the parents."

Girl#2:

"I think it was just downright un-American. I think it was the most terrible thing ever seen in America. I mean, yeah I guess I'm sounding all patriotic or something like that, but I always thought that all men were created equal."

Despite public cries for his intervention, President Eisenhower maintained that Little Rock's problems should be settled in the courts. Privately, he feared he would be forced to act. "If I do," he told an aid, "you can bet one thing. It will be quick, hard and decisive."

The issue was no longer segregation versus integration, it was a question of the supremacy of the United States government.

Governor Faubus finally agreed to remove the National Guard troops—but that only fueled the violence.

White mobs attacked members of the negro press corps. One reporter—Alex Wilson of the Tri-State Defender—was brutally beaten and never recovered from his injuries.

After weeks of patience, President Eisenhower was left with only one choice.

PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (SOT):

"Certain misguided persons have insisted on defying the law and bringing it into disrepute. The orders of the courts have thus been frustrated. "

The President federalized the Arkansas National Guard and ordered twelve-hundred Army paratroopers into Little Rock. He made it clear that he was legally compelled to uphold the Supreme Court's directive:

PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (SOT):

"The very basis of our laws and freedoms rest upon the certainty that the President and the executive branch of government will support and ensure the carrying out of the decisions of the federal courts, even when necessary, with all the means at the President's command. Thus will be restored the image of America and of all its parts as one nation, indivisible with liberty and justice for all."

Federal troops brought an abrupt end to the dissent which had festered for nearly a month. With order restored, they escorted the negro students to school.

The crisis in Little Rock graphically underscored the hardening resolve of Jim Crow segregationists.

REV. CT VIVIAN (SOT):

"If we're wrong, why don't you arrest us?"

But as the Civil Rights Movement swept across the South place names like Birmingham, Neshoba County and Selma would make Little Rock look like a beginner's course in racial violence.

SEGMENT 4 - BENDING TOWARD JUSTICE

THEODORE PARKER (CHARACTER VOICE):

"I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice."

When abolitionist Theodore Parker wrote these words in 1853, he did so with a vision for the nation that few then held. One century later, the Brown decision seemed to vindicate his dream. It marked the beginning of the end for "de jure" segregation—segregation by law. But the practice of segregation—"de facto" segregation—continued, and challenging this Southern dogma could be lethal.

In 1955, a 14-year-old Chicago boy named Emmett Till traveled to visit relatives in Money, Mississippi. A month later, his body returned home in a pine box. For the high-crime of whistling at a white woman, Emmett Till had been beaten and shot and his body dumped in the Tallahatchie River.

The legal system had been too slow—the arc too long—to save Emmett Till and countless other victims of racial violence. But in the mid-1950s a new generation of activists mounted a campaign of direct political action and non-violent protest to exorcise Jim Crow and its violent legacy once and for all. Their fight for freedom and equality became known as the modern Civil Rights Movement.

MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

On December 1, 1955, a department store seamstress boarded a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Her name was Rosa Parks. She was a negro. When the bus driver ordered Ms. Parks to surrender her seat to a white man, she refused and was arrested.

The popular legend of the tired seamstress reveals only part of the story. Rosa Parks was a seamstress—and she was tired—"...just tired of giving in" she would write years later. She was also an active member of the NAACP. By the time Rosa Parks was arrested, community leaders had a plan in place to boycott Montgomery's segregated bus system. They were just waiting for the right person to be arrested: someone who would anger the negro community into action, someone of unimpeachable character, someone like Rosa Parks.

Within a days, the Montgomery Improvement Association was formed to guide the Montgomery Bus Boycott. It was the first large-scale and enduring protest for Negro rights. For leadership, the protesters chose a young Baptist minister—The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Signs were posted around town, "Don't ride the bus today, don't ride it for freedom."

The boycotters organized carpools; they rode in taxicabs; they walked...through heat and cold, rain and snow, they refused to ride the bus. The city of Montgomery lost as many as 35,000 fares each day during the boycott. But even as weeks turned to months, they refused to meet with demands for more courteous service, equal seating privileges and the hiring of negro bus drivers.

Instead, they held fast to their segregationist convictions and filed suit against Movement leaders. Even under attack, King and the others would not be provoked to violence.

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

“We still feel that we are right and that we stand without our constitutional rights in the protest. We still advocate non-violence and passive resistance and we’re still determined to use the weapon of love.”

The idea of “passive resistance” was inspired by India’s Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi’s campaign of non-violent civil disobedience during the 1940s had confounded British imperialists and helped lift India from nearly a century of colonial rule.

On the streets of Montgomery, passive resistance bore similar fruit. In November 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a ruling that declared segregated busing to be unconstitutional. The protest ended a month later 381 days after it began.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a major victory against racial segregation and propelled the Civil Rights Movement to national attention. Martin Luther King became its public face and voice, its most influential leader, and its most lucrative target. During the bus boycott, King’s Montgomery home was bombed and shot at; he was harassed and arrested. For King and the cause, it was symbolic of the determined opposition and deadly violence that lay ahead.

SEGMENT 5 - SHOCK TROOPS OF THE REVOLUTION

In the wake of the Montgomery victory, Martin Luther King brought together other black ministers and community leaders to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. With King as its President, the SCLC championed voter registration drives and supported bus boycotts in other parts of the South.

At about the same time, President Eisenhower’s Attorney General, Herbert Brownell Jr., drafted a proposal for new civil rights legislation. It was universally opposed by Southern legislators.

Nevertheless, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson guided a diluted bill to final passage by a 60-15 vote, establishing the Civil Rights Act of 1957. The NAACP’s Roy Wilkins dismissed it as a “crumb from Congress.” Even so, it was the first civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. The law provided new authority to the Justice Department to oversee elections and investigate

officials who interfered with voter registration. It also created a new division within the Justice Department to prosecute Civil Rights violations.

The legislation was a symbolic victory for King and other Civil Rights leaders, but not enough to silence their rising demand for full legal, economic and social equality.

In some cases, the most deafening statements were made without uttering a word.

In 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, four freshmen college students walked into a Woolworth's Drug Store and sat down at a lunch counter reserved for whites. The "Greensboro Four"—as they became known—were refused service, but they remained seated in silent protest until the store closed.

Their "sit-in" continued for weeks and ignited a wave of similar demonstrations. Within months, the movement reached every southern state and attracted more than 50,000 students.

WHITE THUG (SOT):

They come in and they sit down and we're not used to them sittin' down beside us cause I wasn't raised with 'em, I never have lived with them and I'm not going to start now...

Demonstrators encountered humiliation, abuse, and police harrassment.

OFFICIAL:

You're not welcome in the store, all right?

But they held-fast to their principles of passive resistance.

During a sit-in staged in Nashville, Tennessee, silent protesters were chided with insults and attacked.

They refused to fight-back, but eighty-one demonstrators were arrested anyway—on charges of "disorderly conduct." John Lewis, who would rise to prominence with the movement, later recalled this life-changing moment:

JOHN LEWIS (CHARACTER VOICE):

"It was really happening, what I'd imagined for so long, the drama of good and evil playing itself out on the stage of the living, breathing world. It felt holy, and noble, and good. That paddy wagon...seemed like a chariot to me, a freedom vehicle carrying me across a threshold."

The arrests galvanized the Nashville Student Movement. Student leader Diane Nash led three thousand protesters in the first major march of the Civil Rights Movement. The aim: to challenge Mayor Ben West to take a stand on segregation.

DIANE NASH (SOT):

"...and we needed him to say...should have done a long time ago...like 95 years ago after the civil war. So I asked the Mayor, first of all, Mayor West do you think its wrong to discriminate...based on race and color?"

Ultimately, the answer was "no". Within a month, Nashville became the first major city in the South to begin desegregating its public facilities.

Building on the success of the sit-in movement, Nash and others formed a new organization to harness the energy of young people for the cause of civil rights: the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee or SNCC (pronounced "SNICK"). Younger and more aggressive than the senior civil rights organizations, SNCC members became the "shock troops of the revolution," willing to take the fight to racist enemy in the most intolerant parts of the South.

As a Mississippi farmer named Hartman Turnbow would observe:

HARTMAN TURNBOW (SOT):

"Power seek tha weak places, water seek tha low places, but SNCC done seek the hard places, seem like t' me.

SEGMENT 6 - FREEDOM RIDES

The sit-in protests attracted the first widespread media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement. Photographs and film footage from places like Nashville provided many Americans with their first glimpse of the racism and discrimination that had infected the South for generations.

News reports in October 1960 that Martin Luther King had been jailed for participating in a sit-in were brought to the attention of a young Senator campaigning for the U.S. Presidency. John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts was not a supporter of civil rights, but he recognized that political capital could be gained by reaching out to negroes. At the urging of his advisors, Kennedy intervened on behalf of the incarcerated Civil Rights leader and helped win his release.

MARTIN LUTHER KING:

Well I owe a great debt of gratitude and his family...and all that he did to make this possible. I might say that there are no political considerations here, I'm sure the Senator did it because of his great humanitarian concern...deeply indebted to him for it.

The maneuver paid-off. With King's endorsement candidate Kennedy carried 70% of the nation's black vote and won the Presidency by the narrowest of margins.

As the new President assumed office in January 1961, many Blacks rightfully expected bold new civil rights initiatives.

But Kennedy had other priorities. His “New Frontier” proposals required the support of Southern Democrats. And Cold War concerns in Cuba, Berlin, Vietnam and elsewhere—left little room on the Presidential agenda for civil rights.

But the demand for change could not be quieted. The Congress of Racial Equality or CORE spearheaded the Movement’s boldest initiative to date—the “Freedom Rides”—a descent into the deep South, by bus, to test compliance with Supreme Court rulings barring segregated interstate travel. CORE founder, James Farmer acknowledged the perilousness of the journey.

JAMES FARMER (CHARACTER VOICE):

“I think all of us were prepared for as much violence as could be thrown at us. We were prepared for the possibility of death.”

On May 4, 1961, two buses departed Washington D.C. carrying black and white volunteers into forbidden territory. These were the first Freedom Riders. In Atlanta, they parted for the journey through Alabama. When the first bus reached Anniston, it was attacked and firebombed—the Freedom Riders barely escaped alive. The second bus met a similar fate in Birmingham. The city’s notorious Public Safety Commissioner, Eugene “Bull” Connor made good on his promise to allow Klansmen “...fifteen minutes to do their dirty work.”

REPORTER (SOT):

“With me are part of a group calling themselves the Freedom Riders, an interracial group traveling through the deep south to challenge segregated transportation facilities in this part of the country. Yesterday they ran into trouble—they ran into violence. Today they say, they intend to keep up their pilgrimage.

Mr. Peck, you obviously have been injured, you’re wearing bandages. What happened to you?

PECK (SOT)“

I got beaten twice yesterday, by hoodlums, once aboard the bus and once in the terminal in Birmingham.

The attacks left the Freedom Riders wounded, terrified and trapped among those who had tried to kill them.

In Washington, the reaction of President Kennedy and his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy was mixed.

They feared for the Freedom Riders’ safety, but worried that offering federal protection to the group would inflame the white South.

“Tell them to call it off! The President demanded of an aid. “Stop them...Get your friends off those buses.”

But it was too late to turn back. SNCC (SNICK) leader Diane Nash recognized this as a watershed moment.

DIANE NASH (CHARACTER VOICE):

“If they stop us with violence, the movement is dead. We’re coming.”

Nash sent SNCC volunteers to replace the battle-weary CORE group in Birmingham.

Learning of this, the President lost his composure: “All hell is going to break loose. She’s going to get those people killed.”

The situation fell to Bobby Kennedy. As head of the Justice Department, he was empowered to intervene if he suspected Federal laws were being violated. He dispatched his assistant, John Seigenthaler, to Birmingham to rescue the Freedom Riders.

On May 20th—Seigenthaler boarded a Birmingham-to-Montgomery Greyhound along with the SNCC reinforcements. Their arrival in Montgomery was met by a mob of more than one thousand screaming racists. Some Freedom Riders were able to flee, but others were overwhelmed by fists, iron pipes, axe handles and baseball bats. John Lewis was beaten and bloodied. Seigenthaler himself was struck in the head with a pipe and kicked unconscious.

With no other option, Attorney General Kennedy asserted federal authority by ordering 400 U.S. marshals to Montgomery to restore order and escort the Freedom Riders to safety.

Freedom Riders continued to probe the deep South through the summer of 1961—inspiring arrests and violence, and forcing the Kennedys to confront the issue head-on.

Bobby Kennedy began to see the civil rights debate in a new light: not as one issue among the thousands confronting the administration, but as the defining moral issue of the era.

As a first step, He petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission to adopt new regulations that would stiffen already existing Federal laws requiring all interstate transportation facilities to be integrated.

But, more importantly, the younger Kennedy’s attitude influenced the President’s evolving position on civil rights.

SEGMENT 7 - BIRMINGHAM 1963

George Wallace (SOT):

“I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny . . . and I say . . . segregation today . . . segregation tomorrow . . . segregation forever.”

In 1963, Southern segregationists got a new rallying cry—and the Civil Rights Movement gained a new arch-villain. But even as Alabama’s incoming governor, George Wallace, invoked the spirit of the confederacy, movement leaders were preparing to challenge segregation and racial hatred in the state’s largest city—Birmingham.

Like many Southern cities—Birmingham was struggling to throw-off its racist legacy.

Eugene “Bull” Connor (SOT):

“You’ve got to keep the whites and the blacks separate, just like you’ve got to keep them in schools.... June 7, 1963

The town’s top police official, Eugene “Bull” Connor, embodied the entrenched prejudice of the “old South.” He had given Klansmen free-reign to beat the Freedom Riders in 1961—just as he allowed them to persecute Birmingham’s black population and firebomb their homes with impunity.

By 1963, the public outrage sparked by the Freedom Rides and other high-profile civil rights demonstrations had disappeared. The Movement needed to provoke the kind of news-worthy confrontation that would capture headlines and TV screens. If you’re looking fight, Martin Luther King was told, you’re sure to find a good one in Birmingham.

King and the SCLC launched “Project C” on April 3rd, 1963. The “C” stood for the confrontations designed to bait “Bull” Connor into outrageous action.

But nine days in and the campaign was in trouble. Martin Luther King had been arrested for violating a court order and was languishing in jail. It was here that he penned his famous “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”—concluding that “one day the South will recognize its true heroes.”

King bonded out of jail on April 20th to find the Birmingham movement in peril. With few adults willing to risk jailtime, the city’s Black youth rose-up...and marched into history.

At 1:00 on May 2nd—“D-Day”—a group of students emerged from the 16th Street Baptist Church singing “We Shall Overcome.” Hundreds were arrested and loaded onto school buses—destined for the city jail.

The next day “Bull” Connor called-in the Fire Department and K-9 units.

Teenagers and children became targets for high-pressure water hoses and snarling police dogs. News reports and images from Birmingham spread like wild fire.

The New York Times called the events “...a national disgrace” that made “...a mockery of the legal process”

A letter to the Washington Post read: “If the United States doesn’t stand for some decent average level of human dignity, what does it stand for?”

Day after day for a week the scene was replayed. “Bull” Connor filled the jail—and then the county fairground—with thousands of youthful prisoners. But still more came.

Birmingham business leaders finally agreed to negotiate with movement leaders. Within days, the parties reached an accord to desegregate the city.

Events in Birmingham shone a hard light on America’s race problem and influenced many citizens to reexamine their own views on the issue. Among them, President John F. Kennedy. One month after the Birmingham settlement, the President made an unprecedented statement on national television.

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY (SOT):

“Next week I shall ask the Congress of the United States to act, to make a commitment it has not fully made in this century to the proposition that race has no place in American life or law. The old code of equity law under which we live commands for every wrong a remedy, but in too many communities, in too many parts of the country, wrongs are inflicted on Negro citizens and there are no remedies at law. Unless the Congress acts, their only remedy is in the street.”

The President’s call for Federal Civil Rights legislation—held staggering implications. But the opposition remained intractable and dangerous.

The President was forced to use Federal troops to ensure the admission of James Meredith, the first black student to attend the University of Mississippi in 1962.

In Alabama—Governor George Wallace—who had promised “segregation forever” staged his historic “stand in the schoolhouse door” to oppose the integration of the University of Alabama. Only after Federal Troops arrived on orders of the President—did Wallace relent—allowing Vivian Malone and James Hood to enter.

And just hours after President Kennedy called on the nation to embrace civil rights, NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers was gunned down at his home in Jackson, Mississippi.

Jim Crow was on the run—but he remained armed, dangerous and determined to die in a blaze of glory.

SEGMENT 8 - MARCH ON WASHINGTON

In the wake of Birmingham and the President’s proposed Civil Rights legislation, Negro leaders announced a mass march to galvanize nationwide support for Civil Rights.

For decades, this had been the dream of labor leader, A. Philip Randolph.

A. PHILLIP RANDOLPH (SOT):

Negroes want the same things that white citizens possess. They want complete equality—social, economic and political—and no force under the sun can stand and stop and block this civil rights revolution which is now underway.

Randolph first raised the idea of a mass march in 1941—when he used it as a threat to encourage President Franklin Roosevelt to end segregation in Federal Government agencies and among defense contractors.

Twenty years later, Randolph's dream became reality. The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom would be the greatest mass protest in the nation's history.

SOT:

Freedom Now Movement, hear me. We are requesting all citizens to move into Washington. to go by plane, by car, by bus—any way that you can get there—walk if necessary. We are pushing for jobs, housing, desegregated schools. This is an urgent request. Please join. Go to Washington.

Thousands set-off for the nation's capital to show their support for Civil Rights. They came by car, by bus, by rail—from LA and San Francisco, from Cleveland and Chicago, from Jackson and Birmingham.

Many who opposed Civil Rights predicted violence, but the March organizers went to great lengths to ensure none came. Security volunteers—equipped with 2-way radios—would provide a first line of defense. Their code names: freedom, equality, justice, jobs.

SOT:

“This is Freedom 2 to Equality 1...”

A quarter of a million participants—some say even more—converged on the mall in Washington D.C.

Speakers and performers inspired the crowd.

But the one who enunciated their universal call for justice most passionately was Martin Luther King, Jr.

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today!”

A. PHILLIP RANDOLPH (SOT):

I think history was written today which will have its effect on coming generations with respect to our democracy, our ideals, struggle man dignity.

Everyone agreed: it was an historic milestone in the Civil Rights movement. It awakened millions of Americans to the quest for Freedom and equality and stressed to Congress the widespread support for the issue.

SOT:

**I believe the real significance...laid the groundwork for the building of a broad coalition...
..another thing is we did produce a non-segregated march.**

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

I think this march will go down as one of the greatest—if not THE greatest demonstrations for freedom and human dignity ever held in the United States.

President Kennedy welcomed the leaders at the White House. His ambivalence towards civil rights had evaporated. With a 60% approval rating, the President looked forward to a second term, in which he would consolidate public support for his Civil Rights proposals and press Congress to enact legislation. But it was not to be.

The President was assassinated in Dallas, TX on November 22, 1963.

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“The Greatest leader of our time has been struck down by the foulest deed of our time....

As deep grief ...swirled around Washington, the new President, Lyndon Baines Johnson, sought to reassure the nation.

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

Today the immortal John F. Kennedy lives on....nor in the life of this administration, but he said, “Let us begin.” Today, in this moment of new resolve I say, “Let us continue.”

Johnson vowed to revolutionize America with federal aid to education, tax cuts to stimulate business, conservation programs and to pass the Civil Rights legislation proposed by the late President. He called it the Great Society.

But Lyndon Johnson also inherited Vietnam.

In 1963, it was, “...no bigger than a fist on the horizon,” but it cast a long shadow over the new President...and all he hoped to accomplish at home.

SEGMENT 9 - MISSISSIPPI BURNING

LBJ Telephone Audio: "lbj_wh6406_14_3836_eastland"

Senator Eastland on 9-1

LBJ: Jim?

Hello Mr. President, how you feel?

I'm doing all right. I hope you are. You got a lot of sunshine down there?

Eastland: We need some rain...We need rain mighty bad.

LBJ: Well, we're so dry in my country that we're going to have to sell off all of our cattle if we don't get a rain.

Eastland: Well, I'm in the same shape, got a cotton crop just burning up.

LBJ: I'll be darned.

In June 1964, the secret White House taping system recorded this conversation between President Lyndon Johnson and Mississippi's influential Senator, James Eastland. The two men were old friends, but their call was deadly serious.

Just days earlier, three young Civil Rights Workers had disappeared while working to register black voters in Mississippi.

LBJ: Jim, we've got three kids missing down there, what can I do about it?

Eastland: Well, I don't know. I don't believe there's...I don't believe there's three missing.

LBJ: We've got their parents down here.

Eastland: I believe it's a publicity stunt....

Eastland: And I'm going to tell you why I don't think there's a damn thing to it...they were put in jail in Philadelphia and they were going to Meridien...

There's not a KKK in that area, there's not a Citizens' Council in that area—there's no organized white man in that area...so that's why I think it's a publicity stunt....

It was no publicity stunt and both men knew it. President Johnson ordered FBI director J. Edgar Hoover probe the disappearance. The FBI investigation that ensued—code-named "Mississippi Burning"—would unveil the cauldron of racial intolerance, hatred and violence that infected 1960s Mississippi.

In 1964, fewer than 7% of Mississippi's 900,000 black citizens were registered to vote. Movement Efforts to sign-up new voters had been met by Klan intimidation, beatings, and death threats.

SNCC's Bob Moses outlined a new initiative to confront the challenge directly.

ROBERT MOSES (SOT):

We hope to send in to Mississippi this summer upwards of one thousand teachers, ministers, lawyers, and students, from all around the country who will engage in what we're calling Freedom Schools and, in general, a program designed to open up Mississippi to the country.

The project was called Freedom Summer. Middle class kids from Northern universities were recruited to help register black voters in rural Mississippi.

As SNCC's John Lewis put it: "Mississippi was deadly...Our people were essentially being slaughtered down there. If White America would not respond to the deaths of our people... maybe it would react to the deaths of its own children."

James Foreman (SOT):

"We're going down there we're trying to face a real situation that will occur..."

James Forman led SNCC training sessions that prepared volunteers for police brutality, mob violence and worse...

James Foreman (SOT):

"People should expect to be get beaten, they should expect to spend in jail...and it may go beyond the summer when they're in jail and they should expect possibly somebody to get killed..."

Twenty-one year old Andrew Goodman was among the first contingent to depart for Mississippi.

On the first day of Freedom Summer—June 21, 1963—Goodman, James Chaney, and Michael Schwerner left project headquarters in Meridien to investigate the burning of a Black church in neighboring Neshoba County. They were never heard from again.

Within days the FBI turned-up the remains of their burnt-out station wagon—but there was no sign of the boys. As the intense search continued, locals refused to cooperate with investigators. The word on the street was: "If they were killed, they got what was comin' to 'em."

Assistant Attorney General John Doar condemned the lack of cooperation from local officials, saying: "...a thousand eyes explored every corner of Neshoba County, but 'Neshoba County' remained silent."

Forty-four days into the investigation—the FBI received an anonymous tip. Even the buzzards sensed what lay beneath the Mississippi clay.

LBJ: Lyndon Johnson.

“Deke” DeLoach: Mr. President, Mr. Hoover wanted me to call you immediately and tell you that the FBI has found three bodies six miles southwest of Philadelphia, Mississippi.

We have not identified them as yet as the three missing men, but we have every reason to believe they are the three missing men....

The gruesome discovery solved half the mystery. Finding and prosecuting those responsible remained.

WHITE HOUSE OPERATOR (SOT):

“J. Edgar Hoover on nine-one.”

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

Edgar, I wanted to call you last night...I wanted to congratulate you on a job well done...

J. EDGAR HOOVER (SOT):

Well that’s awful nice of you indeed. You might be interested the physical examination showed that each of these men had been shot. The two white men had been shot once each and the colored fella was shot three times. And we have the names of the people who did it. To prove it is going to be a little tougher job. The sheriff was in on it; the deputy sheriff was in on it; the justice of the peace was in on it; and there were seven other men. So we have all those names and as I say, we’re concentrating now on developing the evidence...

Only twelve-hundred blacks were added to Mississippi’s voter rolls during Freedom Summer—at a brutal cost of thirty-five shootings, thirty bombings, eighty physical attacks and six murders. Fifteen thousand other negro applicants petitioned the registrar but were rejected. But the Summer Project was far from a failure.

It helped to launch the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party which challenged the legitimacy of the all-white Democratic Party in the state.

And, it successfully focused national attention on the need for voting rights legislation—a cause that was destined to galvanize the movement and the entire nation in Selma, Alabama six months later.

SEGMENT 10 - CIVIL RIGHTS TO SELMA

When Lyndon Johnson assumed the Presidency in 1963, Movement leaders feared they would lose the meager gains achieved under President Kennedy. But the new President—a native Southerner—embraced the cause of Civil Rights as a great domestic challenge and a historic opportunity.

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“This bill is going to pass if it takes us all summer...and this bill is going to be signed and enacted into law because justice and morality demand it.”

President Johnson applied his passion and political accumen to the cause. He encouraged Congressmen, cajoled the press and enjoined the public to support new Civil Rights legislation.

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“The Civil Rights bill now before congress is a far-reaching step in the direction of equality.”

Legislators who resisted were subjected to the full force of President’s overbearing personality—the “Johnson Treatment.”

Johnson once said the only power he had was the power to persuade. To which an aide replied, that was like saying the only wind we have is a hurricane.

Within a year, Johnson achieved his goal.

UNITED NEWSREEL (SOT):

“Congress passes the most sweeping Civil Rights Bill ever to be written into the law and thus reaffirms the conception of equality for all men that began with Lincoln and the Civil War 100 years ago.”

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT): “I am about to sign into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We believe that all men are entitled to the blessings of liberty. Yet millions are being deprived of those blessings, not because of their own failures, but because of the color of their skin. But it cannot continue. Our Constitution, the foundation of our Republic, forbids it. The principles of our freedom forbid it. Morality forbids it. And the law I will sign tonight forbids it.”

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most sweeping Civil Rights legislation since reconstruction. It outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or gender; and banned the practice of segregation in schools, public places and employment.

It was a major advancement toward racial equality. But it did not provide “total” equality. In many areas, literacy tests and other forms of discrimination still prevented African Americans from voting.

SOT:

“In other words, you tell what it means, your understanding of it.”

To the President’s chagrin, demonstrations continued.

In 1965 protests targeted Selma, Alabama—the seat of Dallas County—where fewer than 1% of eligible blacks were registered to vote.

And where “bully-boy segregationist,” Sheriff Jim Clark and his deputized citizens’ posse rounded up civil rights activists using getapo tactics and cattle prods.

SNCC’s John Lewis was among more than 2,000 demonstrators jailed in the first months of 1965.

C.T. VIVIAN (SOT):

“If we’re wrong, then why don’t you arrest us?”

The Reverend C.T. Vivian—an organizer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference—led the Selma campaign.

C.T. VIVIAN (SOT):

“We’re willing to be beaten for democracy and you misuse democracy in the streets. You beat people bloody in order that they will not have the privilege to vote. You beat me in the side and then hide your blows.”

Officer: “Well go on...”

C.T. VIVIAN (SOT):

“No, I don’t need to leave. We’ve come to register to vote. And you must realize this is a national issue—not a Selma issue. It’s not an Alabama issue, this is a national issue. Whenever anyone does not have the right to vote then every man is hurt.”

On the night of February 18th, State troopers savagely attacked Vivian and other demonstrators. In the chaos, a young man named Jimmy Lee Jackson was shot at point blank range in what the local newspaper called “a nightmare of state police stupidity.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

“He was murdered by the irresponsibility of every politician from governors on down who have fed his constituents a stale bread of hatred and the spoiled meat of racism.”

The tragedy galvanized the Selma voting rights campaign.

The SCLC’s James Bevel proposed a symbolic march from Selma to the Alabama state capital in Montgomery—more than fifty miles away.

On March 7, 1965, SNCC’s John Lewis and the SCLC’s Hosea Williams led a procession of more than 500 marchers over the Edmund Pettus bridge.

Alabama State troopers—clad in gas masks and bearing riot gear—waited on the other side.

SELMA POLICE OFFICER (SOT):

“It will be detrimental to your safety to continue this march and I’m saying this is an unlawful assembly. You have orders to disperse...you are ordered to disperse, go home, or go to your church. This march will not continue...”

News cameras immortalized a hellish scene of police brutality and chaos. Images of “Bloody Sunday” shocked the nation. Time Magazine reported that, “Rarely in human history has public opinion reacted so spontaneously and with such fury.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

“We have no alternative but to keep moving with determination. We’ve gone too far now to turn back.”

Two weeks later, Martin Luther King led more than three thousand demonstrators in a repeat of the “Bloody Sunday” march. This time, there would be no tear gas, no bull whips, no billy clubs....

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama.”

On March 15, 1965, President Johnson called upon Congress to enact new Voting Rights legislation.

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“Our mission is at once the oldest and the most basic of this country: to right wrong, to do justice, to serve man.//The issue of equal rights for American Negroes is such an issue. And should we defeat every enemy, should we double our wealth and conquer the stars, and still be unequal to this issue, then we will have failed as a people and as a nation.//For with a country as with a person, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

When the Selma to Montgomery march reached its destination five days later, its numbers surpassed 25,000. Ten years after the Montgomery bus boycott christened the Civil Rights movement, the crusade was at its zenith: unified, triumphant and non-violent.

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

“I know you’re asking today, how long will it take. How long? Not long, because the arc of the moral universe bends toward justice. How long? Not long, because mine eyes have seen the glory...”

But even as Martin Luther King reassured the faithful that their goal was within reach, divisions between the “old guard” and young militants within SNCC threatened to splinter the movement itself.

SEGMENT 11 - BLACK POWER

UNITED NEWSREEL (SOT):

“In the same room that President Lincoln signed the first Emancipation order in 1961...1965 Voter Registration Act and pledged to millions of Americans, a new chance to find a political voice.”

On August 6, 1965—just five months after the violence of Selma and the President’s civil rights appeal to Congress—Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act of 1965. (LINGER ON THIS A FEW BEATS LONGER)

Five days later, the Watts district of Los Angeles erupted in the worst race riots in the city’s history. National attention was riveted on the streets of L.A., but the riots there were simply manifestations (STAY ON THE WIDE SHOT OF THE CITY - AFTER THE TRAIN - RATHER THAN THE SEQUENCE) of the racial tension and rage that simmered in every major U.S. city during the period.

SOT:

“Is it too much to ask you to grant us human dignity? Should we be put down and shot to death for this request? If so, you can aim your guns. What the hell do you think we care about dying if you're going to deny us the right to live?”

Poverty, unemployment, police harassment, unfulfilled expectations...had created a tinderbox on the streets of inner-city ghettos. The Civil Rights Movement had dismantled the Southern system of segregation and white supremacy. But, it had largely ignored the insidious racism that festered elsewhere.

Northern Blacks were angry, disaffected and easily seduced by fringe groups.

MALCOLM X (SOT):

“They call Mr. Muhammad a hate teacher because he makes you hate dope and alcohol..... (establish and then under)”

Malcolm X had emerged in the early 1960s as a radical alternative to Martin Luther King and non-violence, which he called the “philosophy of the fool.” As the chief spokesman for a black nationalist group called the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X espoused self-reliance and separatism—rather than integration. To his admirers, he was a courageous advocate for black rights. But for many others, he symbolized reverse racism, black supremacy, and violence.

MALCOLM X (SOT):

“We are trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty, of ignorance, of apathy, of disease, and of death. And they have these ol’ Uncle Toms, Negro leaders, coming to Harlem, telling you and me that the times are getting better. The times will never get better until you make ‘em better.”

During his lifetime, Malcolm X did not achieve the notoriety of figures like King. But he was assassinated in 1965 and, in death, became a near-mythic figure.

His revolutionary rhetoric infected many Civil Rights veterans—especially within the corps of SNCC.

STOKELY CARMICHAEL (SOT):

“You go sit in front of your television set and listen to LBJ say ‘violence never accomplishes anything my fellow Americans. But you see the real problem with non-violence is that we have never been violent; we have been too non-violent...too non-violent.”

Under the new leadership of Stokely Carmichael, SNCC assumed a militant posture, beginning in 1966. The group’s mantra of non-violence was replaced by the chorus of Black Power.

STOKELY CARMICHAEL (SOT):

“We want Black Power....We want Black Power....We want Black Power....”

For Americans who were just beginning to warm to the idea of Civil Rights, “Black Power” was something altogether different. Martin Luther King considered the slogan, at best, an unfortunate choice of words. Roy Wilkins, of the NAACP, called it, “The father of hatred and the mother of violence.” John Lewis feared that “Black Power” would divide the races and the movement—and it did.

The new movement challenged the established relationship between whites and blacks. In some communities, “Black Power” was exercised in the voting booth. In 1967, Cleveland voters elected Carl Stokes as mayor. He was the first negro to hold the position of Chief Executive of a major U.S. city.

But in other parts of the country—“Black Power” meant bullets, not ballots. In Oakland, California Huey Newton and Bobby Seale formed the Black Panther party.

What began as a community organization to provide free breakfasts and “liberation schools” to ghetto kids ultimately devolved into murder, rape, bank heists and drug trafficking.

The anarchy was not limited to California.

Chicago, Newark, Minneapolis, Memphis—in scores of American cities blacks rebelled against chronic racism and police brutality during the late 1960s.

In turn, White America took up arms. Civil rights had become civil war—President Johnson’s Great Society, a lawless society.

By nearly any measure, the United States was an immensely divided society in the late sixties—divided on civil rights, by the war in Vietnam and by a generation gap without equal in American history.

“Black Power” brought an end to the Civil Rights Movement that began with the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956. But it never achieved mainstream recognition.

The NAACP and the Martin Luther King’s SCLC—although marginalized—still spoke for the majority of Negroes—or “Blacks”—as many now preferred to be called.

In April 1968, Martin Luther King traveled to Memphis, Tennessee to speak in support of striking sanitation workers. The message of hope was familiar—but with an ominous sense of forboding.

MARTIN LUTHER KING (SOT):

“Like anybody, I would like to live a long life—longevity has its place. But I’m not concerned with that now. I just want to do God’s will and he’s allowed me to go up to the mountain and I’ve looked over and I’ve seen the promised land. I may not get there with you but I want you to know that we as a people will get to the promised land.”

One day later, King stepped from his room at the Lorraine Motel—and was gunned down by an assassin.

From coast to coast, America erupted in violence.

Edward Kosner of Newsweek recalled,

EDWARD KOSNER (CHARACTER VOICE):

"It was Pandora's box flung open—an apocalyptic act that loosed the furies brooding in the shadows of America's sullen ghettos."

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“Once again, the heart of America is heavy for a tragedy that denies the very meaning of our land. The life of a man who symbolized the freedom and faith of America has been taken. But the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King has not died with him. Men who are white, men who are black, must and will now join together, as never in the past to let all the forces of

divisiveness know that America shall not be ruled not by the bullet but only by the ballot of free and of just men.”

The Civil Rights Movement could rightfully claim victory in desegregating the South and opening its voting roles to millions of blacks who had been disenfranchised for a century.

But the rioting demonstrated that deep problems remained.

PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON (SOT):

“We need to know the answer I think to three basic questions about these riots. What happened, why did it happen, what can be done to prevent it from happening again and again.”

President Johnson appointed a special committee to study the violence and race riots of the late 1960s. The Kerner Commission concluded that America was “moving toward two separate societies, one Black, one white—separate and unequal.” It warned that frustration and resentment resulting from brutalizing inequality and white racism were fostering violence by Blacks.

As the 1970s dawned, African-Americans were no longer at the back of the bus, but the challenge of achieving true freedom and equality remained.

It would be left for the next generation and those who followed to finish—once and for all—what President Lincoln had started.

Blackline Masters

- [Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test](#)
- [Blackline Masters #3a-3d: Post-Test](#)
- [Blackline Master #4: Discussion Questions](#)
- [Blackline Master #5: Vocabulary](#)

Activity: **Pre-Test (1)** Name _____
Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

DIRECTIONS: Read the questions carefully and circle the correct answer.

1. Rosa Parks was a central figure in the:
 - A. Black Panther party
 - B. Freedom Rides
 - C. Selma to Montgomery March
 - D. None of the Above
2. The Alabama politician who promised, "...segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever" was:
 - A. Governor Ross Barnett
 - B. Governor George Wallace
 - C. Representative Paul "Bear" Bryant
 - D. Senator Edmund Pettus
3. Malcolm X was the chief spokesperson for the NAACP.
 - A. true
 - B. false
4. In the mid to late 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement was overshadowed by the:
 - A. Black Panther Movement
 - B. Black Power Movement
 - C. Women's Movement
 - D. Equal Rights Movement
5. Supporters of the Civil Rights Movement used all of the following tactics except:
 - A. hunger strikes
 - B. organized marches
 - C. business boycotts
 - D. sit-ins
 - E. legal action
6. During the twentieth century discrimination and racism were limited to the South.
 - A. true
 - B. false
7. The Landmark federal legislation that effectively ended the Jim Crow era was the:
 - A. Civil Rights Act of 1957
 - B. Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - C. Voting Rights Act of 1965
 - D. Twenty-Fourth Amendment

8. The pioneering civil rights organization that fought segregation primarily through the nation's legal system is known by the acronym:
- A. SCLC
 - B. SNCC
 - C. CORE
 - D. NAACP
9. Martin Luther King was assassinated in the year:
- A. 1963
 - B. 1957
 - C. 1968
 - D. 1973
10. In 1957, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Birmingham, Alabama to ensure the admittance of nine black students to an all-white high school.
- A. true
 - B. false
11. Following the Civil War three new amendments to the U.S. Constitution extended to former slaves freedom, citizenship, the right to due process and equal protection under the law, and the right to vote.
- A. true
 - B. false
12. In 1947, Jackie Robinson became the first African American:
- A. elected to the United States Senate
 - B. to fly across the English Channel
 - C. to play for a Major League Baseball team
 - D. appointed to a federal court
13. The Civil Rights Movement can be considered a continuation of the struggle for racial equality which began during:
- A. the Civil War
 - B. Reconstruction
 - C. the Great Depression
 - D. the Great Migration
14. Jim Crow laws resulted in:
- A. separate drinking fountains for white and black people
 - B. segregated restrooms and restaurants
 - C. segregated schools, public places and public transportation
 - D. all of the above
15. The Civil Rights Movement generally refers to the movements in the United States aimed at outlawing racial discrimination against African Americans and restoring Suffrage in Southern states.

- A. true
 - B. false
16. In 1896 the U.S. Supreme Court case affirmed that segregation was legal as long as accommodations were "separate but equal" in the case:
- A. Plessy v. Ferguson
 - B. Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka
 - C. Miranda v. Arizona
 - D. Reynolds v. Simms
17. The black minister who led the Montgomery Bus Boycott and became the dominant voice of the Civil Rights Movement was:
- A. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - B. Jesse Jackson
 - C. W.E.B. DuBois
 - D. Malcolm X
18. The historic 1963 political rally in support of civil and economic rights for African Americans was called the:
- A. Million Man March
 - B. Poor People's March
 - C. March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
 - D. Ides of March
19. Mississippi Burning refers to:
- A. the refusal of Mississippi delegates to vote at the 1959 Democratic National Convention
 - B. a spate of arson fires in Jackson, Mississippi directed at black-owned businesses
 - C. the FBI investigation into the murder of three civil rights workers in rural Mississippi
 - D. Ku Klux Klan lynchings that occurred in Mississippi between 1896 and 1917
20. The Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery in the United States.
- A. true
 - B. false

Activity: **Post-Test (3a)** Name _____
Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

True or False

DIRECTIONS: Read each of the following statements. Then circle the best answer.

1. The three Reconstruction Amendments were intended to extend the "blessings of liberty" to the entire male populace, including slaves and their descendants.
 - a. true
 - b. false
2. The 1896 Supreme Court case "Plessy v. Ferguson" affirmed that segregation was legal as long as accommodations were "separate or equal."
 - a. true
 - b. false
3. The Ku Klux Klan was a white supremacist group that perpetrated violence against African Americans.
 - a. true
 - b. false
4. The Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery in the United States.
 - a. true
 - b. false
5. Poll taxes and literacy tests were used by Southern states to disenfranchise African Americans following the Civil War.
 - a. true
 - b. false
6. The Little Rock Crisis of 1957 challenged the supremacy of the Federal government.
 - a. true
 - b. false
7. In 1955, a 14 year-old boy named Emmett Till was murdered for allegedly whistling at a white woman in Money, Mississippi.
 - a. true
 - b. false
8. President John F. Kennedy was an enthusiastic supporter of Civil Rights.
 - a. true
 - b. false

Activity: **Post-Test (3b)** Name _____

Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

9. President Eisenhower personally agreed with the Supreme Court's decision in the case, *Brown v. Board of Education*.
 - a. true
 - b. false
10. In 1963, police infamously attacked civil rights demonstrators with police dogs and fire hoses in Birmingham, Alabama.
 - a. true
 - b. false
11. Beginning in the 1870s, many Southern states sought to discriminate against and disenfranchise African Americans.
 - a. true
 - b. false
12. Following the Selma Voting Rights campaign, SNCC rejected non-violence and embraced a doctrine of "Black Power."
 - a. true
 - b. false
13. The "Southern Manifesto" was the master plan for desegregating the South.
 - a. true
 - b. false
14. In the mid to late 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement gave way to the Black Panther Movement.
 - a. true
 - b. false
15. The 1964 FBI investigation into the murder of three civil rights workers is known as COINTELPRO.
 - a. true
 - b. false
16. The Freedom Rides were designed to test compliance with Supreme Court rulings barring segregated facilities for interstate travel.
 - a. true
 - b. false

Activity: **Post-Test (3c)** Name _____

Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

17. The Civil Rights Movement generally refers to the movements in the United States aimed at outlawing racial discrimination against African Americans and restoring suffrage in Southern states.
- true
 - false
18. In the early twentieth century, many African Americans moved to the North in search of jobs and better living conditions.
- true
 - false
19. During the twentieth century discrimination and racism were limited to the South.
- true
 - false
20. While imprisoned in Alabama, civil rights leader Jesse Jackson wrote “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.”
- true
 - false

Multiple Choice

DIRECTIONS: Read each of the following statements. Then circle the best answer.

21. Lyndon Johnson was the guiding force behind the passage of the:
- Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - Civil Rights Act of 1957
 - Voting Rights Act of 1965
 - all of the above
22. The pioneering civil rights organization that fought segregation primarily through the nation's legal system is known by the acronym:
- NAACP
 - SNCC
 - SCLC
 - CORE

Activity: **Post-Test (3d)** Name _____
Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

23. The Alabama Governor who promised, "segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever" was:
- George Wallace
 - Chauncy Wittic
 - Eugene "Bull" Connor
 - J. Edgar Hoover
 - Orval Faubus
24. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was:
- awarded the Nobel Peace Prize
 - assassinated in 1968
 - a Baptist minister
 - all of the above
25. During the 1950s and early 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement focused on desegregating:
- the West
 - the South
 - the East
 - the North
26. The 1963 political rally in support of civil and economic rights for African Americans was the:
- Million Man March
 - March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
 - Ides of March
 - Poor People's March
27. The U.S. President who issued executive orders banning segregation in the federal workforce and the military was:
- President Truman
 - President Eisenhower
 - President Roosevelt
 - President Kennedy
28. The document which called on Southerners to resist integration by any lawful means was:
- the Southern Manifesto
 - the Segregation Imperitive
 - the Birmingham Accord
 - the Integration Ultimatum

Activity: **Post-Test (3e)** Name _____
Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

29. The "Little Rock Nine" was/were:
- the first public golf course in the United States to integrate
 - nine African American students who enrolled at an all-white high school
 - nine cabinet appointees of President Johnson
 - members of the Ku Klux Klan convicted of conspiracy
30. A protest technique used by college students to desegregate lunch counters was:
- hunger strike
 - sit-in
 - violent resistance
 - silent insistence
31. A term used to describe opponents of Reconstruction is:
- scaliwags
 - carpetbaggers
 - redeemers
 - all of the above
32. Martin Luther King, Jr. was inspired by the philosophies of non-violent protest and passive resistance practiced by the political and spiritual leader:
- Jawaharial Nehru
 - Mao Tse Tung
 - Mohandas Ghandi
 - the Dalai Lama
33. A founder of the Black Panther party was:
- Huey Freeman
 - Huey Long
 - Huey Newton
 - Huey Lewis
34. The Supreme Court's 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision reversed the doctrine of "Separate Equal" upheld in the landmark case:
- Engel v. Vitale
 - Gideon v. Wainwright
 - Reynolds v. Simms
 - Plessy v. Ferguson

Activity: **Post-Test (3f)** Name _____
Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

35. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. first gained national attention during:
- Mississippi Freedom Summer
 - “Project C” in Birmingham
 - the Freedom Rides
 - the Montgomery Bus Boycott
36. Malcolm X was the chief spokesperson for:
- SCLC
 - SNCC
 - the Nation of Islam
 - the Black Panthers
37. The NAACP attorney who argued the Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* was:
- Clarence Thomas
 - Charles Hamilton Houston
 - John Marshall Harlan
 - Thurgood Marshall
38. The first African American to play for a Major League Baseball team was:
- Jackie Robinson
 - Josh Gibson
 - Satchel Paige
 - “Buck” O’Neil
39. Mississippi Freedom Summer is noted for:
- the murder of three civil rights workers
 - inspiring the formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party
 - middle class college kids from the North working to register voters in Mississippi
 - all of the above
40. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was organized following:
- the Freedom Rides
 - the March on Washington
 - the sit-ins
 - Martin Luther King’s assassination

Activity: **Post-Test (3g)** Name _____
Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

41. SNCC leader John Lewis was ousted by Black Power advocate:
- Stokely Carmichael
 - Bobby Seale
 - Roy Wilkins
 - Huey Newton
42. The modern Civil Rights Movement can be considered a continuation of the struggle for racial equality began during:
- the emancipation
 - the Civil War
 - Reconstruction
 - the Revolutionary War
43. James Meredith was the first African American to:
- ride a Greyhound bus from Washington D.C. to Birmingham, Alabama
 - enroll at the all-white Little Rock Central high school
 - enroll at the University of Alabama
 - none of the above
44. Which of the following was NOT part of the NAACP three-step legal strategy to overturn legal segregation?
- make achieving equality too expensive for states to maintain
 - attack the principle of “separate but equal”
 - demonstrate that separate educational facilities were seldom equal
 - litigate on the basis of “one man one vote”
45. Eugene “Bull” Connor was a central figure in:
- the Birmingham Childrens’ Campaign
 - the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - the Montgomery Bus Boycott
 - the Selma to Montgomery march

Activity: **Post-Test (3h)** Name _____

Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

Cloze

Directions: Read each of the following statements and attribute it to the correct person.

Stokely Carmichael	President Lyndon Johnson	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Theodore Parker	President Harry S. Truman	George Wallace
Roy Wilkins	Malcolm X	Charles Hamilton Houston

46. "The only way we gonna stop them white men from whuppin' us is to take over. We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothin'. What we gonna start saying now is Black Power!"—_____
47. [Black Power] is the ranging of race against race on the irrelevant basis of skin color. It is the father of hatred and the mother of violence."—_____
48. "Once again, the heart of America is heavy for a tragedy that denies the very meaning of our land. The life of a man who symbolized the freedom and faith of America has been taken. But the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King has not died with him. Men who are white, men who are black, must and will now join together, as never in the past to let all the forces of divisiveness know that America shall not be ruled not by the bullet but only by the ballot of free and of just men."—_____
49. "I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny and I say: segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever."—

50. "Someday the South will recognize its true heroes."—_____
51. "The arc of the moral universe is long...but it bends toward justice."—

52. "...we can no longer afford the luxury of a leisurely attack upon prejudice and discrimination. There is much that State and local governments can do in providing positive safeguards for civil rights. But we cannot, any longer, await the growth of a will to action in the slowest State or the most backward community. Our National Government must show the way."—_____

Activity: **Discussion Questions (4)** Name _____

Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

Chapter 1 - Reconstruction to Redemption

1. Discuss the successes and failures of the Civil Rights Movement.
2. What role did the media play in the evolution of the Civil Rights Movement?
3. Compare and contrast the NAACP, the SCLC, and the SNCC. Which organization do you think was the most successful in desegregating the South? Why?
4. Defend this statement: The Civil Rights Movement was a continuation of the struggle for racial equality begun during Reconstruction.

Chapter 1 - Reconstruction to Redemption

5. What were "Jim Crow" laws. Provide specific examples.
6. Why do you think the South resorted to Jim Crow measures and disenfranchisement in the late 19th century?

Chapter 2 - The Road to Brown

8. The NAACP focused on a legal approach to ending segregation. Do you think this was the best strategy for the time?

Chapter 3 - Integration

9. Following the Brown v. Board of Education decision, the Supreme Court directed schools to integrate with "all deliberate speed." Why do you think the court used such vague language? Do you think this ultimately helped or hurt the cause of integration?
10. The program suggests that the Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education galvanized segregationist and intensified Southern white resistance to racial change. Do you agree with this assessment?
11. In the program, President Eisenhower is quoted as saying that his appointment of Earl Warren to be chief justice of the Supreme Court was the, "...biggest damn fool thing I ever did."
12. Different groups reacted in different ways to the Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education. How did African Americans react? How did white Americans react?

Chapter 4 - Bending Toward Justice

13. How did the goals and strategies of the Civil Rights Movement change beginning in the mid-1950s?
14. Explain the difference between "de jure" segregation and "de facto" segregation.
15. Who was Rosa Parks and what role did she play in the Civil Rights Movement? Who was Rosa Parks and what role did she play in the Civil Rights Movement?

Chapter 5 - Shock Troops of the Revolution**Chapter 6 - Freedom Rides**

16. Why do you think the Kennedys were initially so reticent to embrace the issue of race?
17. What were the Freedom Riders trying to accomplish?
18. How did the Civil Rights position of President Kennedy evolve during his time in office.

Chapter 7 - Confrontation 1963

19. In the 1963 Birmingham Childrens' Campaign, children were placed in the dangerous position of facing-off against police dogs and fire hoses. Do you think that civil rights leaders exploited young people by doing this? What do you think was their motivation?

Chapter 8 - March on Washington**Chapter 9 - Mississippi Burning**

20. In the program, FBI Director Hoover informs President Johnson that those responsible for the murder of three civil rights workers in rural Mississippi included, the sheriff, the deputy sheriff and the justice of the peace - among others. Were you surprised to hear this? What do you think this says about the race relations in rural Mississippi in 1964?

Chapter 10 - Civil Rights to Selma**Chapter 11 - Black Power**

21. In the program, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam are categorized as "fringe" elements. What do you think this means and do you feel it is a fair assessment?
22. Do you think Black Power was a legitimate strategy to advance the interests of African Americans? Why or why not?
23. In his memoir, "Lay Bare the Heart," James Farmer of CORE writes: "It should be no surprise to anyone that Malcolm X was not a member of the Big Six [civil rights organizations]. He was not a civil rights leader; he was a black nationalist leader. His objective was the building

of a black nation, not the integration of blacks into the American nation." Do you agree with Farmer's characterization? Why or why not?

24. Discuss the philosophies of Malcolm X. How did they compare to those of "mainstream" civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King, Jr?
25. Discuss the factors that contributed to the rise of the Black Power Movement.

Activity: **Vocabulary Terms (5)** Name _____

Subject: **The Civil Rights Movement** Date _____

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Definition: The American Civil War was a civil war in the United States, fought between 1861 and 1865. Eleven Southern slave states declared their secession from the United States and formed the Confederate States of America, also known as "the Confederacy". Led by Jefferson Davis, they fought against the United States (the Union), which was supported by all the free states and generally by the five border slave states.

Context: There were numerous causes of the civil war, the most obvious being the schism between abolitionists and the anti-abolitionists, the supremacy of states' rights, and economic factors.

BIRTH OF A NATION

Definition: The Birth of a Nation is a 1915 American silent film directed by D.W. Griffith. Set during and after the American Civil War, the film provoked great controversy for promoting white supremacy and positively portraying the "knights" of the Ku Klux Klan as heroes.

Context: The leading civil rights organization of the era, the NAACP, criticized the melodrama as "...three miles of filth."

BLACK PANTHER PARTY

Definition: Founded in Oakland, California by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, the Black Panther Party was an African-American revolutionary left-wing organization working for the self-defense for black people. It was active in the United States from the mid-1960s into the 1970s.

BLOODY SUNDAY

Definition: The Selma to Montgomery March for voting rights ended three weeks, and three events, that represented the political and emotional peak of the modern Civil Rights Movement. On "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965, some 600 civil rights marchers headed east out of Selma on U.S. Route 80. They got only as far as the Edmund Pettus Bridge six blocks away, where state and local lawmen attacked them with billy clubs and tear gas and drove them back into Selma. Media coverage of the confrontation galvanized the American public and inspired President Johnson to call for new voting rights legislation.

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Definition: A committee established in 1946 by executive order of President Truman to investigate the status of civil rights in the United States and propose measures to strengthen and protect the civil rights of American citizens.

Context: President Truman's support for civil rights splintered the Democratic Party. Southern states, which traditionally voted Democrat, would henceforth become overwhelmingly Republican.

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION OF TOPEKA

Definition: Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka was a landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court that declared state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students and denying black children equal educational opportunities unconstitutional. The decision overturned the 1896 decision in Plessy v. Ferguson which permitted segregation.

Context: Handed down on May 17, 1954, the Warren Court's unanimous (9–0) decision stated that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." As a result, de jure racial segregation was ruled a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. This ruling paved the way for integration and the civil rights movement.

CHICAGO DEFENDER

Definition: The Chicago Defender was the most influential African American newspaper during the early and mid-20th century. The Defender, published in Chicago with a national editorial perspective, played a leading role in the widespread Great Migration of African Americans from the South to the North.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Definition: The African American Civil Rights Movement refers to the movements in the United States (between roughly 1955 and 1968) aimed at outlawing racial discrimination against African Americans and restoring suffrage in Southern states.

Context: In the late 1960s, the emergence of the Black Power Movement, which lasted roughly from 1966 to 1975, enlarged the aims of the Civil Rights Movement to include racial dignity, economic and political self-sufficiency, and freedom from oppression by white Americans.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Definition: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a landmark piece of legislation in the United States that outlawed unequal application of voter registration requirements and racial segregation in schools, at the workplace and by facilities that served the general public, so-called "public accommodations".

Context: Once the Act was implemented, its effects were far-reaching and had tremendous long-term impacts on the whole country. It prohibited discrimination in public facilities, in government, and in employment, invalidating the Jim Crow laws in the southern U.S. It became illegal to compel segregation of the races in schools, housing, or hiring.

COLD WAR

Definition: The Cold War was a geopolitical confrontation between the United States and its western allies and the Soviet Union its communist satellites. The Cold War began in the aftermath of World War II and continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992.

Context:

CONGRESS OF RACIAL EQUALITY (CORE)

Definition: The Congress of Racial Equality or CORE is a U.S. civil rights organization that originally played a pivotal role for African Americans in the Civil Rights Movement. Membership in CORE is still stated to be open to "anyone who believes that 'all people are created equal' and is willing to work towards the ultimate goal of true equality throughout the world."

Context: CORE organized the Freedom Rides of 1961 which were infamous for the racial violence they inspired.

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Definition: The Emancipation Proclamation consists of two executive orders issued by United States President Abraham Lincoln during the American Civil War. The first one, issued September 22, 1862, declared the freedom of all slaves in any state of the Confederate States of America that did not return to Union control by January 1, 1863. The second order, issued January 1, 1863, named ten specific states where it would apply. Lincoln issued the Executive Order by his authority as "Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy" under Article II, section 2 of the United States Constitution.

Context: Many falsely believe the Emancipation Proclamation freed all slaves. This is not the case as stated above. Slavery was outlawed throughout the United States with the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on December 6, 1865.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Definition: The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is an agency of the United States Department of Justice that serves as both a federal criminal investigative body and an internal intelligence agency. The FBI has investigative jurisdiction over violations of more than 200 categories of federal crime.

Context: During the 1950s and 1960s, FBI officials became increasingly concerned about the influence of civil rights leaders. The agency carried out controversial domestic surveillance in an operation it called the COINTELPRO, which was short for "COunter-INTElligence PROgram." It aimed at investigating and disrupting dissident political organizations and individuals within the United States. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a frequent target of the investigation. Although the FBI found no evidence of any crime, it attempted to blackmail King and, according to some

accounts, the FBI had sent at least one anonymous letter to King encouraging him to commit suicide.

FREEDOM RIDES

Definition: Freedom Riders refers to the African American and white civil rights activists who rode interstate buses into the segregated southern United States to test compliance with federal laws banning discrimination in interstate travel facilities.

Context: Coordinated by CORE, the Freedom Rides, and the violent reactions they provoked, bolstered the credibility of the American Civil Rights Movement and called national attention to the violent disregard for the law that was used to enforce segregation in the southern United States. Riders were arrested for trespassing, unlawful assembly, and violating state and local Jim Crow laws, along with other alleged offenses.

FREEDOM SUMMER

Definition: Freedom Summer (also known as the Mississippi Summer Project or simply the Summer Project) was a campaign in the United States launched in June 1964 to attempt to register as many African American voters as possible in Mississippi, which up to that time had almost totally excluded black voters. The project also set up dozens of Freedom Schools and Freedom Houses in small towns throughout Mississippi to aid the local black population. The project was organized by the only two groups working on Civil Rights in Mississippi at the time, the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Bob Moses, SNCC field secretary and co-director of COFO, directed the summer project.

GREAT SOCIETY

Definition: The Great Society was a set of domestic programs proposed or enacted on the initiative of President Lyndon B. Johnson. Two main goals of the Great Society social reforms were the “War on Poverty” and new civil rights legislation. New major spending programs that addressed education, medical care, urban problems, and transportation were launched during this period. The Great Society in scope and sweep resembled the New Deal domestic agenda of Franklin D. Roosevelt, but differed sharply in types of programs enacted.

Context: Some of the Great Society programs have been eliminated or scaled back since their introduction, but many of them have become staples of the modern liberal democracy, including Medicare, Medicaid, and federal education funding.

GREENSBORO FOUR

Definition: The Greensboro Four were four African American students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College who staged one of the first sit-in protests of the Civil Rights Movement.

On February 1, 1960, the Ezell A. Blair Jr., David Leinail Richmond, Joseph Alfred McNeil, and Franklin Eugene McCain sat at a segregated lunch counter in the Greensboro, North Carolina, Woolworth's store. This lunch counter only had seating for white patrons, while black people had to stand and eat. Although they were refused service, they were allowed to stay at the counter.

Context: The actions of the Greensboro Four inspired a wave of similar demonstrations across the South that eventually involved more than 50,000 students and led to increased national attention at a critical point in the Civil Rights Movement.

INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION (ICC)

Definition: The Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) was a regulatory body in the United States created by the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887, which was signed into law by President Grover Cleveland. The agency was abolished in 1995, and the agency's remaining functions were transferred to the Surface Transportation Board.

Context: Following the 1961 Freedom Rides, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission to adopt new regulations that would stiffen already existing Federal laws requiring all interstate transportation facilities to be integrated.

JIM CROW

Definition: The Jim Crow laws were state and local laws in the United States enacted between 1876 and 1965. They mandated de jure racial segregation in all public facilities, with a supposedly "separate but equal" status for black Americans. In reality, this led to treatment and accommodations that were usually inferior to those provided for white Americans, systematizing a number of economic, educational and social disadvantages.

Context: Some examples of Jim Crow laws are the segregation of public schools, public places and public transportation, and the segregation of restrooms, restaurants and drinking fountains for whites and blacks. State-sponsored school segregation was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Generally, the remaining Jim Crow laws were overruled by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

KERNER COMMISSION

Definition: The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, known as the Kerner Commission after its chair, Governor Otto Kerner, Jr. of Illinois, was an 11-member commission established by President Lyndon Johnson to investigate the causes of the 1967 race riots in the United States and to provide recommendations for the future.

Context: The long, hot summers of 1965, 1966 and 1967 had brought riots in the black sections of many major cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago and Newark. In his remarks upon signing the order establishing the Commission, Johnson asked for answers to three basic questions

about the riots: "What happened? Why did it happen? What can be done to prevent it from happening again and again?"

In its most memorable passage, the report warned, "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal."

KU KLUX KLAN

Definition: The Ku Klux Klan was an insurgent movement initially founded in 1865 by former confederate soldiers or so-called redeemers. As a secret vigilante group, the Klan reacted against Radical Republican control of Reconstruction by attempting to restore white supremacy by threats and violence, including murder, against black and white Republicans.

In 1915, the second Klan was founded. It grew rapidly nationwide after 1921 in response to a period of postwar social tensions, where industrialization in the North had attracted numerous waves of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and the Great Migration of Southern blacks and whites. The second KKK preached racism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Communism, nativism, and antisemitism. Some local groups took part in attacks on private houses, and carried out other violent activities, generally in the South. At its peak in the mid-1920s, the organization boasted a membership of 4–5 million men.

The "Ku Klux Klan" name was used by many independent local groups opposing the Civil Rights Movement and desegregation, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. During this period, they often forged alliances with Southern police departments, as in Birmingham, Alabama; or with governor's offices, as with George Wallace of Alabama. Several members of KKK groups were convicted of murder in the deaths of civil rights workers and children in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham.

LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL

Definition: "Letter from Birmingham City Jail: is an open letter written on April 16, 1963, by Martin Luther King, Jr. from the city jail in Birmingham, Alabama, where he was confined after being arrested for his part in the Birmingham campaign, a planned non-violent protest conducted by the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights and King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference against racial segregation by Birmingham's city government and downtown retailers.

King's letter is a response to a statement made by eight white Alabama clergymen on April 12, 1963, titled "A Call For Unity". The clergymen agreed that social injustices existed but argued that the battle against racial segregation should be fought solely in the courts, not in the streets. King responded that without nonviolent forceful direct actions such as his, true civil rights could never be achieved. As he put it, "This 'Wait' has almost always meant 'Never.'" He asserted that not only was civil disobedience justified in the face of unjust laws, but that "one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws."

Context: King's letter includes the famous statement "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," as well as the words attributed to William Ewart Gladstone quoted by King: "[J]ustice too long delayed is justice denied."

LITTLE ROCK CRISIS/LITTLE ROCK NINE

Definition: The Little Rock Nine was a group of African American students who were enrolled in Little Rock Central High School in 1957. The ensuing Little Rock Crisis, in which the students were initially prevented from entering the racially segregated school by Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus, and then attended after the intervention of President Eisenhower, is considered to be one of the most important events in the African-American Civil Rights Movement.

MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Definition: The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was a large political rally in support of civil and economic rights for African-Americans that took place in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, August 28, 1963. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his historic "I Have a Dream" speech advocating racial harmony at the Lincoln Memorial during the march.

MISSISSIPPI BURNING (MIBURN)

Definition: Mississippi Burning (MIBURN) was the FBI investigation into the murder of three civil rights workers in rural Mississippi during the Freedom Summer project of 1964.

Context: Mississippi Burning resources:

[FBI documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\)](#)

<http://www.mississippiburning.org/>

MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Definition: The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was an American political party created in the state of Mississippi in 1964, during the civil rights movement. It was organized by black and white Mississippians, with assistance from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), to challenge the legitimacy of the white-only Democratic Party in the state.

MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

Definition: The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a political and social protest campaign initiated in December 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama. The protest opposed the city's racially segregated public transportation system. The boycott was launched following the arrest of Rosa Parks on December 1, 1955. The protest brought national attention to the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement and the leader of the boycott, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Context: Although the Montgomery Bus Boycott was successful in marshaling attention to the Civil Rights Movement the boycott ended only after a Supreme Court decision in a case introduced by the NAACP.

NASHVILLE STUDENT MOVEMENT

Definition: The Nashville Student Movement, led by civil rights activist Diane Nash, was organized following the Greensboro Sit-in to oppose segregated lunch counters and busing in Nashville, Tennessee.

Context: Following the Nashville sit-ins, Diane Nash would play a leading role in the establishment of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

Definition: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, usually abbreviated as NAACP is one of the oldest and most influential civil rights organizations in the United States. The NAACP was founded on February 12, 1909 by a diverse group of citizens.

Context: Its mission is "to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination". Its name, retained in accordance with tradition, is one of the last surviving uses of the term colored people.

NESHOPA COUNTY

Definition: Neshoba County is a county in rural Mississippi and is known as the site of one of the most famous race-related crimes in American history. In 1964, three civil rights workers were murdered brutally by white supremacists, allegedly including a deputy county sheriff, in Philadelphia, the county seat.

PLESSY V. FERGUSON

Definition: Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) is a landmark United States Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of state laws requiring racial segregation in private businesses (particularly railroads), under the doctrine of "separate but equal".

The decision was handed down by a vote of 7 to 1. "Separate but equal" remained standard doctrine in U.S. law until its repudiation in the 1954 Supreme Court decision Brown v. Board of Education.

Context: The dissenting vote was cast by Justice John Marshall Harlan who wrote, "The thin disguise of "equal" accommodations...will not mislead anyone, nor atone for the wrong this day done."

RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

Definition: The Reconstruction Amendments are the Thirteenth Amendment, the Fourteenth Amendment and the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. They were adopted between 1865 and 1870, the five years immediately following the Civil War.

The Amendments were intended to restructure the United States from a country that was (in Abraham Lincoln's words) "half slave and half free" to one in which the constitutionally

guaranteed "blessings of liberty" would be extended to the entire male populace, including the former slaves and their descendants.

RED SUMMER OF HATE

Definition: The Red Summer refers to the summer and fall of 1919, in which race riots exploded in a number of cities in both the North and South. The three most violent episodes occurred in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Elaine, Arkansas.

PROJECT "C"

Definition: "Project C" was the code name for a group of demonstrations planned for Birmingham, Alabama in early 1963. Wyatt Tee Walker, one of the SCLC founders, planned the tactics of the direct action protests, specifically targeting Birmingham Public Safety Commissioner, Eugene "Bull" Connor's tendency to react to demonstrations with violence. Walker said, "Project C," stood for "confrontation."

Context: According to historians, "the demands on the city authorities were straightforward: desegregate the economic life of Birmingham—it's restaurants, hotels, public toilets, and the unwritten policy of hiring blacks for menial jobs only".

SELMA TO MONTGOMERY MARCH

Definition: The Selma to Montgomery March—or, more properly, marches—were a series of public demonstrations launched as part of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights Campaign.

The first march occurred on "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965, when some 600 civil rights marchers were attacked and beaten by local law enforcement officials. Two days later on March 9, Martin Luther King, Jr., led a "symbolic" march to the bridge. Then civil rights leaders sought court protection for a third, full-scale march from Selma to the state capitol in Montgomery.

Context: The legality of the third march was challenged in federal court. Federal District Court Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., ruled in favor of the demonstrators writing, "The law is clear that the right to petition one's government for the redress of grievances may be exercised in large groups...and these rights may be exercised by marching, even along public highways." On Sunday, March 21, about 3,200 marchers set out for Montgomery, walking 12 miles a day and sleeping in fields. By the time they reached the capitol on Thursday, March 25, they were 25,000-strong.

SEPARATE BUT EQUAL

Definition: Separate but equal was a legal doctrine in United States Constitutional law that justified systems of segregation. Under this doctrine, services, facilities and public accommodations were allowed to be separated by race, on the condition that the quality of each group's public facilities were (supposedly) to remain equal. The phrase was derived from a Louisiana law of 1890.

SIT-IN

Definition: The sit-in protest is a form of direct action that involves one or more persons nonviolently occupying an area for a protest, often to promote political, social, or economic change.

Context: During the Civil Rights Movement sit-ins were successfully employed to oppose segregated lunch counters and public transit.

SIXTEENTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Definition: The Sixteenth Street Baptist Church is a large, predominantly African American Baptist church in Birmingham, Alabama.

Context: During the Birmingham Childrens' Crusade of early 1963, the church served as headquarters for "Project C." In September 1963, it was the target of a racially motivated bombing that killed four girls.

SOUTHERN MANIFESTO

Definition: The Southern Manifesto was a document largely drawn up to counter the landmark Supreme Court 1954 ruling *Brown v. Board of Education*. The initial version was written by Strom Thurmond. The Manifesto was signed by 19 Senators and 82 members of the House of Representatives, including the entire congressional delegations of the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Virginia. The Southern Manifesto accused the Supreme Court of "clear abuse of judicial power." It further promised to use "all lawful means to bring about a reversal of this decision which is contrary to the Constitution and to prevent the use of force in its implementation."

STAND IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE DOOR

Definition: The "stand in the schoolhouse door" incident was Alabama Governor George Wallace's symbolic opposition to school integration imposed by the federal government. The June 11, 1963, action occurred in the doorway of Foster Auditorium at the University of Alabama and was intended to prevent the enrollment of two black students, James Hood and Vivian Malone. The day marks the beginning of school desegregation in the state. Moreover, it was an event that would continue to haunt both Wallace and the state for years to come.

—from Encyclopedia of Alabama

STUDENT NON-VIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Definition: The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, pronounced "Snick") was founded in Raleigh, North Carolina, in April 1960. SNCC became one of the most important civil rights organizations of the 1960s, and Alabama and Alabamians played vital roles in its efforts. Future Georgia congressman John Lewis, who held the position of SNCC chairperson from the spring of 1963 until May 1966, was from rural Pike County, near Troy, and was involved with SNCC from its beginnings. Robert "Bob" Zellner, a southern Alabamian whose

father was a former Ku Klux Klan member, became SNCC's first white field secretary in the fall of 1961, having begun participating in civil rights protests while a student at Montgomery's Huntingdon College. During his work with SNCC, Zellner was beaten and jailed numerous times, yet he continued to fight against racism and discrimination with the organization for most of its existence. Selma's Bettie Mae Fikes joined the movement while still in high school, taking part in demonstrations, passing out leaflets to register voters, and quickly becoming part of the SNCC Freedom Singers, a group that traveled around the country publicizing and fundraising for the organization. Throughout the 1960s, SNCC became known primarily for holding nonviolent demonstrations, organizing grassroots groups, registering African American voters, and eventually for advocating the philosophy of Black Power.

—from Encyclopedia of Alabama

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Definition: In January 1957, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and a group of African American clergymen and other activists from all over the South gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, to develop ways in which the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling desegregating bus systems in the South could be tested. At this meeting, the men decided to form the Southern Leaders Conference, which later in August of 1957 would become known as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). These men hoped that the SCLC would become a permanent organization that would facilitate and coordinate nonviolent protest efforts of local groups. Initially, the group had two objectives: to use nonviolent protest as a method of resistance to discrimination and to appeal to the moral conscience of white America.

—from Encyclopedia of Alabama

VOTING RIGHTS ACT (1965)

Definition: The Voting Rights Act (1965) was a landmark piece of legislation in the United States that outlawed discriminatory voting practices that had been responsible for the widespread disenfranchisement of African Americans in the U.S.

Echoing the language of the 15th Amendment, the Act prohibits states from imposing any "voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure ... to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color."

Specifically, Congress intended the Act to outlaw the practice of requiring otherwise qualified voters to pass literacy tests in order to register to vote, a principal means by which Southern states had prevented African-Americans from exercising the franchise.

WATTS RIOTS

Definition: The term Watts Riots of 1965 refers to a large-scale riot which lasted six days in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, California, in August 1965. By the time the riot subsided, thirty-four people had been killed, 2,032 injured, and 3,952 arrested. It would stand as the most

severe riot in Los Angeles history until the Los Angeles riots of 1992. The riot is viewed by some as a reaction to the record of police brutality by the LAPD and other racial injustices suffered by black Americans in Los Angeles, including job and housing discrimination.

Context: “Is it too much to ask you to grant us human dignity? Should we be put down and shot to death for this request? If so, you can aim your guns. What the hell do you think we care about dying if you're going to deny us the right to live?”

—from *The Civil Rights Movement*

WE SHALL OVERCOME

Definition: “We Shall Overcome” is a protest song that became a key anthem of the Civil Rights Movement. The lyrics of the song are derived from the refrain of a gospel song by Charles Albert Tindley. The song became associated with the Civil Rights movement from 1959, when Guy Carawan stepped in as song leader at Highlander, and the school was the focus of student non-violent activism. It quickly became the movement's unofficial anthem. Seeger and other famous folksingers in the early 1960s, such as Joan Baez, sang the song at rallies, folk festivals, and concerts in the North and helped make it widely known. Since its rise to prominence, the song, and songs based on it, have been used in a variety of protests worldwide.

Context: In his 1965 voting rights address, President Johnson angered many Southerners when he invoked the words of the Movement saying, “But even if we pass this bill the battle will not be over. What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause too. Because it's not just Negroes, but really it's all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice.

And we shall overcome.

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