

The Civil Rights Movement 1954–1968



Why It Matters

In the 1950s and 1960s, African Americans made major strides. They began by challenging segregation in the South. With the Montgomery bus boycott, Martin Luther King, Jr., achieved national and worldwide recognition. His peaceful resistance inspired many, especially students. After King's assassination, the civil rights movement shifted focus. Many people in the movement began to see economic opportunity as the key to equality.

The Impact Today

Changes brought about by the civil rights movement are still with us.

- Civil rights legislation provides protection against discrimination for all citizens.
- Economic programs for inner-city residents by government and social service agencies continue.



The American Vision Video The Chapter 29 video, "The Civil Rights Movement," chronicles the milestones of the movement to win rights for African Americans.

1954
• *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling issued by Supreme Court



1955
• Rosa Parks refuses to give up bus seat; Montgomery bus boycott begins in Alabama

1957
• Eisenhower sends troops to a Little Rock, Arkansas, high school to ensure integration



1960
• Sit-in protests begin

Kennedy
1961–1963



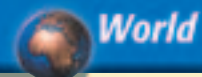
Eisenhower
1953–1961



1953

1957

1961



1955
• West Germany admitted to NATO

1958
• Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago* awarded Nobel Prize for Literature

1959
• Mary Leakey discovers 1.7 million-year-old hominid skull fragment in Tanzania

1960
• France successfully tests nuclear weapons



Americans march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery in support of the civil rights movement.



- 1963**
- Over 200,000 civil rights supporters march on Washington, D.C.



- 1968**
- Civil Rights Act of 1968 passed
 - Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinated

- 1965**
- Malcolm X assassinated
 - Race riots erupt in Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts

Johnson
1963–1969



1965



1969

- 1963**
- Organization of African Unity formed
 - Kenya becomes an independent nation

- 1965**
- China's Cultural Revolution begins

- 1967**
- Arab-Israeli War brings many Palestinians under Israeli rule

HISTORY Online

Chapter Overview
Visit the *American Vision* Web site at tav.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter Overviews—Chapter 29** to preview chapter information.



SECTION 1 The Movement Begins

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

After World War II, African Americans and other supporters of civil rights challenged segregation in the United States.

Key Terms and Names

separate-but-equal, de facto segregation, NAACP, sit-in, Thurgood Marshall, Linda Brown, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Reading Strategy

Organizing As you read about the birth of the civil rights movement, complete a graphic organizer similar to the one below by filling in the causes of the civil rights movement.



Reading Objectives

- **Explain** the origin of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.
- **Discuss** the changing role of the federal government in civil rights enforcement.

Section Theme

Government and Democracy In the 1950s, African Americans began a movement to win greater social equality.

Preview of Events



Rosa Parks

★ An American Story ★

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks left her job as a seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, and boarded a bus to go home. In 1955 buses in Montgomery reserved seats in the front for whites and seats in the rear for African Americans. Seats in the middle were open to African Americans, but only if there were few whites on the bus.

Rosa Parks took a seat just behind the white section. Soon all of the seats on the bus were filled. When the bus driver noticed a white man standing at the front of the bus, he told Parks and three other African Americans in her row to get up and let the white man sit down. Nobody moved. The driver cautioned, "You better make it light on yourselves and let me have those seats." The other three African Americans rose, but Rosa Parks did not. The driver then called the Montgomery police, who took Parks into custody.

News of the arrest soon reached E.D. Nixon, a former president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Nixon wanted to challenge bus segregation in court, and he told Parks, "With your permission we can break down segregation on the bus with your case." Parks told Nixon, "If you think it will mean something to Montgomery and do some good, I'll be happy to go along with it."

—adapted from *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years*

The Origins of the Movement

When Rosa Parks agreed to challenge segregation in court, she did not know that her decision would launch the modern civil rights movement. Within days of her arrest, African Americans in Montgomery had organized a boycott of the bus system. Mass



Student Web Activity Visit the *American Vision* Web site at tav.glencoe.com and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 29** for an activity on the civil rights movement.

protests began across the nation. After decades of segregation and inequality, many African Americans had decided the time had come to demand equal rights.

The struggle would not be easy. The Supreme Court had declared segregation to be constitutional in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. The ruling had established the “**separate-but-equal**” doctrine. Laws segregating African Americans were permitted as long as equal facilities were provided for them.

After the *Plessy* decision, laws segregating African Americans and whites spread quickly. These laws, nicknamed “Jim Crow” laws, segregated buses and trains, schools, restaurants, swimming pools, parks, and other public facilities. Jim Crow laws were common throughout the South, but segregation existed in other states as well. Often it was left up to each local community to decide whether to pass segregation laws. Areas without laws requiring segregation often had **de facto segregation**—segregation by custom and tradition. 📖 (See page 1082 for more information on *Plessy v. Ferguson*.)

Court Challenges Begin

The civil rights movement had been building for a long time. Since 1909, the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP) had supported court cases intended to overturn segregation. Over the years, the NAACP achieved some victories. In 1935, for example, the Supreme Court ruled in *Norris v. Alabama* that Alabama’s exclusion of African Americans from juries violated their right to equal protection under the law. In 1946 the Court ruled in *Morgan v. Virginia* that segregation on interstate buses was unconstitutional. In 1950 it ruled in *Sweatt v. Painter* that state law schools had to admit qualified African American applicants, even if parallel black law schools existed. 📖 (See pages 1082–1083 for more information on these cases.)

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

MOMENT in HISTORY

AMERICAN SEGREGATION

In an Oklahoma City streetcar station in 1939, a man takes a drink from a water cooler labeled “COLORED.” Racially segregated facilities—waiting rooms, railroad cars, lavatories, and drinking fountains—were prevalent all across the South. Under the so-called Jim Crow system, African Americans were legally entitled to “separate-but-equal” education, housing, and social services. In practice, however, only a small percentage of public funds earmarked for schools, streets, police, and other expenses found its way to African American neighborhoods.



New Political Power In addition to a string of court victories, African Americans enjoyed increased political power. Before World War I, most African Americans lived in the South, where they were largely excluded from voting. During the Great Migration, many moved to Northern cities, where they were allowed to vote. Increasingly, Northern politicians sought their votes and listened to their concerns.

During the 1930s, many African Americans benefited from FDR's New Deal programs. Thus they began supporting the Democratic Party, giving it new strength in the North. This wing of the party was now able to counter Southern Democrats, who often supported segregation.

The Push for Desegregation During World War II, African American leaders began to use their new political power to demand more rights. Their efforts helped end discrimination in factories that held government contracts and increased opportunities for African Americans in the military.

In Chicago in 1942, James Farmer and George Houser founded the **Congress of Racial Equality**

(CORE). CORE began using **sit-ins**, a form of protest first used by union workers in the 1930s. In 1943 CORE attempted to desegregate restaurants that refused to serve African Americans.

Using the sit-in strategy, members of CORE went to segregated restaurants. If they were denied service, they sat down and refused to leave. The sit-ins were intended to shame restaurant managers into integrating their restaurants. Using these protests, CORE successfully integrated many restaurants, theaters, and other public facilities in Chicago, Detroit, Denver, and Syracuse.

Reading Check

Examining How had the ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* contributed to segregation?

Separate but Unequal Linda Brown's court case ended decades of official segregation in the South.




The Civil Rights Movement Begins

When World War II ended, many African American soldiers returned home optimistic that their country would appreciate their loyalty and sacrifice. In the 1950s, when change did not come as quickly as hoped, their determination to change prejudices in the United States led to protests and marches—and to the emergence of the civil rights movement.

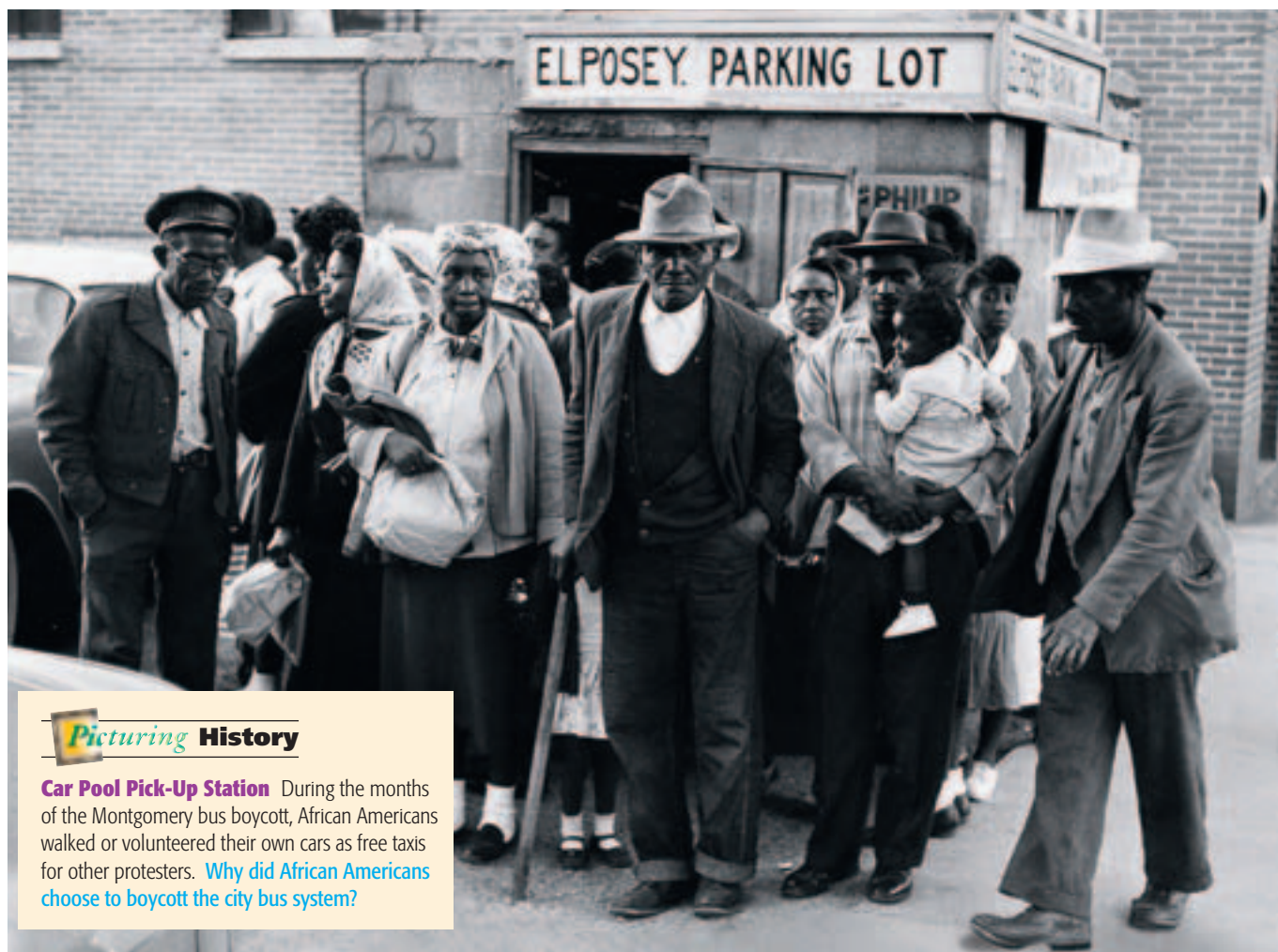
Brown v. Board of Education After World War II, the NAACP continued to challenge segregation in the courts. From 1939 to 1961, the NAACP's chief counsel and director of its Legal Defense and Education Fund was the brilliant African American attorney **Thurgood Marshall**. After World War II, Marshall focused his efforts on ending segregation in public schools.

In 1954 the Supreme Court decided to combine several different cases and issue a general ruling on segregation in schools. One of the cases involved a young African American girl named **Linda Brown**, who was denied admission to her neighborhood school in Topeka, Kansas, because of her race. She was told to attend an all-black school across town. With the help of the NAACP, her parents then sued the Topeka school board.

On May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional and violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Chief Justice Earl Warren summed up the Court's decision when he wrote: "In the field of public education, the doctrine of separate but equal has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."  (See pages 1077 and 1080 for information on *Brown v. Board of Education*.)

The Southern Manifesto The *Brown* decision marked a dramatic reversal of the ideas expressed in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case. *Brown v. Board of Education* applied only to public schools, but the ruling threatened the entire system of segregation. Although it convinced many African Americans that the time had come to challenge other forms of segregation, it also angered many white Southerners, who became even more determined to defend segregation, regardless of what the Supreme Court ruled.

Although some school districts in border states integrated their schools in compliance with the Court's ruling, anger and opposition was a far more common reaction. In Washington, D.C., Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia called on Southerners to



Picturing History

Car Pool Pick-Up Station During the months of the Montgomery bus boycott, African Americans walked or volunteered their own cars as free taxis for other protesters. **Why did African Americans choose to boycott the city bus system?**

adopt “massive resistance” against the ruling. Across the South, hundreds of thousands of white Americans joined citizens’ councils to pressure their local governments and school boards into defying the Supreme Court. Many states adopted pupil assignment laws. These laws created an elaborate set of requirements other than race that schools could use to prevent African Americans from attending white schools.

The Supreme Court inadvertently encouraged white resistance when it followed up its decision in *Brown v. Board* a year later. The Court ordered school districts to proceed “with all deliberate speed” to end school segregation. The wording was vague enough that many districts were able to keep their schools segregated for many more years.

Massive resistance also appeared in the halls of Congress. In 1956 a group of 101 Southern members of Congress signed the **Southern Manifesto**, which denounced the Supreme Court’s ruling as “a clear abuse of judicial power” and pledged to use “all lawful means” to reverse the decision. Although the Southern

Manifesto had no legal standing, the statement encouraged white Southerners to defy the Supreme Court.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott In the midst of the uproar over the *Brown v. Board of Education* case, Rosa Parks made her decision to challenge segregation of public transportation. Outraged by Parks’s arrest, Jo Ann Robinson, head of a local organization called the Women’s Political Council, called on African Americans to boycott Montgomery’s buses on the day Rosa Parks appeared in court.

The boycott was a dramatic success. That afternoon, several African American leaders formed the Montgomery Improvement Association to run the boycott and to negotiate with city leaders for an end to segregation. They elected a 26-year-old pastor named **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, to lead them.

On the evening of December 5, 1955, a meeting was held at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, where Dr. King was pastor. In the deep, resonant tones and powerful phrases that characterized his speaking style, King encouraged the people to continue their

protest. “There comes a time, my friends,” he said, “when people get tired of being thrown into the abyss of humiliation, where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair.” He explained, however, that the protest had to be peaceful:

“Now let us say that we are not advocating violence. . . . The only weapon we have in our hands this evening is the weapon of protest. If we were incarcerated behind the iron curtains of a communistic nation—we couldn’t do this. If we were trapped in the dungeon of a totalitarian regime—we couldn’t do this. But the great glory of American democracy is the right to protest for right!☺☺

—quoted in *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years*

King had earned a Ph.D. in theology from Boston University. He believed that the only moral way to end segregation and racism was through nonviolent passive resistance. He told his followers, “We must use the weapon of love. We must realize that so many people are taught to hate us that they are not totally responsible for their hate.” African Americans, he urged, must say to racists and segregationists: “We will soon wear you down by our capacity to suffer, and in winning our freedom we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process.”

King drew upon the philosophy and techniques of Indian leader Mohandas Gandhi, who had used nonviolent resistance effectively against British rule in India. Like Gandhi, King encouraged his followers to disobey unjust laws. Believing in people’s ability to transform themselves, King was certain that public opinion would eventually force the government to end segregation.

Stirred by King’s powerful words, African Americans in Montgomery continued their boycott for over a year. Instead of riding the bus, they organized car pools or walked to work. They refused to be intimidated, yet they avoided violence. Meanwhile Rosa Parks’s legal challenge to bus segregation worked its way through the courts. Finally, in December 1956, the Supreme Court

Profiles IN HISTORY

Thurgood Marshall

1908–1993

Over his long lifetime, Thurgood Marshall made many contributions to the civil rights movement. Perhaps his most famous accomplishment was representing the NAACP in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case.

Marshall’s speaking style was both simple and direct. During the *Brown* case, Justice Frankfurter asked Marshall for a definition of equal. “Equal means getting the same thing, at the same time and in the same place,” Marshall answered.

Born into a middle-class Baltimore family in 1908, Marshall earned a law degree from Howard University Law School. The school’s dean, Charles Hamilton Houston, enlisted Marshall to work for the NAACP. Together the two laid out the legal strategy for challenging discrimination in many arenas of American life.



Marshall became the first African American on the Supreme Court when President Lyndon Johnson appointed him in 1967. On the Court, he remained a voice for civil rights. In his view, the Constitution was not perfect because it had accepted slavery. Its ideas of liberty, justice, and equality had to be refined. “The true miracle of the Constitution,” he once wrote, “was not the birth of the Constitution, but its life.”

affirmed the decision of a special three-judge panel declaring Alabama’s laws requiring segregation on buses to be unconstitutional.

Reading Check **Describing** What was the ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*?

African American Churches

Martin Luther King, Jr., was not the only prominent minister in the bus boycott. Many of the other leaders were African American ministers. The boycott could not have succeeded without the support of the African American churches in the city. As the civil rights movement gained momentum, African American churches continued to play a critical role. They served as forums for many of the protests and planning meetings, and they also mobilized many of the volunteers for specific civil rights campaigns.

After the Montgomery bus boycott demonstrated that nonviolent protest could be successful, African American ministers led by King established the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)** in 1957. The SCLC set out to eliminate segregation from American society and to encourage



African Americans to register to vote. Dr. King served as the SCLC's first president. Under his leadership, the organization challenged segregation at the voting booths and in public transportation, housing, and public accommodations.

 **Reading Check** **Summarizing** What role did African American churches play in the civil rights movement?

Eisenhower and Civil Rights

President Eisenhower sympathized with the goals of the civil rights movement, and he personally disagreed with segregation. Following the precedent set by President Truman, he ordered navy shipyards and veterans' hospitals to be desegregated.

At the same time, however, Eisenhower disagreed with those who wanted to roll back segregation through protests and court rulings. He believed that people had to allow segregation and racism to end gradually as values changed. With the nation in the midst of the Cold War, he worried that challenging white Southerners on segregation might divide the nation and lead to violence at a time when the country

had to pull together. Publicly, he refused to endorse the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Privately, he remarked, "I don't believe you can change the hearts of men with laws or decisions."

Despite his belief that the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was wrong, Eisenhower felt he had to uphold the authority of the federal government, including its court system. As a result, he became the first president since Reconstruction to send federal troops into the South to protect the constitutional rights of African Americans.

Crisis in Little Rock In September 1957, the school board in Little Rock, Arkansas, won a court order to admit nine African American students to Central High, a school with 2,000 white students. Little Rock was a racially moderate Southern city, as was most of the state of Arkansas. A number of Arkansas communities, as well as the state university, had already begun to desegregate their schools.

The governor of Arkansas, Orval Faubus, was believed to be a moderate on racial issues, unlike many other Southern politicians. Faubus was determined to win re-election, however, and so he began to campaign

Picturing History

Crisis in Little Rock Fifteen-year-old Elizabeth Eckford (in sunglasses at right) braves an angry crowd of Central High School students in Arkansas. [How did Governor Orval Faubus react to attempts to integrate the high school?](#)



as a defender of white supremacy. He ordered troops from the Arkansas National Guard to prevent the nine African American students from entering the school. The next day, as the National Guard troops surrounded the school, an angry white mob joined the troops to protest the integration plan and to intimidate the African American students trying to register.

Television coverage of this episode placed Little Rock at the center of national attention. Faubus had used the armed forces of a state to oppose the authority of the federal government—the first such challenge to the Constitution since the Civil War. Eisenhower knew that he could not allow Faubus to defy the federal government. After a conference between Eisenhower and Faubus proved fruitless, the district court ordered the governor to remove the troops. Instead of ending the crisis, however, Faubus simply left the school to the mob. After the African American students entered the school, angry whites beat at least two African American reporters and broke many of the school’s windows. The mob came so close to capturing the terrified African American students that the police had to take them away to safety.

The mob violence finally pushed President Eisenhower’s patience to the breaking point. Federal authority had to be upheld. He immediately ordered the U.S. Army to send troops to Little Rock. By nightfall 1,000 soldiers of the elite 101st Airborne Division had arrived. By 5:00 A.M. the troops had encircled the school, bayonets ready. A few hours later, the nine African American students arrived in an army station wagon, and they walked into the

high school. The law had been upheld, but the troops were forced to remain in Little Rock for the rest of the school year.

New Civil Rights Legislation The same year that the Little Rock crisis began, Congress passed the first civil rights law since Reconstruction. The **Civil Rights Act of 1957** was intended to protect the right of African Americans to vote. Eisenhower believed firmly in the right to vote, and he viewed it as his responsibility to protect voting rights. He also knew that if he sent a civil rights bill to Congress, conservative Southern Democrats would try to block the legislation. In 1956 he did send the bill to Congress, hoping not only to split the Democratic Party but also to convince more African Americans to vote Republican.

Several Southern senators did try to stop the Civil Rights Act of 1957, but the Senate majority leader, Democrat Lyndon Johnson, put together a compromise that enabled the act to pass. Although its final form was much weaker than originally intended, the act still brought the power of the federal government into the civil rights debate. The act created a civil rights division within the Department of Justice and gave it the authority to seek court injunctions against anyone interfering with the right to vote. It also created the United States Commission on Civil Rights to investigate allegations of denial of voting rights. After the bill passed, the SCLC announced a campaign to register 2 million new African American voters.

 **Reading Check** **Explaining** Why did President Eisenhower intervene in the civil rights controversy?

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- Define:** *separate-but-equal, de facto segregation, sit-in.*
- Identify:** NAACP, Thurgood Marshall, Linda Brown, Martin Luther King, Jr., Southern Christian Leadership Conference.
- State** the outcome of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case.

Reviewing Themes

- Government and Democracy** Why did the role of the federal government in civil rights enforcement change?

Critical Thinking

- Interpreting** Do you think the civil rights movement would have been successful in gaining civil rights for African Americans without the help of the NAACP and the SCLC? Explain.
- Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to list the efforts made to end segregation.



Analyzing Visuals

- Examining Photographs** Study the photograph of Central High School students on page 871. How would you describe Elizabeth Eckford’s demeanor compared to those around her? What might this tell you about her character?

Writing About History

- Expository Writing** Take on the role of an African American soldier returning to the United States after fighting in World War II. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper describing your expectations of civil rights as an American citizen.

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

African American citizens and white supporters created organizations that directed protests, targeted specific inequalities, and attracted the attention of the mass media and the government.

Key Terms and Names

Jesse Jackson, Ella Baker, Freedom Riders, filibuster, cloture, Civil Rights Act of 1964, poll tax

Preview of Events

**Reading Strategy**

Organizing As you read about challenges to segregation in the South, complete a cause/effect chart like the one below.

Cause	Effect
Sit-In Movement	
Freedom Riders	
	African American support of Kennedy
	African American voter registration

Reading Objectives

- **Evaluate** the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- **Summarize** the efforts to establish voting rights for African Americans.

Section Theme

Science and Technology The civil rights movement gained momentum in the early 1960s due to national television coverage.

★ **An American Story** ★

Four North Carolina College students after they participated in a lunch counter sit-in.

In the fall of 1959, four young African Americans—Joseph McNeil, Ezell Blair, Jr., David Richmond, and Franklin McCain—enrolled at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro. The four freshmen became close friends and spent evenings talking about the civil rights movement. In January 1960, McNeil told his friends that he thought the time had come to take action, and he suggested a sit-in at the whites-only lunch counter in the nearby Woolworth's department store.

"All of us were afraid," Richmond later recalled, "but we went and did it." On February 1, 1960, the four friends entered the Woolworth's. They purchased school supplies and then sat at the lunch counter and ordered coffee. When they were refused service, Blair said, "I beg your pardon, but you just served us at [the checkout] counter. Why can't we be served at the counter here?" The students stayed at the counter until it closed, then announced that they would sit at the counter every day until they were given the same service as white customers.

As they left the store, the four were excited. McNeil recalled, "I just felt I had powers within me, a superhuman strength that would come forward." McCain was also energized, saying, "I probably felt better that day than I've ever felt in my life."

—adapted from *Civilities and Civil Rights*

The Sit-In Movement

News of the daring sit-in at the Woolworth's store spread quickly across Greensboro. The following day, 29 African American students arrived at Woolworth's determined to sit at the counter until served. By the end of the week, over 300 students were taking part.

Starting with just four students, a new mass movement for civil rights had begun. Within two months, sit-ins had spread to 54 cities in 9 states. Sit-ins were staged at segregated stores, restaurants, hotels, movie theaters, and swimming pools. By 1961 sit-ins had been held in more than 100 cities.

The sit-in movement brought large numbers of idealistic and energized college students into the civil rights struggle. Many African American students had become discouraged by the slow pace of desegregation. Students like **Jesse Jackson**, a student leader at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College, wanted to see things change. The sit-in offered them a way to take matters into their own hands.

At first the leaders of the NAACP and the SCLC were nervous about the sit-in movement. They feared that students did not have the discipline to remain nonviolent if they were provoked enough. For the most part, the students proved them wrong. Those conducting sit-ins were heckled by bystanders, punched, kicked, beaten with clubs, and burned with cigarettes, hot coffee, and acid—but most did not fight back. They remained peaceful, and their heroic behavior grabbed the nation’s attention.

 **Reading Check** **Examining** What were the effects of the sit-in movement?

SNCC

As the sit-ins spread, student leaders in different states realized that they needed to coordinate their efforts. The person who brought them together was **Ella Baker**, the 55-year-old executive director of the SCLC. In April 1960, Baker invited student leaders to

attend a convention at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. At the convention, Baker urged students to create their own organization instead of joining the NAACP or the SCLC. Students, she said, had “the right to direct their own affairs and even make their own mistakes.”

The students agreed with Baker and established the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**. Among SNCC’s early leaders were **Marion Barry**, who later served as mayor of Washington, D.C., and John Lewis, who later became a member of Congress. African American college students from all across the South made up the majority of SNCC’s members, although many whites also joined.

Between 1960 and 1965, SNCC played a key role in desegregating public facilities in dozens of Southern communities. SNCC also began sending volunteers into rural areas of the Deep South to register African Americans to vote. The idea for what came to be called the Voter Education Project began with Robert Moses, an SNCC volunteer from New York. Moses pointed out that the civil rights movement tended to focus on urban areas. He urged SNCC to fill in the gap by helping rural African Americans. Moses himself went to rural Mississippi, where African Americans who tried to register to vote frequently met with violence.

Despite the danger, many SNCC volunteers headed to Mississippi and other parts of the Deep South. Several had their lives threatened, and others were beaten. In 1964 local officials in Mississippi brutally murdered three SNCC workers as the workers attempted to register African American voters.

One SNCC organizer, a former sharecropper named **Fannie Lou Hamer**, had been evicted from her farm after registering to vote. She was then arrested in Mississippi for urging other African Americans to register, and she was severely beaten by the police while in jail. She then helped organize the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, and she challenged the legality of the segregated Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

 **Reading Check** **Explaining** What role did Ella Baker play in forming SNCC?

The Freedom Riders

Despite rulings outlawing segregation in interstate bus service, bus travel remained segregated in much of the South. In 1961 CORE leader James Farmer asked teams of African Americans and whites to travel into the South to draw attention to

Picturing History

Sit-Ins Fight Segregation African American students challenged Southern segregation laws by demanding equal service at lunch counters. [How did the NAACP initially feel about the sit-in movement?](#)



the South's refusal to integrate bus terminals. The teams became known as the **Freedom Riders**.

In early May 1961, the first Freedom Riders boarded several southbound interstate buses. When the buses carrying them arrived in Anniston, Birmingham, and Montgomery, Alabama, angry white mobs attacked them. The mobs slit the bus tires and threw rocks at the windows. In Anniston, someone threw a firebomb into one bus, although fortunately no one was killed.

In Birmingham the riders emerged from a bus to face a gang of young men armed with baseball bats, chains, and lead pipes. They beat the riders viciously. One witness later reported, "You couldn't see their faces through the blood." The head of the police in Birmingham, Public Safety Commissioner Theophilus Eugene ("Bull") Connor, explained that there had been no police at the bus station because it was Mother's Day, and he had given many of his officers the day off. FBI evidence later showed that Connor had contacted the local Ku Klux Klan and told them he wanted the Freedom Riders beaten until "it looked like a bulldog got a hold of them."

The violence in Alabama made national news, shocking many Americans. The attack on the Freedom Riders came less than four months after President John F. Kennedy took office. The new president felt compelled to do something to get the violence under control.

 **Reading Check** **Summarizing** What was the goal of the Freedom Riders?

John F. Kennedy and Civil Rights

While campaigning for the presidency in 1960, John F. Kennedy promised to actively support the civil rights movement if elected. His brother, Robert F. Kennedy, had used his influence to get Dr. King released from jail after a demonstration in Georgia. African Americans responded by voting overwhelmingly for Kennedy. Their votes helped him narrowly win several key states, including Illinois, which Kennedy carried by only 9,000 votes. Once in office, however, Kennedy at first seemed as cautious as Eisenhower on civil rights, which disappointed many African Americans. Kennedy knew that he needed the support of many Southern senators to get



Picturing History

Riding Into Danger On May 14, 1961, Freedom Riders were driven from their bus outside of Anniston, Alabama, when angry townspeople set the bus on fire. [Which civil rights protest organization coordinated the Freedom Riders?](#)

other programs he wanted through Congress, and that any attempt to push through new civil rights legislation would anger them.

Kennedy did, however, name approximately 40 African Americans to high-level positions in the federal government. He also appointed Thurgood Marshall to a judgeship on the Second Circuit Appeals Court in New York—one level below the Supreme Court and the highest judicial position an African American had attained to that point. Kennedy also created the **Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity (CEEEO)** to stop the federal bureaucracy from discriminating against African Americans when hiring and promoting people.

The Justice Department Takes Action Although President Kennedy was unwilling to challenge Southern Democrats in Congress, he allowed the Justice Department, run by his brother Robert, to actively support the civil rights movement. Robert Kennedy tried to help African Americans register to vote by having the civil rights division of the Justice Department file lawsuits throughout the South.

When violence erupted against the Freedom Riders, the Kennedys came to their aid as well, although not at first. At the time the Freedom Riders took action, President Kennedy was preparing for a meeting with Nikita Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Union. Kennedy did not want violence in the South to disrupt the meeting by giving the impression that his country was weak and divided.

After the Freedom Riders were attacked in Montgomery, the Kennedys publicly urged them to

stop the rides and give everybody a “cooling off” period. James Farmer replied that African Americans “have been cooling off now for 350 years. If we cool off anymore, we’ll be in a deep freeze.” Instead he announced that the Freedom Riders planned to head into Mississippi on their next trip.

To stop the violence, President Kennedy made a deal with Senator James Eastland of Mississippi, a strong supporter of segregation. If Eastland would use his influence in Mississippi to prevent violence, Kennedy would not object if the Mississippi police arrested the Freedom Riders. Eastland kept the deal. No violence occurred when the buses arrived in Jackson, Mississippi, but the riders were arrested.

The cost of bailing the Freedom Riders out of jail used up most of CORE’s funds, which meant that the rides would have to end unless more money could be found. When Thurgood Marshall learned of the situation, he offered James Farmer the use of the NAACP’s Legal Defense Fund’s huge bail bond account to keep the rides going.

When President Kennedy returned from his meeting with Khrushchev and found that the Freedom Riders were still active, he changed his position and ordered the Interstate Commerce Commission to tighten its regulations against segregated bus terminals. In the meantime, Robert Kennedy ordered the Justice Department to take legal action against Southern cities that were maintaining segregated bus terminals. The continuing pressure of CORE and the actions of the ICC and the Justice Department finally produced results. By late 1962, segregation in interstate travel had come to an end.

James Meredith As the Freedom Riders were trying to desegregate bus terminals, efforts continued to integrate Southern schools. On the very day John F. Kennedy was inaugurated, an African American air force veteran named **James Meredith** applied for a transfer to the University of Mississippi. Up to that point, the university had avoided complying with the Supreme Court ruling ending segregated education.

In September 1962, Meredith tried to register at the university’s admissions office, only to find Ross Barnett, the governor of Mississippi, blocking his path. Although Meredith had a court order directing the university to register him, Governor Barnett stated emphatically, “Never! We will never surrender to the evil and illegal forces of tyranny.”

Frustrated, President Kennedy dispatched 500 federal marshals to escort Meredith to the campus. Shortly after Meredith and the marshals arrived, an


angry white mob attacked the campus, and a full-scale riot erupted. The mob hurled rocks, bottles, bricks, and acid at the marshals. Some people fired shotguns at them. The marshals responded with tear gas, but they were under orders not to fire.

The fighting continued all night. By morning, 160 marshals had been wounded. Reluctantly Kennedy ordered the army to send several thousand troops to the campus. For the rest of the year, Meredith attended classes at the University of Mississippi under federal guard. He graduated the following August.

Violence in Birmingham The events in Mississippi frustrated Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders. Although they were pleased that Kennedy had intervened to protect Meredith’s rights, they were disappointed that the president had not seized the moment to push for a new civil rights law. When the Cuban missile crisis began the following month, civil rights issues dropped out of the news, and for the next several months, foreign policy became the main priority at the White House.

Reflecting on the problem, Dr. King came to a difficult decision. It seemed to him that only when violence and disorder got out of hand would the federal government intervene. “We’ve got to have a crisis to bargain with,” one of his advisers observed. King agreed. In the spring of 1963, he decided to launch demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, knowing they would probably provoke a violent response. He believed it was the only way to get President Kennedy to actively support civil rights.

The situation in Birmingham was volatile. Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor, who had arranged for the attack on the Freedom Riders, was now running for mayor. Eight days after the protests began, King was arrested and held for a time in solitary confinement. While in prison, King began writing on scraps of paper that had been smuggled into his cell. The “Letter From a Birmingham Jail” that he produced is one of the most eloquent defenses of nonviolent protest ever written.

In his letter, King explained that although the protesters were breaking the law, they were following a higher moral law based on divine justice. To the charge that the protests created racial tensions, King argued that the protests “merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive.” Injustice, he insisted, had to be exposed “to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.”  (See page 1056 for more on “Letter From a Birmingham Jail.”)

After King was released, the protests, which had been dwindling, began to grow again. Bull Connor responded with force, ordering the police to use clubs, police dogs, and high-pressure fire hoses on the demonstrators, including women and children. Millions of people across the nation watched the graphic violence on television. Outraged by the brutality and worried that the government was losing control, Kennedy ordered his aides to prepare a new civil rights bill.

 **Reading Check** **Evaluating** How did President Kennedy help the civil rights movement?

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

Determined to introduce a civil rights bill, Kennedy now waited for a dramatic opportunity to address the nation on the issue. Shortly after the violence in Birmingham had shocked the nation, Alabama's governor, George Wallace, gave the president his chance. Wallace was committed to segregation. At his inauguration, he had stated, "I draw a line in the dust . . . and I say, Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!" On June 11, 1963, Wallace personally stood in front of the University of Alabama's admissions office to block the enrollment of two African Americans. He stayed until federal marshals ordered him to stand aside.

President Kennedy seized the moment to announce his civil rights bill. That evening, he went on television to speak to the American people about a "moral issue . . . as old as the scriptures and as clear as the American Constitution":

“The heart of the question is whether . . . we are going to treat our fellow Americans as we want to be treated. If an American, because his skin is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the public, if he cannot send his children to the best public school available, if he cannot vote for the public officials who will

represent him . . . then who among us would be content to have the color of his skin changed and stand in his place?

One hundred years of delay have passed since President Lincoln freed the slaves, yet their heirs, their grandsons, are not fully free. . . . And this nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free. . . . Now the time has come for this nation to fulfill its promise.”

—from Kennedy's White House Address,
June 11, 1963

TURNING POINT

The March on Washington Dr. King realized that Kennedy would have a very difficult time pushing his civil rights bill through Congress. Therefore, he searched for a way to lobby Congress and to build more public support. When A. Philip Randolph suggested a march on Washington, King agreed.

On August 28, 1963, more than 200,000 demonstrators of all races flocked to the nation's capital. The audience heard speeches and sang hymns and songs as they gathered peacefully near the Lincoln Memorial. Dr. King then delivered a powerful speech outlining his dream of freedom and equality for all Americans:

Picturing History

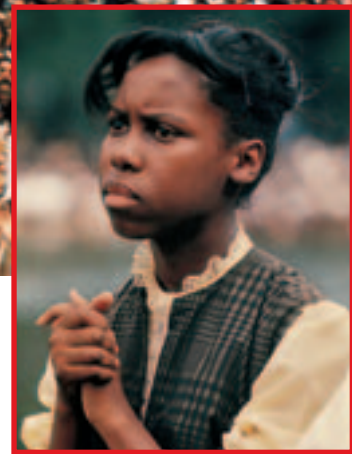
Forcing Change Birmingham police used high-pressure hoses to force civil rights protesters to stop their marches. [Why did King's followers offer no resistance?](#)





“I have a dream”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.




Picturing History

A Dream Deferred The 1963 March on Washington was the emotional high point of the civil rights movement. Its nonviolent atmosphere and Dr. King’s eloquent speech made it one of the most momentous American events of the twentieth century. [What significant legislation resulted from the March on Washington?](#)

“I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed . . . that all men are created equal. . . . I have a dream that one day . . . the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit together at the table of brotherhood. . . . 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 . . . when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing . . . ‘Free at last, Free at last, Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.’”

—quoted in *Freedom Bound: A History of America’s Civil Rights Movement*

King’s speech and the peacefulness and dignity of the March on Washington had built momentum for the civil rights bill. Opponents in Congress, however,

continued to do what they could to slow the bill down, dragging out their committee investigations and using procedural rules to delay votes.  (See page 1078 for an excerpt from Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.)

The Civil Rights Bill Becomes Law Although the civil rights bill was likely to pass the House of Representatives, where a majority of Republicans and Northern Democrats supported the measure, it faced a much more difficult time in the Senate. There, a small group of determined senators would try to block the bill indefinitely.

In the U.S. Senate, senators are allowed to speak for as long as they like when a bill is being debated. The Senate cannot vote on a bill until all senators have finished speaking. A **filibuster** occurs when a small group of senators take turns speaking and refuse to stop the debate and allow a bill to come to a vote. Today a filibuster can be stopped if at least 60 senators vote for **cloture**, a motion which cuts off debate and forces a vote. In the 1960s, however, 67




senators had to vote for cloture to stop a filibuster. This meant that a minority of senators opposed to civil rights could easily prevent the majority from enacting new civil rights laws.

Worried the bill would never pass, many African Americans became even more disheartened. Then President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963, and his vice president, Lyndon Johnson, became president. Johnson was from Texas and had been the leader of the Senate Democrats before becoming vice president. Although he had helped push the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960 through the Senate, he had done so by weakening their provisions and by compromising with other Southern senators.

To the surprise of the civil rights movement, Johnson committed himself wholeheartedly to getting Kennedy's program, including the civil rights bill, through Congress. Unlike Kennedy, Johnson was very familiar with how Congress operated, having served there for many years. He knew how to build public support, how to put pressure on members of Congress, and how to use the rules and procedures to get what he wanted.

In February 1964, President Johnson's leadership began to produce results. The civil rights bill passed the House of Representatives by a majority of 290 to 130. The debate then moved to the Senate. In June, after 87 days of filibuster, the Senate finally voted to end debate by a margin of 71 to 29—four votes over the two-thirds needed for cloture. On July 2, 1964, President Johnson signed the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** into law.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most comprehensive civil rights law Congress had ever enacted. It gave the federal government broad power to prevent racial discrimination in a number of areas. The law made segregation illegal in most places of public accommodation, and it gave citizens of all races and nationalities equal access to such facilities as restaurants, parks, libraries, and theaters. The law gave the attorney general more power to bring lawsuits to force school desegregation, and it required private employers to end discrimination in the workplace. It also established the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission** (EEOC) as a permanent agency in the federal government. This commission monitors the ban on job discrimination by race, religion, gender, and national origin.

 **Reading Check** **Examining** How did Dr. King lobby Congress to expand the right to participate in the democratic process?

The Struggle for Voting Rights

Even after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, voting rights were far from secure. The act had focused on segregation and job discrimination, and it did little to address voting issues. The Twenty-fourth Amendment, ratified in 1964, helped somewhat by eliminating **poll taxes**, or fees paid in order to vote, in federal (but not state) elections. African Americans still faced hurdles, however, when they tried to vote. As the SCLC and SNCC stepped up their voter registration efforts in the South, their members were often attacked and beaten, and several were murdered.

Across the South, bombs exploded in African American businesses and churches. Between June and October 1964, arson and bombs destroyed 24 African American churches in Mississippi alone. Convinced that a new law was needed to protect African American voting rights, Dr. King decided to stage another dramatic protest.

The Selma March In January 1965, the SCLC and Dr. King selected Selma, Alabama, as the focal point for their campaign for voting rights. Although African Americans made up a majority of Selma's

Voting Rights In the early 1960s, African Americans focused on increasing their political power.



population, they comprised only 3 percent of registered voters. To prevent African Americans from registering to vote, Sheriff Jim Clark had deputized and armed dozens of white citizens. His posse terrorized African Americans and frequently attacked demonstrators with clubs and electric cattle prods.

Just weeks after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, for his work in the civil rights movement, Dr. King stated, "We are not asking, we are demanding the ballot." King's demonstrations in Selma led to approximately 2,000 African Americans, including schoolchildren, being arrested by Sheriff Clark. Clark's men attacked and beat many of the demonstrators, and Selma quickly became a major story in the national news.

To keep pressure on the president and Congress to act, Dr. King joined with SNCC activists and organized a "march for freedom" from Selma to the state capitol in Montgomery, a distance of about 50 miles (80 km). On Sunday, March 7, 1965, the march began. The SCLC's Hosea Williams and SNCC's John Lewis led 500 protesters toward U.S. Highway 80, the route that marchers had planned to follow to Montgomery.

As the protesters approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, which led out of Selma, Sheriff Clark ordered them to disperse. While the marchers kneeled in prayer, more than 200 state troopers and deputized citizens rushed the demonstrators. Many were beaten in full view of television cameras. This brutal attack, known later as "Bloody Sunday," left 70 African Americans hospitalized and many more injured.

The nation was stunned as it viewed the shocking footage of law enforcement officers beating peaceful demonstrators. Watching the events from the White House, President Johnson became furious. Eight

days later, he appeared before a nationally televised joint session of the legislature to propose a new voting rights law.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 On August 3, 1965, the House of Representatives passed the voting rights bill by a wide margin. The following day, the Senate also passed the bill. The **Voting Rights Act of 1965** authorized the attorney general to send federal examiners to register qualified voters, bypassing local officials who often refused to register African Americans. The law also suspended discriminatory devices such as literacy tests in counties where less than half of all adults had been allowed to vote.

The results were dramatic. By the end of the year, almost 250,000 African Americans had registered as new voters. The number of African American elected officials in the South also increased, from about 100 in 1965 to more than 5,000 in 1990.

The passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 marked a turning point in the civil rights movement. The movement had now achieved its two major legislative goals. Segregation had been outlawed, and new federal laws were in place to prevent discrimination and protect voting rights.

After 1965 the movement began to shift its focus. It began to pay more attention to the problem of achieving full social and economic equality for African Americans. As part of that effort, the movement turned its attention to the problems of African Americans trapped in poverty and living in ghettos in many of the nation's major cities.

 **Reading Check** **Summarizing** How did the Twenty-fourth Amendment affect African American voting rights?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

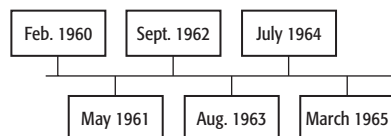
- Define:** **Freedom Riders, filibuster, cloture, poll tax.**
- Identify:** Jesse Jackson, Ella Baker, Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Describe** the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 aimed at ending segregation and racial discrimination.

Reviewing Themes

- Science and Technology** How did television help the civil rights movement?

Critical Thinking

- Evaluating** How did protesting and lobbying lead to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965?
- Sequencing** Use a time line like the one below to show relative chronology of events in the civil rights movement.



Analyzing Visuals

- Examining Photographs** Study the photographs in this section. What elements of the photographs show the sacrifices African Americans made in the civil rights movement?

Writing About History

- Descriptive Writing** Take on the role of a journalist for the student newspaper of a college in 1960. Write an article for the newspaper describing the sit-in movement taking place across the country.

SECTION 3 New Issues

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

In the mid-1960s, civil rights leaders began to understand that merely winning political rights for African Americans would not address the problem of African Americans' economic status.

Key Terms and Names

racism, Chicago Movement, Richard Daley, black power, Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, Black Panthers

Reading Strategy

Organizing As you read about the changing focus of the civil rights movement, complete a chart similar to the one below. Fill in five major violent events and their results.

Event	Result

Reading Objectives

- **Describe** the division between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the black power movement.
- **Discuss** the direction and progress of the civil rights movement after 1968.

Section Theme

Civic Rights and Responsibilities In the late 1960s, the civil rights movement tried to address the persistent economic inequality of African Americans.

Preview of Events



★ An American Story ★

Thursday, July 12, 1965, was hot and humid in Chicago. That evening Dessie Mae Williams, a 23-year-old African American woman, stood on the corner near the firehouse at 4000 West Wilcox Street. A firetruck sped out of the firehouse, and the driver lost control. The truck smashed into a stop sign near Williams, and the sign struck and killed her.

African Americans had already picketed this firehouse because it was not integrated. Hearing of Williams's death, 200 neighborhood young people streamed into the street, surrounding the firehouse. For two nights, rioting and disorder reigned. Angry youths threw bricks and bottles at the firehouse and nearby windows. Shouting gangs pelted police with rocks and accosted whites and beat them. Approximately 75 people were injured.

African American detectives, clergy, and National Guard members eventually restored order. Mayor Richard Daley then summoned both white and black leaders to discuss the area's problems. An 18-year-old man who had been in the riot admitted that he had lost his head. "We're sorry about the bricks and bottles," he said, "but when you get pushed, you shove back. Man, you don't like to stand on a corner and be told to get off it when you got nowhere else to go."

—adapted from *Anyplace But Here*



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., marching with protesters in Chicago.

Problems Facing Urban African Americans

Civil rights leaders had made great progress in the decade following the Montgomery bus boycott, but full equality still eluded many African Americans. Until 1965 the civil rights movement had focused on ending segregation and restoring the voting rights of

African Americans in the South. These were goals that could be achieved through court decisions and by convincing Congress to pass new laws.

Despite the passage of several civil rights laws in the 1950s and 1960s, **racism**—prejudice or discrimination toward someone because of his or her race—was still common in American society. Changing the law could not change people’s attitudes immediately, nor could it help those African Americans trapped in poverty in the nation’s big cities.

In 1965 nearly 70 percent of African Americans lived in large cities. Many had moved from the South to the big cities of the North and West during the Great Migration of the 1920s and 1940s. There, they often found the same prejudice and discrimination that had plagued them in the South. Many whites refused to live with African Americans in the same neighborhood. When African Americans moved into a neighborhood, whites often moved out. Real estate agents and landlords in white neighborhoods refused to rent or sell to African Americans, who often found it difficult to arrange for mortgages at local banks.

Even if African Americans had been allowed to move into white neighborhoods, poverty trapped many of them in inner cities while whites moved to

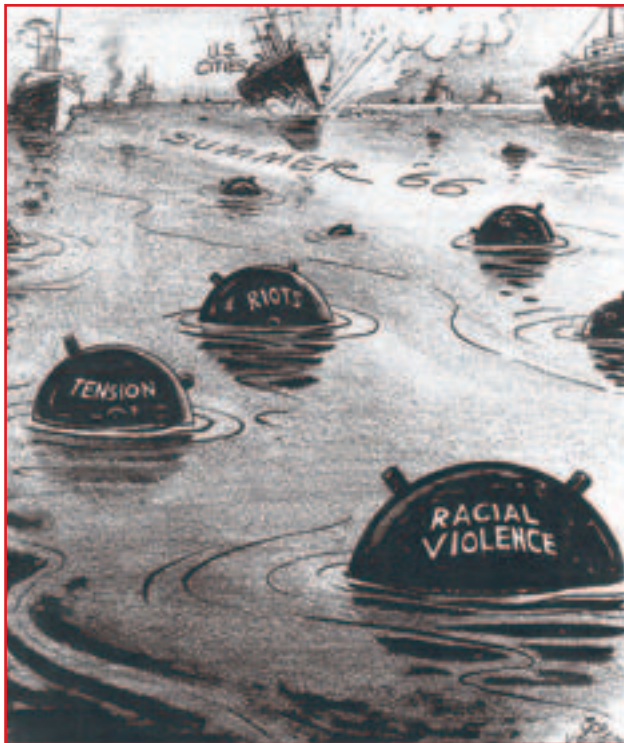
the suburbs. Many African Americans found themselves channeled into low-paying jobs. They served as custodians and maids, porters and dock workers, with little chance of advancement. Those who did better typically found employment as blue-collar workers in factories, but very few advanced beyond that. In 1965 only 15 percent of African Americans held professional, managerial, or clerical jobs, compared to 44 percent of whites. Almost half of all African American families lived in poverty, and the median income of an African American family was only 55 percent of that of the average white family. African American unemployment was typically twice that of whites.

Poor neighborhoods in the nation’s major cities were overcrowded and dirty, leading to higher rates of illness and infant mortality. At the same time, the crime rate increased in the 1960s, particularly in low-income neighborhoods. Incidents of juvenile delinquency rose, as did the rate of young people dropping out of school. Complicating matters even more was a rise in the number of single-parent households. All poor neighborhoods suffered from these problems, but because more African Americans lived in poverty, their communities were disproportionately affected.

Many African Americans living in urban poverty knew the civil rights movement had made enormous gains, but when they looked at their own circumstances, nothing seemed to be changing. The movement had raised their hopes, but their everyday problems were economic and social, and therefore harder to address. As a result, their anger and frustration began to rise—until it finally erupted.

The Watts Riot Just five days after President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act, a race riot broke out in Watts, an African American neighborhood in Los Angeles. Allegations of police brutality had served as the catalyst of this uprising, which lasted for six days and required over 14,000 members of the National Guard and 1,500 law officers to restore order. Rioters burned and looted entire neighborhoods and destroyed about \$45 million in property. They killed 34 people, and about 900 suffered injuries.

More rioting was yet to come. Race riots broke out in dozens of American cities between 1965 and 1968. It seemed that they could explode at any place and at any time. The worst riot took place in Detroit in 1967. Burning, looting, and skirmishes with police and National Guard members resulted in 43 deaths and over 1,000 wounded. Eventually the U.S. Army sent in tanks and soldiers armed with machine guns to get control of the situation. Nearly 4,000 fires destroyed



Analyzing Political Cartoons

“Perilous Going” This political cartoon highlights the problems that American cities were experiencing in the mid-1960s. [Why did riots break out in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts?](#)


1,300 buildings, and the damage in property loss was estimated at \$250 million. The governor of Michigan, who viewed the smoldering city from a helicopter, remarked that Detroit looked like “a city that had been bombed.”

GOVERNMENT

The Kerner Commission In 1967 President Johnson appointed the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, headed by Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois, to study the causes of the urban riots and to make recommendations to prevent them from happening again in the future. The **Kerner Commission**, as it became known, conducted a detailed study of the problem. The commission blamed white society and white racism for

the majority of the problems in the inner city. “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal,” it concluded.

The commission recommended the creation of 2 million new jobs in the inner city, the construction of 6 million new units of public housing, and a renewed federal commitment to fight de facto segregation. President Johnson’s war on poverty, however, which addressed some of the same concerns for inner-city jobs and housing, was already underway. Saddled with massive spending for the Vietnam War, however, President Johnson never endorsed the recommendations of the commission.

 **Reading Check Explaining** What was the federal government’s response to the race riots in Los Angeles and Detroit?

The Shift to Economic Rights

By the mid-1960s, a number of African American leaders were becoming increasingly critical of Martin Luther King’s nonviolent strategy. They felt it had failed to improve the economic position of African Americans. What good was the right to dine at restaurants or stay at hotels if most African Americans could not afford these services anyway? Dr. King became sensitive to this criticism, and in 1965 he began to focus on economic issues.

In 1965 Albert Raby, president of a council of community organizations that worked to



Picturing History

Anger in Chicago When Dr. King refocused the civil rights movement on the North, some white Americans protested. **What did King do to draw attention to slum conditions in Chicago?**

improve conditions for Chicago’s poor, invited Dr. King to visit the city. Dr. King and his staff had never conducted a civil rights campaign in the North. By focusing on the problems that African Americans faced in Chicago, Dr. King believed he could call greater attention to poverty and other racial problems that lay beneath the urban race riots.

To call attention to the deplorable housing conditions that many African American families faced, Dr. King and his wife Coretta moved into a slum apartment in an African American neighborhood in Chicago. Dr. King and the SCLC hoped to work with local leaders to improve the economic status of African Americans in Chicago’s poor neighborhoods.

The **Chicago Movement**, however, made little headway. When Dr. King led a march through the all-white suburb of Marquette Park to demonstrate the need for open housing, he was met by angry white mobs similar to those in Birmingham and Selma. Mayor **Richard Daley** ordered the Chicago police to protect the marchers, but he wanted to avoid any repeat of the violence. He met with Dr. King and proposed a new program to clean up the slums. Associations of realtors and bankers also agreed to promote open housing. In theory, mortgages and rental property would be available to everyone, regardless of race. In practice, very little changed.

 **Reading Check Describing** How did Dr. King and SCLC leaders hope to address economic concerns?

Black Power

Dr. King's failure in Chicago seemed to show that nonviolent protests could do little to change economic problems. After 1965 many African Americans, especially young people living in cities, began to turn away from King. Some leaders called for more aggressive forms of protest. Their new strategies ranged from armed self-defense to the suggestion that the government set aside a number of states where African Americans could live free from the presence of whites.

As African Americans became more assertive, they placed less emphasis on cooperation with sympathetic whites in the civil rights movement. Some African American organizations, including CORE and SNCC, voted to expel all whites from leadership positions within their organizations, believing that African Americans alone should determine the course and direction of their struggle.

Many young African Americans called for **black power**, a term that had many different meanings. A few interpreted black power to mean that physical self-defense and even violence were acceptable in defense of one's freedom—a clear rejection of Dr. King's philosophy. To most, including **Stokely Carmichael**, the leader of SNCC in 1966, the term meant that African Americans should control the social, political, and economic direction of their struggle:

“This is the significance of black power as a slogan. For once, black people are going to use the words they want to use—not just the words whites want to hear. . . . The need for psychological equality is the reason why SNCC today believes that blacks must organize in the black community. Only black people

can . . . create in the community an aroused and continuing black consciousness. . . . Black people must do things for themselves; they must get . . . money they will control and spend themselves; they must conduct tutorial programs themselves so that black children can identify with black people.”

—from the *New York Review of Books*,
September 1966

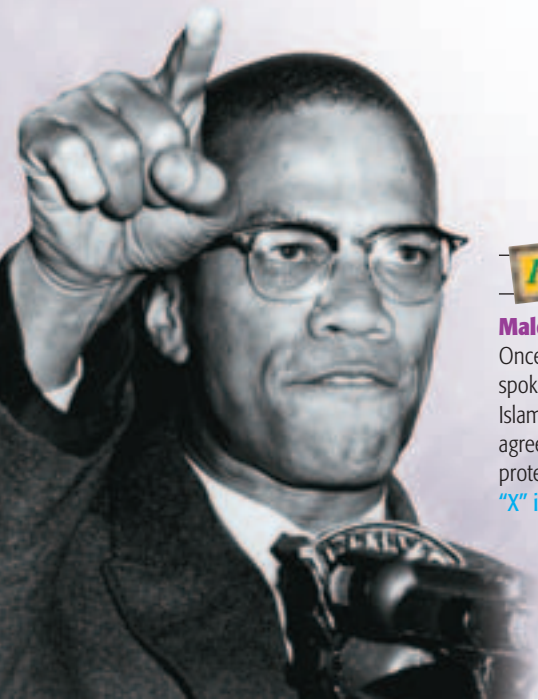
Black power also stressed pride in the African American cultural group. It emphasized racial distinctiveness rather than **cultural assimilation**—the process by which minority groups adapt to the dominant culture in a society. African Americans showed pride in their racial heritage by adopting new Afro hairstyles and African-style clothing. Many also took on African names. In universities, students demanded that African and African American Studies courses be adopted as part of the standard school curriculum. Dr. King and some other leaders criticized black power as a philosophy of hopelessness and despair. The idea was very popular, however, in the poor urban neighborhoods where many African Americans resided.

Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam By the early 1960s, a man named **Malcolm X** had become a symbol of the black power movement that was sweeping the nation. Born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, he experienced a difficult childhood and adolescence. He drifted into a life of crime, and in 1946, he was convicted of burglary and sent to prison for six years.

Prison transformed Malcolm. He began to educate himself, and he played an active role in the prison debate society. Eventually he joined the **Nation of Islam**, commonly known as the Black Muslims, who were led by Elijah Muhammad. Despite their name, the Black Muslims do not hold the same beliefs as mainstream Muslims. The Nation of Islam preached black nationalism. Like Marcus Garvey in the 1920s, Black Muslims believed that African Americans should separate themselves from whites and form their own self-governing communities.

Shortly after joining the Nation of Islam, Malcolm Little changed his name to Malcolm X. The “X” stood as a symbol for the family name of his African ancestors who had been enslaved. Malcolm argued that his true family name had been stolen from him by slavery, and he did not intend to use the name white society had given him.

The Black Muslims viewed themselves as their own nation and attempted to make themselves as economically self-sufficient as possible. They ran their own businesses, organized their own schools, established



Picturing History

Malcolm X Makes His Point

Once the most visible spokesperson for the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X originally disagreed with Dr. King's passive protest tactics. **What did the “X” in his name symbolize?**

their own weekly newspaper (*Muhammad Speaks*), and encouraged their members to respect each other and to strengthen their families. Although the Black Muslims did not advocate violence, they did advocate self-defense. Malcolm X was a powerful and charismatic speaker, and his criticisms of white society and the mainstream civil rights movement gained national attention for the Nation of Islam.

By 1964 Malcolm X had broken with the Black Muslims. Discouraged by scandals involving the Nation of Islam's leader, he went to the Muslim holy city of Makkah (also called Mecca) in Saudi Arabia. After seeing Muslims from many different races worshipping together, he concluded that an integrated society was possible. In a revealing letter describing his pilgrimage to Makkah, he stated that many whites that he met during the pilgrimage displayed a spirit of brotherhood that gave him a new, positive insight into race relations.

After Malcolm X broke with the Nation of Islam, he continued to criticize the organization and its leader, Elijah Muhammad. Because of this, three organization members shot and killed him in February 1965 while he was giving a speech in New York. Although Malcolm X left the Nation of Islam before his death, his speeches and ideas from those years with the Black Muslims are those for which he is most remembered. In Malcolm's view, African Americans may have been victims in the past, but they did not have to allow racism to victimize them in the present. His ideas have influenced African Americans to take pride in their own culture and to believe in their ability to make their way in the world.

The Black Panthers Malcolm X's ideas influenced a new generation of militant African American leaders who also preached black power, black nationalism, and economic self-sufficiency. In 1966 in Oakland, California, Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, and Eldridge Cleaver organized the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, or the **Black Panthers**, as they were known. They considered themselves the heirs of Malcolm X, and they recruited most of their members from poor urban communities across the nation.

The Black Panthers believed that a revolution was necessary in the United States, and they urged African Americans to arm themselves and confront white society in order to force whites to grant them equal rights. Black Panther leaders adopted a "Ten-Point Program," which called for black empowerment, an end to racial oppression, and control of major institutions and services in the African American community, such as schools, law enforcement, housing, and medical



Picturing History

Black Power U.S. athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos give the black power salute during the medal ceremony at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City. [How did black power supporters demonstrate their belief in the movement?](#)

facilities. **Eldridge Cleaver**, who served as the minister of culture, articulated many of the organization's objectives in his 1967 best-selling book, *Soul on Ice*.

Reading Check **Describing** What caused a division between Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the black power movement?

The Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

By the late 1960s, the civil rights movement had fragmented into dozens of competing organizations with philosophies for reaching equality. At the same time, the emergence of black power and the call by some African Americans for violent action angered many white civil rights supporters. This made further legislation to help blacks economically less likely.

In this atmosphere, Dr. King went to Memphis, Tennessee, to support a strike of African American sanitation workers in March 1968. At the time, the SCLC had been planning a national "Poor People's Campaign" to promote economic advancement for



there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the Promised Land.”

Dr. King’s assassination touched off both national mourning and riots in more than 100 cities, including Washington, D.C. The Reverend **Ralph Abernathy**, who had served as a trusted assistant to Dr. King for many years, led the Poor People’s Campaign in King’s absence. The demonstration, however, did not achieve any of the major objectives that either King or the SCLC had hoped it would.

In the wake of Dr. King’s death, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The act contained a fair housing provision outlawing discrimination in housing sales and rentals and gave the Justice Department authority to bring suits against such discrimination.

Dr. King’s death marked the end of an era in American history. Although the civil rights movement continued, it lacked the unity of purpose and vision that Dr. King had given it. Under his leadership, and with the help of tens of thousands of dedicated African Americans, many of whom were students, the civil rights movement transformed American society. Although many problems remain to be resolved, the achievements of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s dramatically improved life for African Americans, creating new opportunities where none had existed before.

 **Reading Check** **Summarizing** What were the goals of the Poor People’s Campaign?

Picturing History

Atlanta Mourns Martin Luther King, Jr. The nation joined Coretta Scott King (right) in sorrow following the assassination of her husband in 1968. **Why was King in Memphis at the time of his death?**

all impoverished Americans. The purpose of this campaign, the most ambitious one that Dr. King would ever lead, was to lobby the federal government to commit billions of dollars to end poverty and unemployment in the United States. People of all races and nationalities were to converge on the nation’s capital, as they had in 1963 during the March on Washington, where they would camp out until both Congress and President Johnson agreed to pass the requested legislation to fund the proposal.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, as he stood on his hotel balcony in Memphis, Dr. King was assassinated by a sniper. Ironically, he had told a gathering at a local African American church just the previous night, “I’ve been to the mountaintop. . . . I’ve looked over and I’ve seen the Promised Land. I may not get

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

- Define:** racism, black power.
- Identify:** Chicago Movement, Richard Daley, Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, Black Panthers.
- Explain** the goals of the Nation of Islam in the 1960s.
- Summarize** the findings of the Kerner Commission.

Reviewing Themes

- Civic Rights and Responsibilities** How was the Civil Rights Act of 1968 designed to help end discrimination?

Critical Thinking

- Identifying Cause and Effect** What were the effects of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?
- Categorizing** Using a graphic organizer like the one below, list the main views of the three leaders listed.

Leader	Views
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	
Malcolm X	
Eldridge Cleaver	

Analyzing Visuals

- Analyzing Political Cartoons** The cartoon on page 882 suggests that the violence of the mid-1960s was as bad as the violence of the Vietnam War going on at the same time. What images does the cartoonist use to compare violence at home with the violence of the war?

Writing About History

- Expository Writing** Take on the role of a reporter in the late 1960s. Imagine you have interviewed a follower of Dr. King and a Black Panther member. Write out a transcript of each interview.

Study and Writing SKILLBUILDER

Preparing a Bibliography

Why Learn This Skill?

When you write research reports, you should include a list of the sources used to find your information. This list, called a *bibliography*, allows you to credit the sources you cited and supports the report's accuracy.

Learning the Skill

A bibliography is a list of sources used in a research report. These sources include books; articles from newspapers, magazines, and journals; interviews; and other sources.

There are two main reasons to write a bibliography. First, those who read your report may want to learn more about the topic. Second, a bibliography supports the reliability of your report.

A bibliography follows an established format. The entry for each source contains all the information needed to find that source, including the author, title, page numbers, publisher information, and publication date. You should document this information as you carry out your research. If you neglect this step early in your research, you must locate your sources again in order to credit them in your report.

You should arrange bibliographic entries alphabetically by the author's last name. The following are acceptable formats, followed by sample entries. Note that all lines after the first line are indented.

Books:

Author's last name, first name. *Full Title*. Place of publication: publisher, copyright date.

Hay, Peter. *Ordinary Heroes: The Life and Death of Chana Szenes, Israel's National Heroine*. New York: Paragon House, 1986.

Articles:

Author's last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Name of Periodical* in which article appears, volume number (date of issue): page numbers.

Watson, Bruce. "The New Peace Corps in the New Kazakhstan." *Smithsonian*, Vol. 25 (August 1994): pp. 26–35.

Other Sources:

For other kinds of sources, adapt the format for book entries as needed.

Practicing the Skill

Review the sample bibliography below from a report on Martin Luther King, Jr. Then answer the questions that follow.

Patrick, Diane. *Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Franklin Watts, 1990.

Franklin, John H. "Jim Crow Goes to School: The Genesis of Legal Segregation in Southern Schools." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 57 (1956): pp. 225–235.

Washington, James Melvin, ed. *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.* San Francisco: Harper & Row.

King, Jr., Martin Luther. Time for Freedom has Come. *New York Times Magazine* (Sept. 10, 1961).

- 1 Are the bibliography entries in the correct order? Why or why not?
- 2 What is missing from the second book listing?
- 3 What features are missing from the second article listing?

Skills Assessment

Complete the Practicing Skills questions on page 889 and the Chapter 29 Skill Reinforcement Activity to assess your mastery of this skill.

Applying the Skill

Preparing a Bibliography Put together a bibliography of at least five sources that you could use for a report on the civil rights movement. Include books, periodicals, and any other sources you wish.



Glencoe's **Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 2**, provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.

Reviewing Key Terms

On a sheet of paper, use each of these terms in a sentence.

1. separate-but-equal
2. de facto segregation
3. sit-in
4. Freedom Riders
5. filibuster
6. cloture
7. poll tax
8. racism
9. black power

Reviewing Key Facts

10. **Identify:** NAACP, Thurgood Marshall, Linda Brown, Martin Luther King, Jr., Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Jesse Jackson, Chicago Movement, Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X.
11. What event led to the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama?

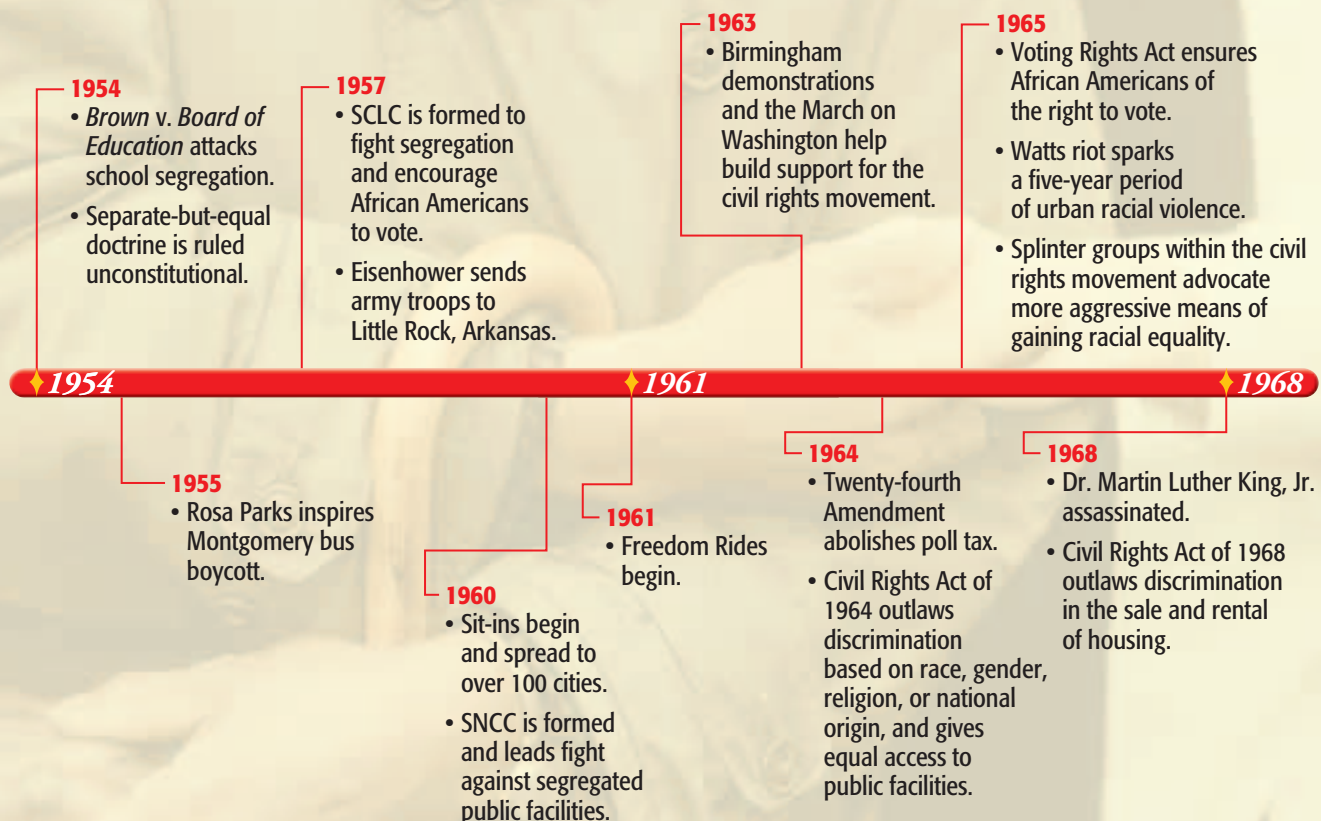
12. Why was the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* a significant step toward ending segregation?
13. What was the role of SNCC in the civil rights movement?
14. How did the government react to race riots in cities such as Los Angeles and Detroit?
15. What were two changes in the focus of the civil rights movement in the mid-1960s?

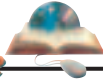
Critical Thinking

16. **Analyzing Themes: Civic Rights and Responsibilities** Do you agree with the viewpoint of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or with that of the Black Panthers concerning the civil rights movement? Explain your answer.
17. **Evaluating** Why did the civil rights movement make fewer gains after 1968?

Chapter Summary

Major Events in Civil Rights Movement





Self-Check Quiz

Visit the *American Vision* Web site at tav.glencoe.com and click on **Self-Check Quizzes—Chapter 29** to assess your knowledge of chapter content.

- 18. **Making Generalizations** Why was the sit-in movement considered a major turning point in the civil rights movement?
- 19. **Organizing** Use a graphic organizer similar to the one below to compare examples of civil rights legislation.

Civil Rights Legislation	Provisions
Civil Rights Act 1957	
Twenty-Fourth Amendment	
Voting Rights Act	
Civil Rights Act of 1964	
Civil Rights Act of 1968	

Practicing Skills

- 20. **Preparing a Bibliography** Review the following bibliography for a report on the civil rights movement. Then answer the questions that follow.

Fairclough, Adam. *Martin Luther King, Jr.* Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1995.

Juan Williams. *Eyes on the Prize*. New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1987.

Patterson, James T. *Grand Expectations, The United States, 1945–1974*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Bontemps, Arna, and Jack Conroy. *Anyplace but Here*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press. (NO PUB DATE)

- a. The entries presented above are not listed in the correct order. Using just the names of the authors, put them in the correct order.
- b. What is incorrect in the Patterson listing?
- c. Rewrite the Juan Williams listing correctly.

Geography and History

- 21. The map on this page shows routes of Freedom Riders. Study the map and answer the questions below.
 - a. **Interpreting Maps** Which states did the Freedom Riders travel through? What was their final destination?
 - b. **Applying Geography Skills** Why do you think the Freedom Riders faced protests during this trip?

Writing Activity

- 22. **Writing a Script** Work in small groups to write a script for a documentary on the civil rights movement in the 1950s and



1960s. Your group should choose a specific topic, movement leader, or time period to write about. Use your script to produce a documentary to present to the other groups in your class.

Chapter Activity

- 23. **Examining Interviews** Work with a classmate to research interviews with Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. Take notes on the different points of view of these civil rights leaders, and then prepare a chart illustrating similarities, differences, and any bias which shapes their beliefs.

Standardized Test Practice

Directions: Choose the phrase that best completes the following statement.

One difference between the strategies of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and some later civil rights groups was that King was committed to

- A ending discrimination in housing and unemployment.
- B using only nonviolent forms of protest.
- C demanding equal rights for African Americans.
- D gaining improvements in living conditions for African Americans.

Test-Taking Tip: If you read this question carefully, you will notice that it asks for one *difference* in civil rights strategies. Three of the answer choices will represent *common goals*. Be careful to read through all the choices to find the one that represents a *different* type of strategy.