Civil Rights Timeline

People have taken a stand for civil and human rights since the beginning of time. Here, we honor the courage and commitment displayed by countless individuals — some who lost their lives — in the struggle for equal rights during a time known as “the modern American Civil Rights Movement.”

1954
May 17, 1954
Supreme Court outlaws school segregation in Brown v. Board of Education

1955
May 7, 1955
THE REV. GEORGE LEE
Killed for leading voter-registration drive Belzoni, Mississippi

August 13, 1955
LAMAR SMITH
 Murdered for organizing black voters Brookhaven, Mississippi

August 28, 1955
EMMETT LOUIS TILL
 Murdered for speaking to a white woman Money, Mississippi

October 22, 1955
JOHN EARL REESE
Slain by nightriders opposed to school improvements Mayflower, Texas

December 1, 1955
Rosa Parks arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man Montgomery, Alabama

December 5, 1955
Montgomery bus boycott begins

1956
November 13, 1956
Supreme court bans segregated seating on Montgomery buses

1957
January 23, 1957
WILLIE EDWARDS JR.
Killed by Klansmen Montgomery, Alabama

August 29, 1957
Congress passes first civil rights act since reconstruction

September 24, 1957
President Eisenhower orders federal troops to enforce school desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas

1959
April 25, 1959
MACK CHARLES PARKER
Taken from jail and lynched Poplarville, Mississippi

1960
February 1, 1960
Black students stage sit-in at “whites only” lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina

December 5, 1960
Supreme court outlaws segregation in bus terminals

1961
May 14, 1961
Freedom Riders attacked in Alabama while testing compliance with bus desegregation laws

September 25, 1961
HERBERT LEE
Voter registration worker killed by white legislator Liberty, Mississippi

1962
April 1, 1962
Civil rights groups join forces to launch voter registration drive

April 9, 1962
CPL. ROMAN DUCKSWORTH JR.
Taken from bus and killed by police Taylorsville, Mississippi

September 30, 1962
Riots erupt when James Meredith, a black student, enrolls at Ole Miss

September 30, 1962
PAUL GUIHARD
French reporter killed during Ole Miss riot Oxford, Mississippi

1963
April 23, 1963
WILLIAM LEWIS MOORE
Slain during one-man march against segregation Attalla, Alabama

May 3, 1963
Birmingham police attack marching children with dogs and fire hoses

June 11, 1963
Alabama Governor George Wallace stands in schoolhouse door to stop university integration

June 12, 1963
MEDGAR EVERS
Civil rights leader assassinated Jackson, Mississippi

August 28, 1963
250,000 Americans march on Washington for civil rights

September 15, 1963
ADDIE MAE COLLINS,
DENISE MCNAIR,
CAROLE ROBERTSON,
CYNTHIA WESLEY
Schoolgirls killed in bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church Birmingham, Alabama

September 15, 1963
VIRGIL LAMAR WARE
Youth killed during wave of racist violence Birmingham, Alabama

1964
January 23, 1964
Poll tax outlawed in federal elections

January 31, 1964
LOUIS ALLEN
Witness to murder of civil rights worker assassinated Liberty, Mississippi
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 7, 1964</td>
<td>THE REV. BRUCE KLUNDER Killed protesting construction of segregated school Cleveland, Ohio</td>
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<td>May 2, 1964</td>
<td>HENRY HEZEKIAH DEE &amp; CHARLES EDDIE MOORE Killed by Klansmen Meadville, Mississippi</td>
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<td>June 20, 1964</td>
<td>Freedom Summer brings 1,000 young civil rights volunteers to Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 21, 1964</td>
<td>JAMES CHANEY, ANDREW GOODMAN, MICHAEL SCHWERNER Civil rights workers abducted and slain by Klansmen Philadelphia, Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2, 1964</td>
<td>President Johnson signs Civil Rights Act of 1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 11, 1964</td>
<td>LT. COL. LEMUEL PENN Killed by Klansmen while driving north Colbert, Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 26, 1965</td>
<td>JIMMIE LEE JACKSON Civil rights marcher killed by state trooper Marion, Alabama</td>
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<td>March 7, 1965</td>
<td>State troopers beat back marchers at Edmund Pettus Bridge Selma, Alabama</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11, 1965</td>
<td>THE REV. JAMES REEB March volunteer beaten to death Selma, Alabama</td>
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<td>March 25, 1965</td>
<td>Thousands complete the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March</td>
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<td>March 25, 1965</td>
<td>VIOLA GREGG LIUZZO Killed by Klansmen while transporting marchers Selma Highway, Alabama</td>
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<td>June 2, 1965</td>
<td>ONEAL MOORE Black deputy killed by nightriders Varnado, Louisiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 9, 1965</td>
<td>Congress passes Voting Rights Act of 1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 18, 1965</td>
<td>WILLIE BREWSTER Killed by nightriders Anniston, Alabama</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 20, 1965</td>
<td>JONATHAN DANIELS Seminary student killed by deputy Hayneville, Alabama</td>
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<td>July 30, 1966</td>
<td>CLARENCE TRIGGS Slain by nightriders Bogalusa, Louisiana</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 3, 1966</td>
<td>SAMUEL YOUNGE JR. Student civil rights activist killed in dispute Tuskegee, Alabama</td>
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<td>January 10, 1966</td>
<td>VERNON DAHMER Black community leader killed in Klan bombing Hattiesburg, Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10, 1966</td>
<td>BEN CHESTER WHITE Killed by Klansmen Natchez, Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 27, 1967</td>
<td>WHARLEST JACKSON Civil rights leader killed after promotion to ‘white’ job Natchez, Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 12, 1967</td>
<td>BENJAMIN BROWN Civil rights worker killed when police fired on protesters Jackson, Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2, 1967</td>
<td>Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first black Supreme Court justice</td>
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<td>1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 8, 1968</td>
<td>SAMUEL HAMMOND JR., DELANO MIDDLETON, HENRY SMITH Students killed when highway patrolmen fire on protesters Orangeburg, South Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 4, 1968</td>
<td>THE REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. Assassinated Memphis, Tennessee</td>
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The great triumphs of the Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and ‘60s continue to inspire those who seek justice and equality today.
Civil Rights Memorial Center

In Montgomery, Alabama, in 1989, the Southern Poverty Law Center built a memorial to educate young people about the Civil Rights Movement.

Memorial designer Maya Lin, who also designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., says it is “a place to remember the Civil Rights Movement, to honor those killed during the struggle, to appreciate how far the country has come in its quest for equality, and to consider how far it has to go.”

A visitor studies the Civil Rights Memorial. What would you expect to see if you visited the Memorial? Include a drawing of yourself, a friend, or a family member on the coloring page.
...until justice rolls down like waters
And righteousness like a mighty stream
Powerful Words

The Civil Rights Memorial includes a curved black granite wall that is engraved with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s well-known paraphrase of Amos 5:24. Unscramble the letters below to reveal the quote.

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Ultni ijeuct lolsr
nwdo eikl tsearw
dan noshteurseisg
kiel a ihgmyt trames
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“What will the world look like when these powerful words reflect reality?”

What will the world look like when these powerful words reflect reality?
When Did It Happen?

Draw a line from the event that took place during the Civil Rights Movement to the year it happened.

- March on Washington: 1965
- Thurgood Marshall joins the Supreme Court: 1964
- President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act: 1955
- Lunch Counter Sit-In: 1960
- Montgomery Bus Boycott: 1967
- Congress passes the Voting Rights Act: 1963
Launching a Movement

Rosa Parks was born in 1913 in Alabama, where black people like her were treated as second-class citizens. This system of laws and customs was called “Jim Crow” — also known as “segregation.” Many black people were not allowed to vote. They could not go to school with white children or swim in their pools. They could not eat at the same restaurants or stay at the same hotels. They even had to drink out of separate water fountains.

When Rosa grew up, she and many others were determined to get rid of these unfair laws. But it was very hard to do, because some powerful people wanted to keep everything the same. One day — on Dec. 1, 1955 — Rosa was riding a city bus in Montgomery and the driver ordered her to give up her seat to a white passenger who didn’t have one. She said no, and so the police came and took her to jail.

The city’s black community was angry. Their leaders asked everyone to stop riding city buses. So, tens of thousands of people walked to work the next day — and the next day, and the next. They kept on walking for 381 straight days.

The city lost a lot of money, because these people were not buying bus tickets. Finally, the rules were changed, and black people could sit wherever they wanted.

This event is known as the Montgomery Bus Boycott. It inspired people across America to join a civil rights movement that changed our country forever.
**Overheard**

*Find the words or expressions often used during the Civil Rights Movement.*

- Boycott
- Voting rights
- Segregation
- Protest
- Equality
- Integration
- Demonstration
- Equal rights
- Jim Crow
- Non-violence
- Struggle
- Sit-in
- Freedom
- Respect
- Justice
Who Am I?

I grew up in Chicago.
In the summer of 1955, I took a bus to Money, Mississippi, to visit my cousins.
I was 14 years old.

My name is

COLORING PAGE!
What do you think he most enjoyed about visiting his cousins in Mississippi during the summer?
Who Am I?

I was a mother of five children living in Detroit, Michigan. One night, I saw some very disturbing images on the evening news. State troopers in Selma, Alabama, were attacking peaceful protestors with tear gas and clubs as they tried to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. I couldn’t do anything but cry as I watched.

Four days later came the news reports of the death of the Rev. James Reeb, a white minister from Washington, D. C., who came to Alabama to join Dr. King and thousands of others who were determined to march from Montgomery to Selma.

I got in my car and left for Selma alone.

Even though her children grew up without their mother, what lasting lesson did she leave for them?
Children of the Movement
Find the names of the children included on the Civil Rights Memorial in the word search below.

Addie Mae Collins  Emmett Till
Denise McNair  Virgil Ware
John Earl Reese  Cynthia Wesley
Carole Robertson

cemcylnsakfcncunbwsapa
ymjodenisraoyonyfj
nmavwmtvpdmsmidhuo
teadyuspendwotlverth
btpuhgjceislnpncen
dtwlmcnaiwomensisyeye
atakeaiclcavdfshta
cirtredrejbywnevmr
hlergageddpohgmuol
plfowumkhdingjtcscr
carolerobertsonahese
serligaedjkbfdayne
ridgedwelwpervrtlibcs
vtdsrcisjfnckjraee
fagwitbvirgisatlgau
uhyovmrhnjmoohnearm
The March Continues
Social movements often use signs to convey a message. Civil Rights activists would create signs to be used as part of demonstrations or acts of civil disobedience. Design a protest sign to deliver your own important message.
Famous Civil Rights Protest Marches

Draw a line from the march to the corresponding photo. The images are your clues.

March on Washington
Memphis Sanitation Workers
Selma to Montgomery March
Bloody Sunday
Children’s Crusade
Who Am I?

Once, I walked alone from Baltimore, Maryland, to the state capitol in Annapolis to protest segregation.

Later, I walked to Washington, D.C., to deliver a letter I wrote to President Kennedy at the White House.

My last walk was to be much longer — from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi — to deliver a letter urging Governor Ross Barnett to accept integration.

I never finished that march. Thankfully, others completed it for me.

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COLORING PAGE!
What challenges would he have faced along the way?
Rosa Parks’ Path
Trace the path that is the shortest distance between home and work for Mrs. Parks.

Rosa Parks lived with her husband, Raymond, in the Cleveland Court housing development. During the Montgomery bus boycott, Mrs. Parks, like thousands of others, often walked to work.
ACROSS

3 Marshall was the first black Supreme Court justice.

10 Till was a 14-year-old boy from Chicago, Illinois.

11 Evers was the first NAACP Field Secretary for Mississippi.

13 The school the Alabama Governor fought to keep segregated.

17 Where Mrs. Rosa Parks was trained in nonviolent civil disobedience.

18 The number of students who integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

19 The first black student to attend the University of Mississippi.

20 Number of students who began the Woolworth Lunch Counter Sit-In in Greensboro, North Carolina.

21 Her name before she became known as Mrs. Coretta King.

DOWN

1 During the 1960s, he was a Freedom Rider and led the “Bloody Sunday” march. He became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

2 “Bloody Sunday” protestors marched across this bridge.

4 President of the United States who signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

5 Edwards was forced to jump to his death in the Alabama River.

6 This reverend was killed protesting construction of segregated schools in Cleveland, Ohio.

7 French reporter killed during a riot at Ole Miss.

8 The Tennessee city where Dr. King was killed.

9 The Baptist Church where four schoolgirls were killed in Birmingham.

12 He preached about voting rights at his church in Mississippi.

14 City that is home to the Civil Rights Memorial.

15 16-year-old Texan shot while with his cousin in a little café.

16 George was the Alabama governor who blocked the schoolhouse door.
Who Am I?

I was the youngest of 12 children. My dad was a farmer. We had 80 acres of land.

I served as a military police officer in the U. S. Army, reaching the rank of corporal.

My wife had just had a new baby, and I was granted emergency leave to go home. I was excited about seeing them, but a little anxious about the 950-mile bus ride.

I was asleep when the bus pulled into my hometown of Taylorsville, Mississippi. Apparently, a Taylorsville police officer came on board when we arrived. He woke me up by slapping my face. The officer slapped me several more times before he shot me.

Some say the police officer shot me because I was seated in the wrong section of the bus. Others say I was mistaken for a “Freedom Rider.” The police officer later claimed I attacked him, and the grand jury believed him. The police officer was cleared of any wrongdoing.

More than 2,000 people attended my funeral. I was buried with full military honors, including a 16-gun salute.

Why would someone be upset because a black person was seated in the “wrong” section of the bus?
Pledge to Take a Stand

On the Wall of Tolerance in the Civil Rights Memorial Center, visitors have an opportunity to make a pledge to stand against hate and work for tolerance and justice in their daily lives:

I pledge to take a stand against hate, injustice and intolerance. I will work in my daily life for justice, equality and human rights — the ideals for which the Civil Rights martyrs died.

What does this mean to you? Rewrite the pledge in your own words.
We, _________________________ and _________________________, commit to the pledge above and will help each other live up to these promises, today and every day.

______________________________
YOUR SIGNATURE

______________________________
FRIEND/ADULT SIGNATURE

______________________________
DATE

★ Keep your pledge someplace where you will see it — and remember it — often!
Glossary

**Activism** *(noun)* the act of doing something, like participating in a march or boycott to create change in the world

**Activist** *(noun)* the person who is doing something to create change

**Boycott** *(noun)* refusing to deal with/buy from a person, business or organization

**Civil Rights** *(plural noun)* rights that guarantee freedom and equality to everyone

**Demonstration** *(noun)* publicly expressing support or protest

**Equality** *(noun)* being equal in rights and privileges

**Integration** *(verb)* to bring people together across different groups, such as race and religion

**Jim Crow** *(noun)* the system of rules and practices used to discriminate against African-Americans

**Justice** *(noun)* fairness, following the law

**Martyr** *(noun)* a person who is put to death or suffers greatly on behalf of a belief or cause

**Protest** *(noun)* making public your dislike or disapproval of something

**Segregation** *(noun)* the practice of separating out by race, religion or other group from others

**Tolerance** *(noun)* a fair, objective and accepting attitude toward those who are different from you
## Activity Answers

### #4 March on Washington — 1963
- Thurgood Marshall joins the Supreme Court — 1967
- President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act — 1964
- Lunch Counter sit-in — 1960
- Montgomery Bus Boycott — 1955
- Congress Passes Voting Rights Act — 1965

### #6

| F | S | A | D | E | Q | I | T | B | R | E | G | U | A | M |
| P | I | B | S | W | Y | E | L | G | G | U | R | T | S |
| T | O | C | Y | O | B | Q | O | Y | I | K | E | L | E |
| K | I | N | G | T | T | A | U | P | J | A | C | S | C |
| T | O | H | I | P | I | A | V | S | V | F | P | I | R |
| N | P | R | I | O | T | R | L | O | G | H | P | E | V |
| T | E | H | A | N | K | G | R | A | N | Q | R | C | I | G |
| E | D | F | O | W | A | O | I | R | U | M | O | T | L | A |
| G | N | R | M | O | N | U | G | J | O | Q | T | C | G | T |
| R | S | E | T | R | Q | K | H | U | R | A | E | L | H | I |
| A | B | E | J | C | G | G | T | S | E | N | S | D | Y | O |
| T | R | D | E | M | O | N | S | R | A | T | I | O | N |
| V | O | T | I | N | G | R | I | G | H | T | S | M | E |
| O | O | M | A | J | F | S | I | C | M | A | R | T | I | N |
| N | N | O | N | V | I | O | L | E | N | C | E | L | A | W |

### #7 Emmett Louis Till

### #8 Viola Liuzzo

### #9

| C | E | M | C | Y | N | S | A | K | F | C | N | U | B | W | S | P | A |
| Y | M | J | O | D | E | N | I | S | R | A | O | Y | O | N | Y | F | J |
| N | M | A | V | W | M | L | T | V | P | D | S | M | I | D | H | U | O |
| T | E | A | B | Y | E | U | S | B | W | O | T | L | V | E | R | T | H |
| B | T | P | U | H | G | J | C | E | I | S | L | N | P | N | C | E | N |
| D | T | W | L | M | C | N | A | I | W | O | M | E | N | I | S | Y | E |
| A | T | A | K | E | A | I | C | L | C | A | V | D | F | S | H | T | A |
| C | I | R | T | E | D | R | E | J | B | I | Y | W | E | V | M | R |
| H | L | R | G | A | I | G | A | D | D | P | O | H | G | M | U | O | L |
| P | L | F | O | W | U | M | K | H | D | I | N | J | T | C | S | D | R |
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| V | T | D | S | R | C | I | S | J | F | N | C | K | J | R | A | E | E |
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| U | H | Y | O | V | M | R | H | N | J | M | O | H | N | E | A | R | M |
Activity Answers

#14 Across
3) Thurgood
10) Emmett
11) Medgar
13) University of Alabama
17) Highlander
18) Nine
19) James Meredith
20) Four
21) Scott

Down
1) John Lewis
2) Edmund Pettus
4) Lyndon B. Johnson
5) Willie
6) Bruce Klunder
7) Paul Guihard
8) Memphis
9) Sixteenth Street
12) George Lee
14) Montgomery
15) John Reese
16) Wallace

#15 Corporal Roman Ducksworth Jr.