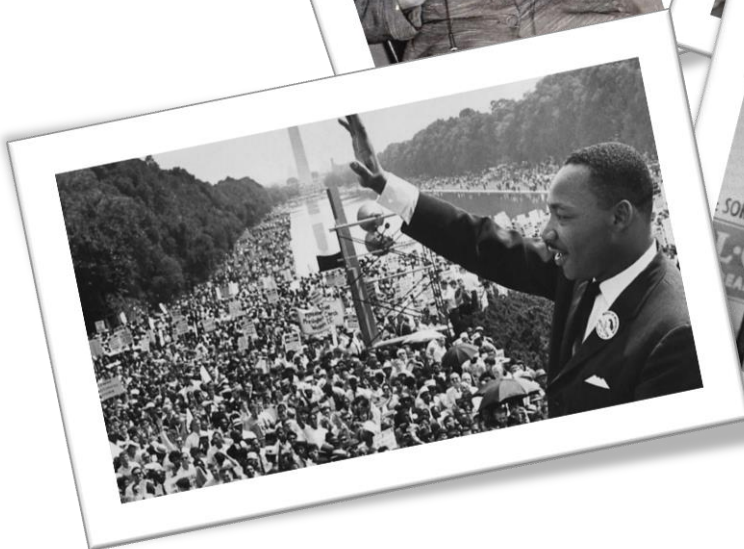


Higher History: European and World

USA, 1918 – 1968: Reasons for the Development of the Civil Rights Campaign, 1945 - 1965





Issue 5: An evaluation of the reasons for the development of the Civil Rights Campaign after 1945

A. Background

Learning Intentions:

- I will be able to explain the opportunities and challenges that faced black Americans after the Great Migration.
- I will be able to write an introduction.

The 'Great Migration' of the 1920s and 1930s, brought a slow but steady growth of political influence for black people. Free to speak and act in their new northern setting, they gained political importance and black voters became increasingly important to white candidates. In an attempt to gain advantage the political parties even began opening up opportunities for black politicians to become 'mainstream' candidates. This political power enabled them to elect representatives to State legislatures and Congress, and to put pressure on political parties in closely contested elections. Northern blacks were therefore in a far better position to improve their status. They could vote, participate more in civil affairs and had more economic opportunities. Despite police harassment and the Ku Klux Klan, northern blacks lived in a far less violent society. However at this time most concentrated upon improving their standards of living rather than joining the black advancement pressure groups.

The Great Depression and New Deal period provided some movement towards greater civil rights for black people – but not much. The Depression hit blacks harder than whites. Black unemployment was between 30% and 60% and was always higher than that of whites. Desperate whites moved into jobs formerly dominated by blacks, such as domestic service, street cleaning and garbage collection. Whites even organised vigilante groups such as the *Black Shirts of Atlanta* to stop blacks getting work. As unskilled labour, blacks were usually the last hired and the first fired. The National Recovery Administration (NRA) allowed employers to pay black people less than whites. One key development was that black people were given leading government jobs. Mary McLeod Bethune, for example, gained a top job in the National Youth Administration (NYA). She helped organise training grants for high school students who were looking for work. Money was made available to allow 'black' songs and oral reminiscence of slavery and hardship to be recorded for posterity. Government sponsorship of black culture was controversial and federal-

funded bi-racial events were criticised by a Congressional committee as encouraging black and white colleagues to become couples!

As the black working class grew there emerged, especially in northern cities, a new middle class that provided services to blacks such as church ministers, newspapers, hotels, and real estate and insurance agents. The black class structure was becoming more complex. Many improvements followed in health care, education, economic and political life. However, there was still a very substantial gap between the social and economic status of whites and blacks. The move North by millions of blacks was putting strains on the community.

Segregation dramatically increased the black sense of community and unity in the face of white supremacy. Jesse Owens' astonishing athletics performances in the Berlin Olympics in 1936 inspired black people all over the USA, and gained world recognition. Successes for black people in entertainment were also welcomed – in jazz music particularly. A sign of how things had improved and yet still had to improve came in February 1940 when actress Hattie McDaniel became the first black person to win an Oscar – a huge achievement for the time. On the awards night she was seated at a segregated table!

World War II brought increased momentum to the campaign for civil rights. The **experience of black servicemen during World War II** was important in raising awareness that racism and disadvantaged ghettos were not only to be found in Nazi-occupied-Europe, but in the cities of the USA. The **continued prejudice and discrimination** that black Americans felt in employment and schools made the government's claims that America was the 'land of the free' doubtful. The **emergence of effective black organisations** raised awareness of the conditions experienced by black Americans and pressurised white politicians into changing the law. Finally, the emergence of **effective black leaders** such as **Martin Luther King, Malcom X and Stokely Carmichael**, although diverse in their approach, helped bring about the Civil Rights Act.

Activity 1

Using the above information, write a detailed introduction. You should include context, factors and a line of argument.

Homework 1

You should now have everything you need to write an introduction. Your teacher will help you with this. You should also use the History Skills Booklet to help you structure your answer.

B. Experience of Black Servicemen in World War II

Learning Intentions:

- I will be able to describe the experience of black soldiers during World War II.
- I will be able to explain why these experiences led to the development of the Civil Rights Movement.

The Second World War and the Jim Crow Army

In 1941, after the Japanese attack on Pearl harbour, the Americans entered the Second World War on the side of Britain, France and the USSR, against Nazi Germany and Japan. An American law of 1940, called the Selective Services Act, made it illegal to show discrimination when calling up and training black soldiers. However, the US War Department continued the practice of segregated regiments i.e. black and white soldiers fought the war separately. The black units that fought for the USA were called the Jim Crow Army. President Roosevelt stated publicly that World War II was fought for democracy and freedom. With large numbers of black soldiers volunteering to fight there was a growing sense that the war would lead to change.



I'm just a Negro soldier
Fighting for "democracy!"
A thing I've often heard of
But very seldom see.

The Double V Campaign

During World War II, thousands of black soldiers served willingly in the armed forces fighting with great bravery, winning medals and receiving promotions. Many returned as high-ranking officers. However, they had fought in segregated regiments. Many African-Americans wondered how they could support the war effort and even give their lives if called upon to fight, while Jim Crow laws and segregation remained in place. Some black newspapers such as the Pittsburgh Courier, reflected these concerns, and openly criticized the segregation of the military and other policies.

"We were at war, and in war you don't have friendly relationships, you're out to kill each other. That's how it was at the Courier. We were trying to kill Jim Crow, and racism. They didn't seem to understand that we had every right to fight for

full citizenship at home if we were expected to give our lives overseas.” Edna Chappell-McKenzie, journalist Pittsburgh Courier and historian.

Two months after the USA entered the war, the Pittsburgh Courier launched the Double-V-Campaign’ - Victory in the war and Victory for Civil Rights at home. The Courier launched a huge publicity campaign, complete with lapel pins and stickers, 'double V' hairstyles and songs. As a result, the black press faced harassment by government agencies.

‘The Pittsburgh Courier had a neat diagram, which was this Double V with an eagle in the middle, and people loved this kind of diagram. And you had women walking around with Double Vs on their dresses. You had a new hairstyle called the “doubler” where black women would walk around and weave two—two Vs in their hair. You had Double V baseball games, Double V flag-waving ceremonies, Double V gardens. I mean it’s just Double V this, Double V this, Double V this. And The Pittsburgh Courier, which was looking for circulation, played this to the hilt. There was even a Double V SONG’. Patrick Washburn, journalist and historian.

The campaign kept awareness of the injustices of segregation in the USA alive during the war. It also brought attention to Jim Crow-style segregation in the armed forces. The troops themselves were segregated. Even the military's blood supply for the wounded was segregated by race. White soldiers brutalized black soldiers, and race riots took place in camps where troops of both races resided. The military tried to suppress word of these events, with partial success; only the black press reported discrimination and discord within the troops. Such controversial reporting, coupled with the double V campaign and the new international visibility of the few black war correspondents, made those in various branches of the government nervous. The power of the black press to influence public opinion and excite its readers never seemed more threatening. Concerned that the black press would actually discourage its readers from supporting the war (it did not), the military banned black newspapers. J. Edgar Hoover (FBI) saw the Double V campaign as an act of treason. With President Franklin D. Roosevelt's approval, he sought to indict black newspaper publishers for treason. However, he did not get the support of the Attorney General and Hoover's plan failed.



A. Philip Randolph

A. Philip Randolph, a black trade union leader used the arguments put by President Roosevelt regarding democracy and freedom against the President and demanded change at home. Randolph was concerned about the way in which black people who were contributing towards the war effort were being paid less and given less favourable working conditions than their white counterparts. He argued that even if there were racist working practices in many American industries, the US government should be seen to treat its citizens with fairness, especially during wartime when everyone needed to pull together. Randolph made three demands:

1. Immediate end to segregation and discrimination in federal government jobs
2. An end to segregation of the armed forces
3. Government support for an end to discrimination and segregation in all jobs in America.

Roosevelt tried to convince Randolph that change must come slowly but Randolph and the other black leaders would not back down. In 1941, with America's entrance into World War II (1939–45), he developed the idea of a massive march on Washington D.C involving 100,000 people. He agreed to call off the march only after President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, which was a significant civil rights measure, ending discrimination in all areas of the defence industries. Roosevelt also established the Fair Employment Practices Committee to investigate incidents of discrimination showing how important and necessary federal and Presidential help was to the Civil Rights Movement.

However, the new order did not end discrimination since employers found ways around the rule but discrimination in defence industry jobs was ended. However, that was more likely as a result of the demand for workers during wartime. The second of Randolph's demands was not met and segregation in the armed forces continued until President Harry Truman abolished it in 1948.

Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)

The first small seed that was planted during World War II was the creation of an organisation called CORE, founded in 1942 by James Farmer and Baynard Rustin. It was the beginning of a mass movement for civil rights. Although, early CORE membership was mainly northern and white.

For soldiers stationed overseas, the Allied victory, and news from home instilling hope for the future, bolstered their spirits. The civil rights protests made during World War II were important in showing where black protest had come from and where it was going. Black soldiers stationed in Britain, particularly if they were from

the South, saw another way of life, as they were allowed into mixed pubs and could 'chat up' white girls. This led to trouble between the black American soldiers and Southern white American soldiers who could not accept this behaviour. African-American soldiers returned from the war with redoubled commitment to fight for equality and dignity on American soil. Many black people believed they would be rewarded for their efforts and loyalty to the USA during the war. Black people hoped to encourage the process of change by joining the NAACP and NAACP membership rose from 50,000 to 450,000 during the war. As one black American soldier said, *"After the end of the war, we just kept on fighting. It's just that simple."* Many historians agree that World War II planted seeds that grew into the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s.

Activity 2

1. Make a list of the ways black soldiers during World War II were discriminated against or treated with prejudice by the US government.
2. Explain how the following contributed to the development of the civil rights movement. You should identify what their aims were, what they did to try to achieve them and any successes and failures of their campaign.
 - i. The Double V Campaign
 - ii. A. Philip Randolph
 - iii. Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)

Homework 2

Now that you have gathered your evidence for this factor, you are ready to use it to write up your first factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

C. The Continuation of Prejudice and Discrimination

Learning Intentions:

- I will be able to describe where black Americans faced prejudice and discrimination in their everyday lives.
- I will be able to explain why the actions of black organisations led to the development of the Civil Rights Movement.

In the 1950s, a series of events that occurred sparked the civil rights campaign that changed America.

1. The Supreme Court's decision, 1954
2. The murder of Emmitt Till, 1955
3. The Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955

1. The Supreme Court's Decision, 1954

Brown versus the Topeka Board of Education'

One of the first 'sparks' that lit up the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s was an argument about which school a seven year old girl called Linda Brown should go to. Linda Brown was black and the local school in Topeka, Kansas, was for white children only. This angered Linda's father, Oliver Brown, so much that he took the Board of Education to court. Linda Brown's father thought it was wrong that his daughter should go to school for black children that was further away from her home and was less well looked after than nearby schools for white children. In 1952, with the help of the NAACP, Linda Brown's father took the Topeka School Board to court. The court case was called '*Brown versus the Topeka Board of Education*'. He lost the case but appealed it to the Supreme Court.

In 1892, the Supreme Court had decided that segregation was acceptable. The Supreme Court said that black people and white people should have 'separate but equal' facilities, which included schools. However, in May 1954, the Supreme Court overruled its previous decision.

'To separate Negro children from others of similar age because of their race brings on a sense of inferiority that may affect their hearts and minds for the rest of their lives. We conclude that in the field of public education segregation denies blacks equal protection under the law.' **Chief Justice Earl Warren, May 1954.**

'Separate but equal' had no place in modern America and that segregated schools were unequal and should be desegregated. The Court's decision was the first victory for civil rights campaigners.

This was a huge breakthrough and gave a huge boost in the fight for civil rights, because the highest, most respected court in the land, whose job it was to decide what the constitution said, had decided that segregation in schools was unconstitutional. This case only meant that schools should be desegregated, but the NAACP knew that if it took cases about segregation in cafes, buses etc. to the Supreme Court it was likely to win. The problem was now how to make southern states desegregate their schools. By the end of 1956, not one black child attended a white school in the South. Most Southern states believed that the Supreme Court was out of touch with the realities of Southern life. Not everyone was happy with the decision of the Supreme Court.



However, it was also very useful to the USA in its propaganda war against the USSR. After World War II, the USA, proclaiming itself the leader of the Free World, was engaged in a Cold War with the Soviet Union, leader of the Communist World. The USA was trying to win allies against the USSR but was finding it difficult to explain why a significant proportion of its own people were discriminated against because of the colour of their skin.

“The existence of discrimination against minority groups in the United States has an adverse effect upon our relations with other countries. Racial discrimination furnishes grist for the Communist propaganda mills.” **Attorney General James P. McGranery, 1952.**

Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957

Despite the Supreme Court's ruling, most Southern states ignored the decision completely. The most famous struggle to integrate schools was in Little Rock, the state capital of Arkansas. In 1957, the Central High School decided that it would take in nine black students, who were selected by the NAACP. The students were all high achievers meaning the school could not complain that they were lowering standards. However, the governor of Arkansas, Orval Faubus, was against integration. He sent state soldiers to surround the school to prevent the black children entering the school. An angry mob of white racists, who did not believe in school integration, also surrounded the school.

Given the amount of protestations, the NAACP decided that in the interests of safety, the students would not be starting school that day. However, no one informed 15-year old, Elizabeth Eckford of the change of plan.

My knees started to shake and I wondered if I would make it to school. The crowd moved closer and closer.



They came closer, shouting, 'No nigger bitch is going to get in our school. Get out of here!' Someone hollered, 'Drag her over to this tree! Let's take care of that nigger.' Just then a white man sat down beside me, put his arm around me and patted my shoulder. He raised my chin and said, 'Don't let them see you cry.'

Somebody started yelling, 'Lynch her! Lynch her!' I tried to see a friendly face somewhere in the mob - someone who maybe would help. I looked into the face of an old woman and it seemed a kind face, but when I looked at her again, she spat on me.

President Eisenhower had three problems to deal with because of Little Rock:

1. Little Rock had turned into a struggle between State and Federal Powers. Eisenhower was aware that Governor Faubus by sending out the National Guard to prevent the black children entering the school was challenging his Presidential authority and federal law. This was not acceptable.
2. For the first time, television brought the realities of African-American discrimination directly into the homes of Americans and people across the world. People were shocked by what they saw of the day-to-day struggles for black people in the South.
3. The USSR were using events at Little Rock as a propaganda coup. The headlines coming out of the South damaged the USA's standing in the world by portraying it in a negative light and the President knew it:

"At a time when we face grave situations abroad because of the hatred that communism bears towards a system of government based on human rights, it

would be difficult to exaggerate the harm that is being done to the prestige and influence and indeed to the safety of our nation and the world. Our enemies are gloating over this incident and using it everywhere to misrepresent our whole nation." **President Eisenhower, 1955.**

The President had claimed that he would not use federal troops to protect African-Americans. However, he was no longer willing to accept the situation. After nearly 3 weeks of negotiation with Governor Faubus, he ordered the governor to remove the National Guard from the school. However, this left the black children unprotected from the white mob. The President sent in one thousand paratroopers to protect the black children on their way to school. The soldiers stayed in Little Rock for a year and they even patrolled the school corridors to make sure the children were safe. This shows how deep rooted the hatred for black people was.

Again, this was another victory for peaceful and very brave protest. The events in Little Rock reminded the rest of the USA that discrimination and prejudice continued in the South and inspired many black and white Americans to take further action to achieve equality and civil rights for all Americans. Little Rock brought worldwide attention to the Civil Rights movement. The story of the 'Little Rock Nine' inspired many other black children and their parents to challenge segregation in their schools districts, which had a lasting effect far beyond the state of Arkansas. However, Orval Faubus was re-elected as Governor of Arkansas and closed down the schools rather than desegregate them. Central High School only reopened in 1960. By 1964, only 3% of African-American children went to integrated schools.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2XHob_nVbw

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xERXusiEszs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGjNqrQBUno>

Activity 3

	Brown versus the Topeka Board of Education'	Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957
Describe events that demonstrate discrimination and prejudice.		
Explain the successes of groups that led to the development of the civil rights movement.		
Explain the failures of these groups encountered.		
Explain why the achievements might be attributed to other reasons.		

Homework 3

Now that you have gathered your evidence for this part of factor two, you are ready to use it to write up the first paragraph of your second factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

2. The Murder of Emmitt Till

The experience of war emphasised freedom, democracy and human rights yet in the USA in the 1950s, 'Jim Crow' laws still existed and lynching went unpunished in many southern states. Violence, lynchings and beatings of black people, which had declined since the 1920s increased again after World War II. There were riots, bombings, and even murders of NAACP supporters. This was to teach black people and their supporters that things were not going to change in the South. A tragic, if all-too-common event, of 1955 shows how discrimination and prejudice continued to exist in the USA.

In 1955, a 14-year-old black boy from Chicago, Illinois Emmett Till, went to visit his relatives in Money, Mississippi. He was not used to southern ways and the extent of racism against black people so he spoke with a white female shop assistant, as he would naturally do back home in Chicago. Angry members of the woman's family, who resented a black man behaving in this way, dragged him off into the countryside, beat him and then shot and killed him. The hopelessly biased court system in Mississippi ensuring that an all-white jury acquitted the killers. The accused later admitted their guilt in a TV interview. It seemed that nothing had really changed.

However, some good did come out of it. The effect of the murder, and the failure to punish those accused, focused the attention of the US and the world on the terrible injustice and violence that black people faced in the South. The funeral, attended by thousands and its publicity made Till's case a national event. His mother insisted he should have an open coffin so the world could see what the two men had done to her little boy. Again new technology turned another black man's murder into a national anger that motivated many people to become involved in the civil rights campaign.



Activity 4

1. Explain why the murder of Emmitt Till helped to develop the Civil Rights Movement.

Homework 4

Now that you have gathered your evidence for this part of factor two, you are ready to use it to write up the second paragraph of your second factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

3. The Montgomery Bus Boycott

The civil rights movement secured a great victory in the town of Montgomery, Alabama, when, in 1955, a 41-year-old black woman, Rosa Parks, tired after working all day, was fined for refusing to give up her seat to a white man. She was sitting in the black seats, but when all the seats became full she was required by law to give up her seat to a white person and stand at the rear of the bus. She was arrested and fined \$10.



Rosa Parks was not just any black woman. She had been an active member of the NAACP for many years. They were planning a bus boycott to take place in 1955. They needed a respected member of the community to be the one arrested for violating the bus segregation laws to give their campaign more attention. Therefore, Rosa Parks was not acting on her own, but was rather part of a wider strategy to bring focus to the continued prejudice and discrimination black Americans experienced in the South.

On the day of her conviction, 5th December 1955, the local black community supported her by staging a 24-hour boycott of the buses. Those who organised the boycott were a group called the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA). They chose as their leader a 26-year-old, charismatic preacher from the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, called Martin Luther King Jr. The boycott was so successful that it continued for 13 months.

The boycott was very effective. Throughout the bus boycott, Martin Luther King inspired the black population of Montgomery to keep up the pressure for their civil rights. The black population 'pooled' or shared their cars. The police in Montgomery tried to stop them car sharing. In a later interview, Rosa Parks described how she was arrested twice – once for riding the bus and the second time for not riding the bus.



The bus boycott soon began to hurt the bus company. Since black Americans made up 60 to 70% of all bus riders, the bus company was faced with a choice – desegregate or go out of business. For the first time the black population had shown its economic power. They carried on until the bus company agreed to seat all

passengers on a first come, first served basis. In December 1956, the Supreme Court declared that segregation on Alabama's buses was unconstitutional. However, the bus companies had already begun desegregating due to loss of revenue.

The success of the Bus Boycott in Montgomery had wide reaching consequence and led to important protests elsewhere. There was a notably bitter campaign against bus segregation in Tallahassee in Florida. However, the victory secured by the MIA with King as its leader ensured that many transport companies simply changed their rules before they too became the subject of the next protest. The bus boycott showed that black Americans had economic power and united, non-violent mass protest could successfully challenge racial segregation, which was an example for others across the South to follow.

In 1957, Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy and other churchmen formed an organisation called the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to campaign for civil rights. The SCLC supported Martin Luther King's ideas about peaceful, non-violent protest and was to play an important role in the Civil Rights Movement.

However, the Montgomery Bus Boycott was only a limited success as there was still segregation in theatres, poolrooms and restaurants. Rosa Parks received death-threats and was forced to leave Montgomery; it became harder for African-Americans to find employment in Montgomery; homes of leading black people were destroyed, including King's home, where his wife and seven-week old baby narrowly escaped injury. Unfortunately, by 1963 it was reported that most African-Americans had accepted their inferior position in society and had returned to sitting at the back of the bus as they had prior to the boycott. Despite these obstacles, the bus boycott led to the growth of the civil rights movement because it achieved a small success and encouraged campaigners to continue and to keep going in their fight for equality.



<http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/civil-rights-movement/videos/montgomery-bus-boycott>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FE6Yvy--5aw>

Activity 5

1. Design a storyboard to describe the events of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Remember to include the key dates and the key people involved.
2. *“The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a turning point in the campaign for Civil Rights.”* To what extent do you agree with this statement?

Homework 5

Now that you have gathered your evidence for this part of factor two, you are ready to use it to write up the third paragraph of your second factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

D. The Role of Martin Luther King

Learning Intentions:

- I will be able to explain the importance of Martin Luther King to the Civil Rights Movement.

Although there were several large civil rights groups that advocated peaceful protest, King became the most well-known and effective spokesperson of the civil rights protest. Born on the 15th of January 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, as a boy growing up in Atlanta, King experienced segregation and discrimination. In 1953, he married Coretta Scott and in 1954, King was given his first job as pastor (leader of a Christian congregation) at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. He was only 25 years old. He went on to become a Baptist minister. He was an inspirational speaker and in his sermons, he preached about winning *'victory over your enemies through love'* and inspired his listeners with the song, *"We Shall Overcome"*. Throughout his life, he used his ability as a preacher to speak up for the poor, the disadvantaged and black Americans across the USA. In the 1950s and 60s his main target was segregation and discrimination against black Americans.

King started to gain the attention of the American public during the Montgomery bus boycott. His successful organisation of the boycott made him into a well-known national leader of the Civil Rights Movement. In 1957, Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy and other churchmen formed an organisation called the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to campaign for civil rights. The SCLC supported Martin Luther King's ideas about peaceful, non-violent protest and was to play an important role in the Civil Rights Movement. In the early 1960s, he led many demonstrations in the South aimed at ending segregation and allowing black Americans to vote freely.

Under the leadership of Martin Luther King, the civil rights campaign in the late 1950s and early 1960s used non-violent peaceful protest. King had studied the tactics of Mahatma Gandhi who had used non-violent protest successfully against British rule in India in the 1940s. Gandhi believed the best way to protest against a system that used force to maintain its power was by non-violent civil disobedience. King, having grown up in Atlanta, Georgia and witnessed the prejudice and discrimination of black Americans, was *'fascinated by the idea of refusing to cooperate with an evil system'*. His belief in non-violent protest was because *"no-violence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it"*. If the civil rights campaign had used violence white racists could say that black

people were not civilized and did not deserve to be given the rights that white citizens had. Moreover, by using peaceful methods, the white racists who attacked the peaceful black protesters were made to look even worse. His belief in civil disobedience was founded on the belief of just and unjust laws:

“One has not only a legal, but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws”, **Martin Luther King, Letter from Birmingham Jail.**

King said he would not obey evil laws and called on black Americans to march and to demonstrate, to resist without bitterness; to be cursed and not reply; to be beaten and not hit back. In that way, they would show up the injustice of segregation and make whites feel ashamed and guilty. Martin Luther King said: *“This is not a conflict between the Negroes and whites. This is only a conflict between justice and injustice.”*

In 1963, King led protests against discrimination in Birmingham, Alabama. The white population was violently resisting desegregation. The city was nicknamed ‘Bombingham’ because of the violence used by the whites against the civil rights protestors. King was arrested and jailed for his part in the protests.

In 1963, he led the enormous civil rights March on Washington D.C., in which he delivered his famous ‘*I Have a Dream*’ speech, predicting that one-day equality for black people would become a reality.

His peaceful methods won him respect and support from abroad for rights for black people. *Time* magazine chose Martin Luther King as their Man of their Year, which was the first time a black man had ever won the title. Later in 1964, when he was 35 years old, he also won the Nobel peace prize in recognition for his campaigning, making him the youngest man to ever win it. This international support was crucial in putting pressure on the US government to do something about the inequality.



King was a very good organiser and planner. He understood the value of good television coverage and of the wider publicity the civil rights movement was beginning to get all over America. He carefully planned to maximise this. He was arrested on more than one occasion by leading marches in places he knew the local authorities were racist and unsympathetic to the cause. He knew that the arrest of a national figure like him would capture headlines. The media coverage gave very valuable publicity to the civil rights cause. Television, radio and newspapers showed millions of whites what was happening. On their television screens, Americans

frequently watched the disturbing sight of innocent men, women and children being attacked by white mobs and of peaceful demonstrations being broken up, with considerable force, by the police.

Whereas earlier campaigners like Marcus Garvey and Philip Randolph could gather support locally, King could do so nationally. King was assassinated in 1968 on a visit to Memphis, Tennessee.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ank52Zi_S0
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UV1fs8lAbg>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=130J-FdZDtY>

Activity 6

1. Write a biography of Martin Luther King. You might want to do this as a fact file of his life. Working with your partner/group, think about the different areas of his life you think are important and contributed to the Civil Rights Movement.
2. Martin Luther King was instrumental in the success of various civil rights protests. You find out more about these as you go through the unit. As you find out more about his role, you should return to this task and complete it in detail.

The Role of Martin Luther King		
Civil Rights Protest	Methods	Successes/Failures
Montgomery Bus Boycott		
Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)		
Albany, Georgia		
Birmingham, Alabama, 1963		
March on Washington, 1963		
Selma, Alabama, 1965		

Homework 6

Now that you have gathered all your evidence for this factor, you are ready to use it to write up your third factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

E. The Formation of Effective Black Organisations

Learning Intentions:

- I will be able to describe the key events of the Civil Rights Movement
- I will be able to explain why these events led to the development of the Civil Rights Movement

Non-Violent Protests

During the 1950s and early 1960s a series of effective 'black' organisations were formed. For the first time these were national organisations which, although formed and based in one part of the country, were able to engage support from black people all across the United States. These groups of young, media savvy campaigners were no longer prepared to put up with the racist actions of the white authorities and hoped that pressure would be put on the federal government to legislate for integration. They became involved in direct action of civil disobedience whilst adopting the peaceful, non-violent tactics as demonstrated by Martin Luther King. King's eloquence instilled and authority in him, which made him the media frontman of the civil rights campaign. However, he was not alone.

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

The SCLC was formed in 1957 and led by Martin Luther King alongside Ralph Abernathy. This group emerged from the widespread offers of support that King received when campaigning against segregation on buses in Montgomery in Alabama in 1955. The SCLC began to co-ordinate the work of civil rights groups in various parts of the country and gained a great deal of national attention and support through King's regular appearances on television. The key aspect of the campaigns of the SCLC was the continued and consistent use of non-violent protest.



Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

SNCC formed in 1960 under the leadership of John Lewis, became a central group in taking forward key aspects of the Civil Rights campaign. Appealing to younger, aspirational



black Americans who wanted a better future for themselves than their parents had, the group enjoyed most of its support in the major northern cities and university towns where restrictions on black entry to higher education were much less strict and, in some cases, had disappeared altogether.

The key role of the group was in organising effective and visible direct action such as sit-ins boycotts, marches and freedom rides. Many of their activities involved white and black students working together and often travelling to southern states to make a direct challenge to the continuing segregation there.

The effort of the SNCC ended discrimination in many public places such as restaurants, hotels and theatres as the attention they drew with their campaigns brought unwelcome publicity to the owners of these properties and so the restrictions were lifted. These small successes gathered more momentum and support for the Civil Rights Movement and encouraged people to continue fighting for civil rights.

NAACP and CORE

Although new groups were emerging both the NAACP and CORE continued to operate and enjoyed increasing membership. For many people these organisations with their long history of campaigning offered the most clearly defined path to involvement with the Civil Rights Movement and particularly appealed to whites who wanted to help the campaign.

Sit-Ins

CORE had organised sit-ins during the 1940s but had not gathered the attention or the momentum that the sit-ins of the late 1950s brought to the Civil Rights Movement. A sit-in is a form of direct action that involves people occupying an area to promote their desire for political or social change. It is a non-violent way to shut down a business that, in this case, was still enforcing segregation. Even though protesters were non-violent, often their forced removal by the authorities involved violence being used against them, therefore bringing publicity and sympathy to their cause.

The SNCC, formed in 1960, wanted to help publicise the sit-in campaigns to desegregate lunch counters and cafes. On February 1st 1960, four black students, Ezell Blair Jr., David Richmond, Franklin McCain and Joseph McNeil, at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, sparked a sit-in movement that soon spread to college towns throughout the region. The men sat

on the white-only seats and refused to leave the lunch counter when they were refused service.

"We sat at a lunch counter where blacks never sat before. We asked for service, and we were denied, and we expected to be denied. We asked why couldn't we be served. It was our intent to sit there until they decided to serve us." **Joseph McNeil, Greensboro, North Carolina sit-in, 1960.**

The next day 23 more students did the same; the day after there were 66 protestors. Within a week, 400 black and white students were organising sit-ins at lunch counters in the town. They refused to retaliate when they were subjected to verbal and physical abuse. When the police arrived, they arrested the protestors. The problem for the police was that as soon as they removed the protestors from the stools, they were simply re-filled by other members of the SNCC or CORE. The 'fill the jails' campaign was working. Jails across the South soon filled up and courts were almost brought to a standstill with the amount of cases being brought before them. Despite all of this, the protestors did not retaliate to violence. The sit-ins are a successful example of civil disobedience and non-violent protests.

Intense television coverage of the Greensboro sit-ins sparked a sit-in movement that spread quickly to college towns throughout the South and into the North, as young blacks and whites joined in various forms of peaceful protest against segregation in libraries, beaches, hotels and other establishments. By the end of March, the movement had spread to 55 cities in 13 states. Though many were arrested for trespassing, disorderly conduct or disturbing the peace, national media coverage of the sit-ins brought increasing national and inter-national attention to the magnitude of segregation in the South and the continued struggle for civil rights for African-Americans. The sit-ins were also a training ground for the future leaders of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

In response to the success of the sit-in movement, dining facilities across the South were being integrated by the summer of 1960. At the end of July, when many local college students were on summer vacation, the Greensboro Woolworth's quietly integrated its lunch counter. Four black Woolworth's employees—Geneva Tisdale, Susie Morrison, Anetha Jones and Charles Best—were the first to be served. By the end of 1960, lunch counters had been desegregated in 126 cities.



Freedom Rides

In 1960, the Supreme Court ruled that segregation in public areas for travellers using interstate buses was unconstitutional. In 1961 groups of young black and white people set to test the Supreme Court's ruling. These journeys were organised by CORE but members of SNCC joined them as they travelled south on two interstate buses. They became known as Freedom Riders.

The first so-called 'Freedom Ride' took place on May 4, 1961, when seven black and six whites members of CORE left Washington D.C. on two interstate buses bound for New Orleans in the 'Deep South' of Louisiana. They rode together, sitting side-by-side through Southern states where segregation was still in place. However, serious trouble awaited them in Alabama.

In May 14, 1961, the Greyhound bus was the first to arrive in Anniston, Alabama. There, an angry mob of about 200 white people surrounded the bus, causing the driver to continue past the bus station. The mob followed the bus in cars, and when the tires on the bus blew out, someone threw a bomb into the bus. The Freedom Riders escaped the bus as it burst into flames, only to be brutally beaten by members of the surrounding mob. The second bus, a Trailways vehicle, travelled



to Birmingham, Alabama and those riders were also beaten by an angry white mob, many of whom brandished metal pipes. Birmingham Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor (1897-1973) stated that, although he knew the Freedom Riders were arriving and violence awaited them, he posted no police protection at the station because it was Mother's Day.

"I was certain I was going to die. What kind of death would it be? Well, damn it, if I had to die, I hoped the newspapers were out there. Plenty of them, with plenty of cameras," **James Farmer, CORE.**

Photographs of the burning Greyhound bus and the bloodied riders appeared on the front pages of newspapers throughout the country and around the world the next day, drawing international attention to the Freedom Riders' cause and the state of race relations in the U.S. Following the widespread violence, CORE officials could not find a bus driver who would agree to transport the integrated group, and they decided to abandon the Freedom Rides. However, Diane Nash, an activist from the SNCC, organized a group of 10 students from Nashville, Tennessee, to continue the rides. U.S.

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy began negotiating with Governor Patterson of Alabama and the bus companies to secure a driver and state protection for the new group of Freedom Riders. The rides finally resumed, on a Greyhound bus departing Birmingham under police escort, on May 20.

The police abandoned the bus just before it arrived at the Montgomery, Alabama, terminal, where a white mob attacked the riders with baseball bats and clubs as they disembarked. Attorney General Kennedy sent 600 federal marshals to the city to stop the violence. The following night, Martin Luther King led a service at the First Baptist Church in Montgomery, which was attended by more than one thousand supporters of the Freedom Riders. A riot ensued outside the church, and King called Robert Kennedy to ask for protection. Kennedy summoned the federal marshals, who used teargas to disperse the white mob. Patterson declared martial law in the city and dispatched the National Guard to restore order.

On May 24, 1961, a group of Freedom Riders departed Montgomery for Jackson, Mississippi. There, several hundred supporters greeted the riders. However, those who attempted to use the whites-only facilities were arrested for trespassing and taken to the maximum-security prison in Parchman, Mississippi. The judge sentenced the riders to 30 days in jail. Attorneys from the NAACP appealed the convictions all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which reversed them.



The violence and arrests continued to garner national and international attention, and drew hundreds of new Freedom Riders to the cause. By the end of the summer, the protests had spread to train stations and airports across the South. Attacks by the Klan and firebombed buses were pictured in the national newspapers and on television. The Federal government could not ignore the situation in the South any longer. In November 1961, under pressure from the Kennedy administration the Interstate Commerce Commission issued clear rules banning segregated transport facilities, which included airports, rail and bus, stations. The Federal Government was now moving towards more open support for civil rights. In the Presidential election of 1960, John F Kennedy had managed to scrape a victory thanks to the votes of black people in the northern states. Kennedy knew he had a debt to pay to the Civil Rights Movement. Campaigns like those of the freedom rides then forced him to act.

Many people agree that of all the strategies, the Freedom Riders did the most to increase support for the Civil Rights Movement. They were successful in making northern Americans more and more sympathetic towards the civil rights cause. The Freedom Rides and the Sit-Ins demonstrated that anyone who opposed segregation could take direct action themselves to bring about the end of discrimination.

However, there is also a view that the Freedom Rides did very little to change the real problem experienced by black Americans: that they had to rely on white politicians to make changes for them as they had no power to change things themselves. Martin Luther King's leadership and his non-violent strategy was now being openly questioned as the Supreme Court's decisions were still being ignored by many southern states, the KKK was still lynching black people and the federal government was still not supportive of the Civil Rights Movement. Black protestors were being arrested, losing wages and even their jobs for what appeared to be nothing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6T50Ym94k8Y>

Albany, Georgia, 1961

Albany came to the forefront of the civil rights movement in 1961. In November 1961, the SNCC mobilised students from Albany State College, which was an African-American college, to protest about the segregation and disenfranchisement experienced in Albany. This protest did not receive support from local NAACP and other civil rights leaders as they saw SNCC as troublemakers. They were perhaps jealous of the success and national media attention the SNCC had received. Albany's bus centre was targeted, as despite segregation on interstate travel services being outlawed, it still existed in Albany. Hundreds were arrested. Albany's city authorities refused to desegregate the bus station despite pressure from the Attorney-General, Robert Kennedy.



Someone in the Albany civil rights movement invited Martin Luther King to join the protest. This angered SNCC who wanted the protest to stay led by locals over local issues. King led one protest march and was arrested. However, the city authorities decided no one would be arrested and jailed; students were arrested and released. This way there were no 'martyrs' to the cause and the nation's media were less likely to be attracted to what was going on as there was no violent images of black students being arrested. This was the opposite of what happened during the Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides and what would happen in Birmingham. They also promised the creation of a biracial committee to look at Albany's problems. King left the Albany movement and returned to Atlanta.

The authorities went back on their agreement and city parks were closed, city swimming pools were shut down, the city library was integrated but the seats were removed and schools remained segregated, despite 1954 Brown v Topeka. Protests became less and

less well supported. However, the bus station was desegregated and a few more blacks registered their right to vote.

Albany was recognised as a major defeat by the civil rights movement. No violence was used by the authorities in Albany and African-Americans were seen as the cause of trouble rather than the authorities. The lack of violence meant that the federal government had no reason to intervene; social disorder was not threatened as it had been in Little Rock. Another clear problem was the failure of SNCC/SCLC/NAACP to cooperate. King recognised that an area that had little SCLC support would not welcome SCLC help; also that the authorities within the South could not be trusted and that a political approach would be less effective than a financial one: boycotts which would affect the financial wellbeing of the white community were much more effective.

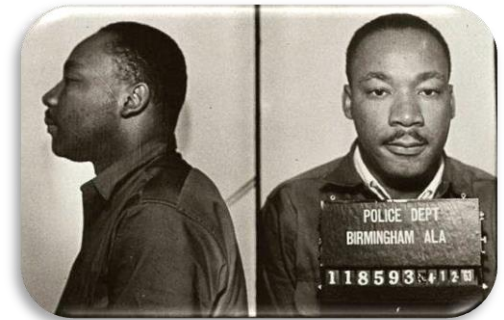
Birmingham, Alabama 1963

The Civil Rights Movement had run into some problems in Albany, Georgia. King realised that the previous success of the movement had been won through a combination of widespread media coverage and economic pressure. If business were suffering because of segregation, then segregation would surely end. During 1963, Martin Luther King and the SCLC organised a new campaign to end segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, *"the most segregated city in the United States"*. The year before the council in Birmingham had closed all public recreational facilities, like parks and swimming baths to black people. It was a KKK stronghold and in recent years, the KKK had castrated an African American; pressured the city to ban a book from book stores as it contained pictures of black and white rabbits and wanted black music banned on radio stations. Race relations here were worse here than almost anywhere else in the South. King believed taking their campaign to *"the biggest and baddest city of the South"* would get the campaign back on track, as he knew that any campaigning here would provoke trouble from the locals and gather national publicity and a response from federal government. The SNCC and NAACP were not active in Birmingham and King and the SCLC would be able to campaign without any competition from other groups.

Unlike Albany, the SCLC's campaign in Birmingham was better planned but not without problems. King's knew that for his plan to work there would need to be a large number of protestors arrested and sent jail, this way the media would have a more interesting story. However, the first few days of the campaign saw only a small numbers of demonstrators conduct acts of civil disobedience. Demonstrations were held in areas where African-Americans lived, which were not in conspicuous city centre areas and did not cause disruption to the day-to-day business of the city, therefore did not gather much media or police attention. The lack of local involvement was the result of the imminent

retirement of the racist head of the police, Eugene “Bull” Connor. Many African-Americans felt that things would improve once he was gone.

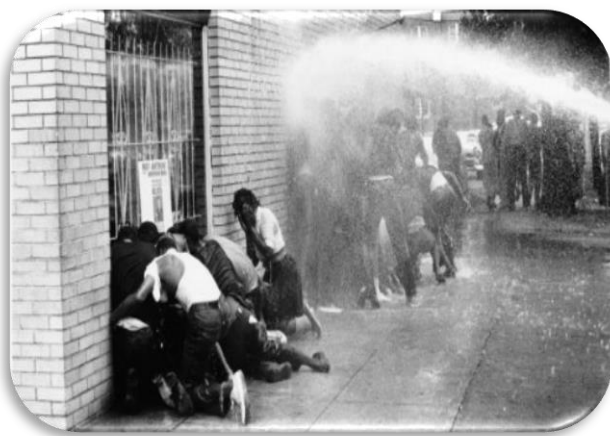
To avoid the protest in Birmingham collapsing in failure, King decided that he must march, despite being legally instructed not to do so. King marched and was, for the thirteenth time, arrested and kept in solitary confinement and was denied the right to see his lawyer. King’s wife Coretta was so worried that she phoned Robert Kennedy, US Attorney-General and brother of the President. President Kennedy himself phoned the racist Birmingham police chief, Eugene ‘Bull’ Connor, though it took a week for King to be released.



Whilst King was in prison, SCLC’s Director of Direct Action, James Bevell, controversially decided to use students as freedom fighters. Unlike adults, they had no jobs or income to lose if they were arrested. On the 2nd May, more than one-thousand students decided they wanted to march for their civil rights. Six-hundred students were arrested the youngest was only eight-years-old. The risky strategy worked as the ‘Children’s Crusade’ as it was labelled, received front-page coverage of the Washington Post and the New York Times.



King knew that Connor had a notorious temper. What were in fact relatively low-key protests, Connor saw as a threat to his ‘rule’ in Birmingham. On 7th May, he ordered police dogs and high-pressure firehoses to be used on the marching schoolchildren, followed by tear gas and electric cattle rods. Five-hundred youths were arrested and jailed. Alabama’s Governor George Wallace called out the National Guard to deal with the demonstrators. The Ku Klux Klan organised a rally in the town. These events were televised throughout USA and helped turn public opinion against racists like Connor. He had achieved the opposite of what he intended; he had played into the hands of King and helped highlight the cause of civil rights for black people.



President Kennedy said, “*The Civil Rights Movement should thank God for Bull Connor. He’s helped it as much as Abraham Lincoln.*”

Birmingham's business community was concerned about the negative publicity the city was receiving and how this would affect their businesses. 'The Birmingham Truce' was agreed after Birmingham's African-American leaders and the business community negotiated plans to desegregate restrooms and lunch counters. However, the bombing of the house that belonged to King's brother and King's motel room wrecked the talks. These outrages provoked riots among the local African-American community.

Pressure was mounting on President Kennedy to do something about civil rights. Kennedy realised there was a lot of public sympathy for the Civil Rights Movement and he did not want to be seen as out of touch with the public's mood. Importantly it was causing the USA international embarrassment as the USSR gloated that the 'land of the free' was denying its black citizens the same rights as its white. USSR devoted 25% of its news broadcasts to the demonstrations, Kennedy realised only federal laws could stop the violence in Birmingham and across the USA. He ordered an end to segregation in Birmingham and the re-enrolment of the 1,100 students who had been expelled from school following their truancy to attend the march. Kennedy ordered 3,000 federal troops to patrol the streets of Birmingham, fearful of what might occur.



March on Washington, 1963

By June 1963, it appeared that Kennedy had been convinced that the only way for African-Americans to achieve civil rights was for federal government to pass a Civil Rights Act. The Civil Rights Movement had to make sure that there was continued momentum and pressure on government to ensure that this became a reality. In August 1963, the *March for Jobs and Freedom* took place in Washington D.C. Somewhere between 250,000 and 500,000 people, including 50,000 white Americans, marched to the Lincoln Memorial in the nation's capital to demand civil rights for all. The largest civil rights demonstration in US history was carried live by four national television stations. It was here where Martin Luther King made his famous 'I have a dream' speech.

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

The March on Washington made sure that there was no backing down from Kennedy's desire to see a Civil Rights Bill introduced to Congress.

Civil Rights Bill, 1964

Kennedy responded to the march by announcing that he was asking Congress to pass a Civil Rights Bill that would make all forms of racial discrimination in public places illegal. In June 1963, the President said on television:

“Are we to say to the world – and much more importantly to each other – that this is the land of the free, except for the Negroes?”

Yet the violence continued. In September 1963, a black church in Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed, killing four children. When President Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, it looked as if everything had been in vain. No one was sure of the opinion of the new President, Lyndon Johnson, who came from the southern state of Texas. He had made very few public comments on the subject of civil rights during his three years as Vice-President. However, President Lyndon B. Johnson promised to preserve Kennedy’s legacy by ensuring the Civil Rights Bill became law. In 1964, the Bill became the Civil Rights Act.

Under the Civil Rights Act, segregation on the grounds of race, religion or national origin was banned in employment and all public places including courthouses, parks, restaurants, theatres, sports arenas and hotels. No longer could any American be denied service simply based on the colour of their skin. It also allowed Federal government to begin legal proceedings against any state government that denied civil rights to African-Americans. Martin Luther King said it was nothing less than a “second emancipation.” However, problems remained. The Act did nothing to stop discrimination over voter registration.

Selma, Alabama, 1964

In the early 1960s, black Americans in the South still found it difficult to register to vote. King believed that *“the denial of the right to vote was the very origin, the root cause, of racial segregation in the South.”* In early 1965, King and the SCLC decided to make Selma, Alabama, the focus of a voter registration campaign. Alabama Governor, George Wallace was a notorious opponent of desegregation, and the local county



sheriff had led a steadfast opposition to black voter registration drives so much so that by 1961 in Dallas County, Alabama, only 2% of eligible black Americans were registered to vote. Between 1st January and 7th February 1965, more than three-thousand people were arrested but only one-hundred more black people were registered to vote.

On February 18, white segregationists attacked a group of peaceful demonstrators. In the ensuing chaos, an Alabama state trooper fatally shot Jimmie Lee Jackson, a young African-American demonstrator. In response to Jackson's death, King and the SCLC, along with the SNCC planned a massive protest march from Selma to the state capitol of Montgomery, 54



miles away. King had won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, and his higher profile would help draw international attention to Selma during the eventful months that followed. King informed President Johnson of his plan but Governor Wallace stated, *"There will be no marches between Selma and Montgomery,"* promising to take all necessary measures to protect 'public safety'. On Sunday, March 7th, a group of six-hundred people led by John Lewis of the SNCC and Reverend Hosea Williams of the SCLC set out on their peaceful march. However, they did not get far. Alabama state troopers on horseback, wielding whips, batons and tear gas rushed the group at the Edmund Pettus Bridge and beat them back to Selma. The brutal scene of bloodied and severely injured peaceful demonstrators was captured on television, enraging many Americans and drawing civil rights and religious leaders of all faiths to Selma in protest.

"There are moments when outrage turns to action. One of these moments came, not on Sunday, March 7, when a group of Negroes at Selma were gassed, clubbed and trampled by horses, but on the following day when films of the event appeared on national television." **George B. Leonard, *The National*, 10th May 1965.**

King himself led another attempt on March 9th. However, when he led the 2,500 marchers onto the Edmund Pettus Bridge he was criticised for doing a deal with the authorities that prevented the marchers crossing the bridge, thus breaching a court's order. King's 'Turnaround Tuesday', led to division emerging once again within the Civil Rights Movement and as his credibility as a leader was questioned and led to SNCC members eager to distance themselves from the SCLC and to abandon the strategy of non-violence and civil disobedience.

A third march was planned for 21st March. Alabama state officials (led by Governor Wallace) tried to prevent the march from going forward, but the courts and President Lyndon Johnson backed the march. Some 2,000 people set out from Selma on March 21, protected by U.S. Army and the Alabama National Guard that Johnson had ordered under federal control. After walking some 12 hours a day and sleeping in fields along the way, they reached Montgomery on March 25th. Nearly 50,000 supporters, black and white, met the marchers in Montgomery, where they gathered in front of the state capitol to hear King and other speakers address the crowd. *“No tide of racism can stop us,”* King proclaimed from the building’s steps, as viewers from around the world watched the historic moment on television.

On March 17, 1965, even as the Selma-to-Montgomery marchers fought for the right to carry out their protest, President Lyndon Johnson addressed a joint session of Congress, calling for federal voting rights legislation to protect African-Americans from barriers that prevented them from voting.

“What happened in Selma is part of a far larger movement which reaches into every section and state of America. It is the effort of American Negroes to secure for themselves the full blessings of American life. Their cause must be our cause too. Because it’s not just Negroes, but really it’s all of us, who must overcome the crippling legacy of bigotry and injustice. And we shall overcome.” **President Johnson, March 15, 1965.**

For some, Johnson’s speech was *‘a victory like no other. It was an affirmation of our movement.’* For the first time, the President was willing to defend the voting rights of African-Americans. For others, it was a cynical move, arguing the Johnson had no alternative given the damage being done to the USA’s international reputation after events of the first march. In addition, the USA was involved with the Vietnam War and on the front-line were thousands of African-American soldiers fighting against Communism and for freedom when they were not entirely free at home.

That August, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act, which guaranteed the right to vote (first awarded by the 15th Amendment) to all African-Americans. Specifically, the act banned literacy tests as a requirement for voting, mandated federal oversight of voter registration in areas where tests had previously been used, and removed the right of individual states to place restrictions on who could vote. Along with the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act was one of the most expansive pieces of civil rights legislation in American history. Its effects greatly reduced the disparity between black and white voters in the U.S. and allowed a greater number of African-Americans to enter political life at the local, state and national level.

Activity 7

1. Write a brief description of the civil rights groups: their methods, their leaders, their aims.
 - SCLS
 - SNCC
 - NAACP
 - CORE
2. These groups all played their part in the demonstrations and protests of the Civil Rights Movement. Take each of the events of the Civil Rights Movement and complete the following. (You do not need to do this as a table).

Event	Organisation Involved	Reason for event	Description of event	Importance to CRM	Limitations of event
Sit-ins					
Freedom Rides					
Albany, Georgia					
March on Birmingham					
March on Washington					
March on Selma					
Civil Rights Act (Role of Government)					

Homework 7

Now that you have gathered all your evidence for this factor, you are ready to use it to write up your fourth factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

F. The Emergence of Effective Black Leaders

Learning Intentions:

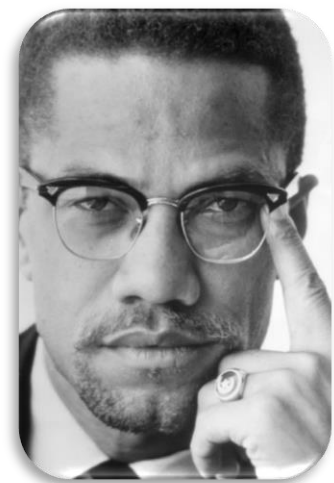
- I will be able to describe the actions of the groups who chose not to follow Martin Luther King's teachings.
- I will be able to explain why they were important to the development of the Civil Rights Movement.

By the 1960s a new type of black leader was emerging; one that was more aggressive and dynamic than those who had preceded them. In the northern cities in particular, there were more active groups who felt that King's commitment to non-violent protest was not advancing the cause with enough speed. Their growing frustration at the lack of obvious progress towards civil rights saw the development of new groups with a harder line towards the campaign. The Nation of Islam, 'Black Power' and 'Black Panther' movements all saw the need for more direct and aggressive action and all were beginning to build support during the early part of the 1960s.

Malcolm X

Another reason for the development of the Civil Rights campaign after 1945 was Malcolm X. Malcolm X was inspirational, but more confrontational. He was the articulate voice of Nation of Islam.

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska. His mother was a homemaker and his father, an outspoken Baptist minister. He was also an avid supporter of Black Nationalist leader Marcus Garvey, which prompted death threats from the white supremacist organisation Black Legion, which forced the family to relocate twice before Malcolm's fourth birthday. In 1929, their home was burned to the ground and two years later, his father's body was found lying across the town's train tracks. Police ruled both incidents as accidents, but the Littles were certain that members of the Black Legion were responsible. Louise suffered emotional breakdown several years after the death of her husband and was committed to a mental institution, while her children were split up among various foster homes and orphanages.



At the age of 21, and now living in Boston, Malcom was arrested and convicted on burglary charges and sentenced to 10 years in prison, although he was granted parole after serving seven years. Whilst in prison he encountered the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI), popularly known as the Black Muslims. Intrigued, Malcolm began to study the teachings of NOI. Muhammad taught that Christianity was a white man's religion; that the white man was the devil with whom blacks cannot live; that white society actively worked to keep African-Americans from empowering themselves and achieving political, economic, and social success; it called for race war; their long term aim was a separate state/country/nation for black Americans. The idea had a strong impact on Malcolm. By the time he was paroled in 1952, Malcolm was a devoted follower with the new surname "X" (He considered "Little" a slave name and chose the "X" to signify his lost tribal name.). Intelligent and articulate, Malcolm was appointed as a minister and national spokesman for the Nation of Islam. Malcolm utilized newspaper columns, as well as radio and television, to communicate the NOI's message across the United States.

Like King, Malcolm X was an excellent public speaker and his message appealed to many black people in the 1960s. He was much more aggressive in defence of black rights than Martin Luther King was. He believed King's soft approach was not working. Black Americans who protested for equality were being violently attacked. He believed black people should defend themselves; that violence should be met with violence. He believed in the idea of 'Black Power' and that the black community should be segregated from the white community and should not beg the white man for equality. He believed that the black community should educate itself, develop its own businesses, and build up its own community without the white man's help. He believed that black people should be proud to be black; 'Black is beautiful'. In northern cities, where more people felt that King's commitment to non-violent protest was not advancing the cause with enough speed, Malcom appealed to the urban black people who could vote and were not segregated, but were very poor and discriminated against. He was keen to warn others of the growing problems in northern cities for black people such as unemployment and drugs. The Civil Rights Movement in the South had hardly touched the problems of black Americans in the main cities of the North. His charisma, drive, and conviction attracted an astounding number of new members (from 500 in 1952 to 30,000 in 1963). His influence had even reached in to the SNCC.

In addition to the media, Malcolm's vivid personality had captured the government's attention. The US government was afraid that Malcolm X was building up hatred against whites that could erupt in national riots and revolution. Already there had been riots in Los Angeles. White authorities were afraid that they would spread as more and more black Americans were attracted to the Black Muslims. As membership in the NOI continued to grow, FBI agents infiltrated the

organization (one even acted as Malcolm's bodyguard) and secretly placed bugs, wiretaps, cameras, and other surveillance equipment to monitor the group's activities.

Malcolm left the NOI after learning of his mentor, Elijah Muhammad's corruption. Malcolm also felt guilty about the masses he had led to join the NOI, which he now felt was a fraudulent organization built on too many lies to ignore. That same year, Malcolm went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, which proved to be life altering for him. When he returned, Malcolm said he had met "blonde-haired, blue-eyed men I could call my brothers." He returned to the United States as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz and with a new outlook on integration and a new hope for the future. This time when Malcolm spoke, instead of just preaching to African-Americans, he had a message for all races. He founded the Organization of Afro-American Unity and increasingly turned his attention from religion to getting more political power and better living/working conditions for black people.

After repeated attempts on his life, Malcolm rarely travelled anywhere without bodyguards. On February 14th 1965, his home in New York was firebombed. Luckily, the family escaped physical injury. One week later, however, Malcolm's enemies were successful in their ruthless attempt. At a speaking engagement in the Manhattan's Audubon Ballroom on February 21st 1965, three gunmen rushed Malcolm onstage. They shot him 15 times at close range. Malcolm's assassins were all members of the Nation of Islam. The 39-year-old was pronounced dead on arrival at New York's Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. Fifteen hundred people attended Malcolm's funeral in Harlem on February 27, 1965.

Therefore, Malcolm X's direct, yet compassionate approach made him an important role model for black people in the North and helping the growth of the civil rights campaign by attracting many people to the cause and gaining media attention. He proved to be a leader in the northern states of America for those who felt their situation was different from those in the South who were led by Martin Luther King. Malcolm X should not be seen as a violent figure. He advocated violence in self-defence. It was his respectability combined with his determination not to be bullied that made him such a frightening figure. However, his philosophy would have turned some people against the case for civil rights, as they would not support violence and hatred. Therefore, Malcolm X may also have had a negative impact on the growth of the Civil Rights campaign.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8zEELNutJs>

Stokely Carmichael

Born in Trinidad, Carmichael immigrated to New York City in 1952 at the age of twelve. In 1956, he gained admittance to the prestigious Bronx High School of Science, where he was introduced to the children of New York City's rich white liberal elite. Carmichael was popular among his new classmates; he attended parties frequently and dated white girls. However, even at that age, he was highly conscious of the racial differences that divided him from his classmates.



Although he had been aware of the American civil rights movement for years, it was not until one night toward the end of high school, when he saw footage of a sit-in on television, that Carmichael felt compelled to join the struggle.

“When I first heard about the Negroes sitting in at lunch counters down South, I thought they were just a bunch of publicity hounds. But one night when I saw those young kids on TV, getting back up on the lunch counter stools after being knocked off them, sugar in their eyes, ketchup in their hair, well, something happened to me. Suddenly I was burning.”

He joined CORE, picketed a Woolworth's store in New York, and travelled to sit-ins in Virginia and South Carolina.

Carmichael received scholarship offers to a variety of prestigious predominantly white universities after graduating high school in 1960 but chose to attend the historically black Howard University in Washington, D.C. At the same time, Carmichael continued to increase his participation in the movement itself. While still a freshman in 1961, he went on his first Freedom Ride. During that trip, he was arrested in Jackson, Mississippi for entering the “whites only” bus stop waiting room and jailed for 49 days. Undeterred, Carmichael remained actively involved in the civil rights movement throughout his college years, participating in another Freedom Ride in Maryland, a demonstration in Georgia and a hospital workers' strike in New York and still managed to graduate from Howard University with honours in 1964.

In the summer of 1964, Carmichael joined the SNCC during its campaign to register black voters in the Deep South. He used his eloquence and natural leadership to raise the number of registered black voters from 70 to 2,600 300 more than the number of registered white voters in the county. At this stage in his life, Carmichael adhered to the philosophy of non-violent resistance espoused by Dr Martin Luther King. However, as time went on, Carmichael, like many young activists, became

frustrated with the slow pace of progress and with having to endure repeated acts of violence and humiliation at the hands of white police officers without recourse.

By the time he was elected national chairman of SNCC in May 1966, Carmichael had largely lost faith in the theory of non-violent resistance that he, and the SNCC, had once held dear. As chairman, he turned SNCC in a sharply radical direction, making it clear that white members were no longer welcome. In June 1966, James Meredith, a civil rights activist who had been the first black student to attend the University of Mississippi, embarked on a solitary "Walk Against Fear" from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi. About 20 miles into Mississippi, Meredith was shot and wounded too severely to continue. Carmichael decided that SNCC volunteers should carry on the march in his place. Reaching Mississippi on June 16th an enraged Carmichael gave the address for which he would forever be best remembered: *"We been saying 'freedom' for six years. What we are going to start saying now is 'Black Power.'"*

The phrase "black power" quickly caught on as the rallying cry of a younger, more radical generation of civil rights activists. Carmichael explained the meaning of black power:

"It is a call for black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, to build a sense of community. It is a call for black people to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations."

Black power also represented Carmichael's break with King's doctrine of non-violence and its end goal of racial integration. Instead, he associated the term with the doctrine of black separatism, articulated most prominently by Malcolm X. Unsurprisingly, the turn to black power proved controversial, evoking fear in many white Americans, even those previously sympathetic to the civil rights movement, and exacerbating cracks within the movement itself between older proponents of non-violence and younger advocates of separatism. Martin Luther King called black power *"an unfortunate choice of words."* He now saw King as an "Uncle Tom" figure, begging the white man to be equal. Carmichael left SNCC and became Prime Minister of the more radical Black Panthers, which demanded radical and immediate change to improve lives of black people. He spent the next two years speaking around the country and writing essays on black nationalism and black separatism. He died in Guinea of cancer on November 15, 1988, at the age of 57.

Stokely Carmichael was a controversial figure as he divided the civil rights movement. An inspired orator, persuasive essayist, effective organiser and expansive thinker, Carmichael stands out as one of the preeminent figures of the American civil rights movement.

The Black Panthers

The Black Panthers were formed in California in 1966 and they played a short but important part in the civil rights movement. The Black Panthers believed that the non-violent campaign of Martin Luther King had failed and any promised changes to their lifestyle via the 'traditional' civil rights movement, would take too long to be implemented or simply not introduced. The Black Panther Party had four desires: equality in education, housing, employment and civil rights.

The language of the Black Panthers was violent as was their public stance. The two founders of the Black Panther Party were Huey Percy Newton and Bobby Seale. They preached for a "revolutionary war" but though they considered themselves an African-American party, they were willing to speak out for all those who were oppressed from whatever minority group. They were willing to use violence to get what they wanted.



The call for a revolutionary war against authority at the time of the Vietnam War, alerted the FBI to the Black Panther's activities. The head of the FBI, Edgar J Hoover, called the BPP "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country." Supporters of the Black Panthers claimed that the FBI used dirty tactics to destroy the organisation. They claimed the FBI forged letters to provoke conflict between the BPP's leaders; that they organised the murders of Black Panther leaders such as John Huggins; that they initiated a "Black Propaganda" campaign to convince the public that the Black Panthers were a threat to national security; that they used infiltrators to commit crimes that could be blamed on the Black Panthers so that leaders could be arrested; that they wrote threatening letters to jurors during trials so that the Black Panthers would be blamed for attempting to pervert the course of justice. Whatever happened, the FBI was successful in destroying the Black Panther's movement.

To view the BPP as a purely revolutionary and violent movement is wrong. In areas of support, the Black Panthers created free food programmes and free medical research health clinics to those members of the black community who could not afford them. Huey Newton said that these were exactly what the African-American community wanted and that the Black Panthers were providing its own people with something the government was not.

In 1966, a survey carried out in America showed that less than 5% of African-Americans approved of groups such as the Black Panthers, with 60% positively

hostile to such groups. However, these survey results may well be slanted in such a manner as to tarnish the name of the Black Panthers at an early stage in its existence. In areas such as Oakland and parts of San Francisco where the BPP claimed to feed nearly 200,000 people, support would have been a lot higher.

The successes achieved in the fight for Civil Rights can be as much attributed to people like Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael as Martin Luther King. The peaceful approach showed how respectable black people were. The more aggressive approach of the black power movement showed black people would no longer put up with violence against them and this no doubt scared some white people / politicians in to action.

Activity 8

1. Groups who did not follow the non-violent approach of Martin Luther King were also important to the Civil Rights Movement. Take each of the alternative groups and answer the following. (You do not need to do this as a table).

Organisation and Leadership	Aims, Beliefs and Appeal	Methods	Importance to the CRM	Limitations of their campaign

Homework 8

Now that you have gathered all your evidence for this factor, you are ready to use it to write up your fifth factor. Your teacher and your History Skills booklet will help you with the structure of your essay. You will begin this factor in class and will complete it at home.

Conclusion

The civil rights movement in America became so large and so widespread that it created a momentum that was difficult to stop. Yet campaigners met with resistance at every step and though they were winning the wider argument, often through their increased use of the media, they still found it incredibly difficult to change the racist attitudes of white people in southern states.

The big changes that took place in many parts of the world after World War II seemed to pass America by. Britain began to dismantle its Empire, yet America's black soldiers returned to a country that had changed little because of war. The resentment this caused led to the formation of CORE, a genuinely mixed-membership organisation dedicated to civil rights. Perhaps the biggest single factor in the development of civil rights in America was the establishment of effective campaign groups, such as CORE, and the emergence of genuinely talented leaders.

Martin Luther King was the dominant figure in this period, and his management of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was a model from which other civil rights groups could learn. King was a well-educated man, an excellent public speaker and motivator, a master of television interviews and was extremely popular. He was also clear about his opposition to the use of violence – throwing the spotlight very firmly on those who used violence against him and his supporters. Black Americans had never had a spokesperson like King before and his personal contribution should not be underestimated.

However, as the movement for civil rights grew and spread across the nation, it became the activities of 'ordinary' people who promoted the cause effectively. Teenage children in Tennessee and Arkansas, students riding buses and sitting in at restaurants, churchgoers who were the subject of racist attacks; all of these people played their part in taking forward the cause of civil rights.

Even those black leaders who emerged in the 1960s to challenge the course taken by Martin Luther King were still assisting in the development of the cause by taking the case to those groups that King had not yet been able to reach – especially in northern cities.

One final point of importance was the growing commitment of the US government to take a more active role in this issue. President Eisenhower ordered the use of troops at Little Rock in support of black school pupils. His successor John F Kennedy was the first President to make clear and public statements in support of civil rights. It was becoming more obvious that the tide was turning in favour of equal rights for black Americans.