

# **Civil Rights Movement DBQ**

## **Historical Background**

During the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement became an organized demand for social change for African Americans. The primary goals of activists included ending racial discrimination and segregation and establishing the protection of citizenship rights by the federal government. Civil disobedience was at the heart of the movement from 1955 to 1968. Members of activist groups such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) used the power of nonviolence by participating in sit-ins, marches, boycotts, and freedom rides. Although these methods involved peaceful protest, civil rights activists often had to deal with the violent actions of people who were resistant to change. Bravery became necessary in order to face such violence. Eventually, the tide of the movement would respond to such cruelty, as race riots began to surface from 1964 to 1970. In addition, the Black Panthers, a militant group, urged African Americans to discard nonviolent notions in favor of using self-defense, including violent tactics. As time progressed, the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement would fuel landmark legislation that achieved some of the goals of the activists. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited public discrimination when it came to education, employment, and public facilities. In the South, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 forbade the use of unfair voting practices and used federal officials to monitor polling facilities. With these laws, the country was on its way toward establishing the equality promised by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

### **ESSAY TOPIC:**

Why was courage a necessary component of the Civil Rights Movement?

## **Document A**

We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. This disposition makes unnecessary any discussion whether such segregation also violates the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Brown v. Board of Education, 1954  
Chief Justice Earl Warren

## **Document B**

SEC. 2. The Secretary of Defense is authorized and directed to take all appropriate steps to enforce any orders of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas for the removal of obstruction of justice in the State of Arkansas with respect to matters relating to enrollment and attendance at public schools in the Little Rock School District, Little Rock, Arkansas. In carrying out the provisions of this section, the Secretary of Defense is authorized to use the units, and members thereof, ordered into the active military service of the United States pursuant to Section 1 of this Order.

SEC. 3. In furtherance of the enforcement of the aforementioned orders of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas, the Secretary of Defense is authorized to use such of the armed forces of the United States as he may deem necessary.

Executive Order 10730: Desegregation of Central High School, September 23, 1957  
President Dwight Eisenhower

## Document C

Montgomery Negroes will continue to boycott city busses until a "satisfactory" seating arrangement is devised, a spokesman told officials of City Bus Lines yesterday.

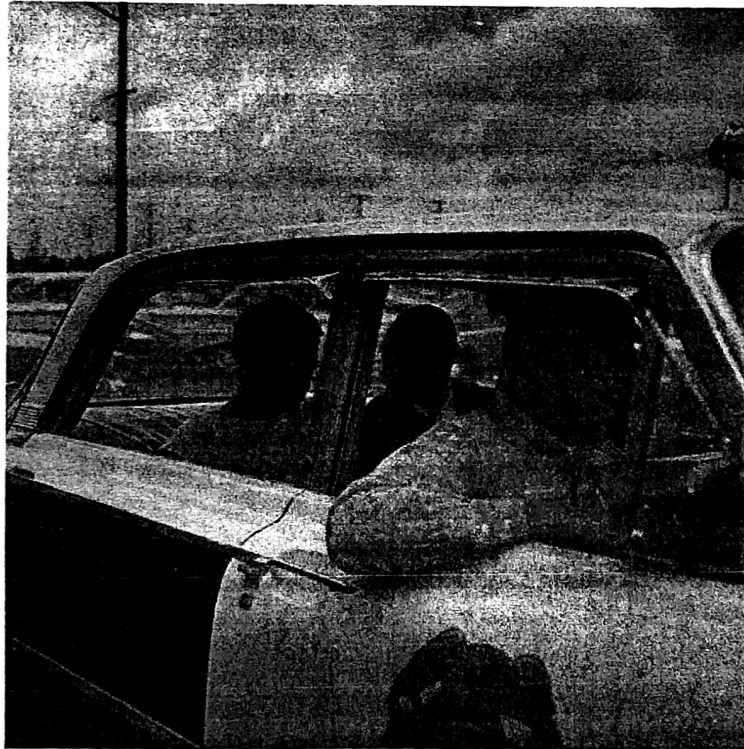
The Rev. M. L. King, speaking for a delegation that conferred with bus lines officials for four hours, proposed that bus patrons be seated on a "first come, first served" basis with no sections reserved for either race.

Negroes would continue to seat from the rear and whites from the front, he said, but there would be no reassignment of seats once the busses were loaded.

He laid down two other conditions sought by Negroes: More courteous treatment and the hiring of Negro drivers on routes "predominantly" Negro.

Bus Boycott Conference Fails to Find Solution, December 9, 1955  
Montgomery Advertiser

## Document D



Civil Rights Activists Arrested, June 16, 1961  
Florida Memory

## Document E

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check—a check which has come back marked “insufficient funds.” But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation...

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundation of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

I Have A Dream, August 28, 1963  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Document F

How can you and I be looked upon as men, with black women being beaten, and nothing being done about it? Black children and black babies being beaten, and nothing being done about it? No, we don't deserve to be recognized and respected as men, as long as our women can be brutalized... and nothing can be done about it except we sit around singing “We Shall Overcome.”

...We will never communicate talking one language and he's talking another language. He's talking the language of violence... Let's learn his language. If his language is with a shotgun, get a shotgun. If he only understands the language of a rifle, get a rifle. If he only understands the language of a rope, get a rope. But don't waste time talking the wrong language to a man, if you want to really communicate with him. Speak his language. And there's nothing wrong with that. If something was wrong with that language, the Federal government would have stopped the cracker from speaking it to you and me.

What Does Mississippi Have to do with Harlem?, 1964  
Malcolm X

## Document G



Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-04298

Congress of Racial Equality Conducts March in Memory of Negro Youngsters  
Killed in Birmingham Bombings, 1963  
Thomas J. O'Halloran

## Document H

SEC. 201. (a) All persons shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, and privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation, as defined in this section, without discrimination or segregation on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin.

(b) Each of the following establishments which serves the public is a place of public accommodation within the meaning of this title if its operations affect commerce, or if discrimination or segregation by it is supported by State action:

- (1) any inn, hotel, motel, or other establishment which provides lodging to transient guests, other than an establishment located within a building which contains not more than five rooms for rent or hire and which is actually occupied by the proprietor of such establishment as his residence;
- (2) any restaurant, cafeteria, lunchroom, lunch counter, soda fountain, or other facility principally engaged in selling food for consumption on the premises, including, but not limited to, any such facility located on the premises of any retail establishment; or any gasoline station;
- (3) any motion picture house, theater, concert hall, sports arena, stadium or other place of exhibition or entertainment.

Civil Rights Act, 1964

## Document I

SEC. 2. No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.

Voting Rights Act, 1965