

BLACK AMERICA



Black America

The ancestors of most African-Americans were brought by force. England, France, Spain, Portugal, and even Denmark had colonies or trading posts in Africa. Europeans captured or bought slaves from Arab traders or from local chieftains who sold enemies they had caught. Many of the slaves died on the way to America. After they were sold, they worked on tobacco, sugar, wheat, rice, and cotton plantations or as servants in houses. Their children were also slaves.

Gradually, slavery disappeared from the North, and there were many free blacks in America – even in the Southern states. But slavery continued in the South until the end of the Civil War. After the war, there were attempts to guarantee the rights of blacks. There were even black politicians in Congress. But Southern whites would not accept blacks as equals. Some whites formed a secret organization called the Ku Klux Klan to terrorize blacks demanding their rights. By 1900, every Southern state had passed laws limiting the right of blacks to vote. Blacks were not even allowed to use the same schools, restaurants, parks, or drinking fountains



Martin Luther King.

as whites. They had to sit in the back of public buses and use special black sections on trains. Schools in America were also segregated. There were separate schools for blacks and whites. This situation continued for nearly a hundred years.

During the 1960s, more and more blacks demanded the right to vote and be treated the same way as whites. The most famous black leader, Martin Luther King, insisted that protests be non-violent. Martin

Luther King said, "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 their character..." – tragically, King was shot in 1968.

Laws and the Constitution were changed to make sure that all American citizens have the right to vote. School districts were changed so that schools

would have a mixture of races. Sometimes towns resorted to "busing." Children were driven in school buses from one neighborhood to another in order to get a better racial mixture. Unfortunately, this did not always work. Parents removed their children from public schools and sent them to private ones instead. Other parents simply moved to towns and cities that were overwhelmingly white.



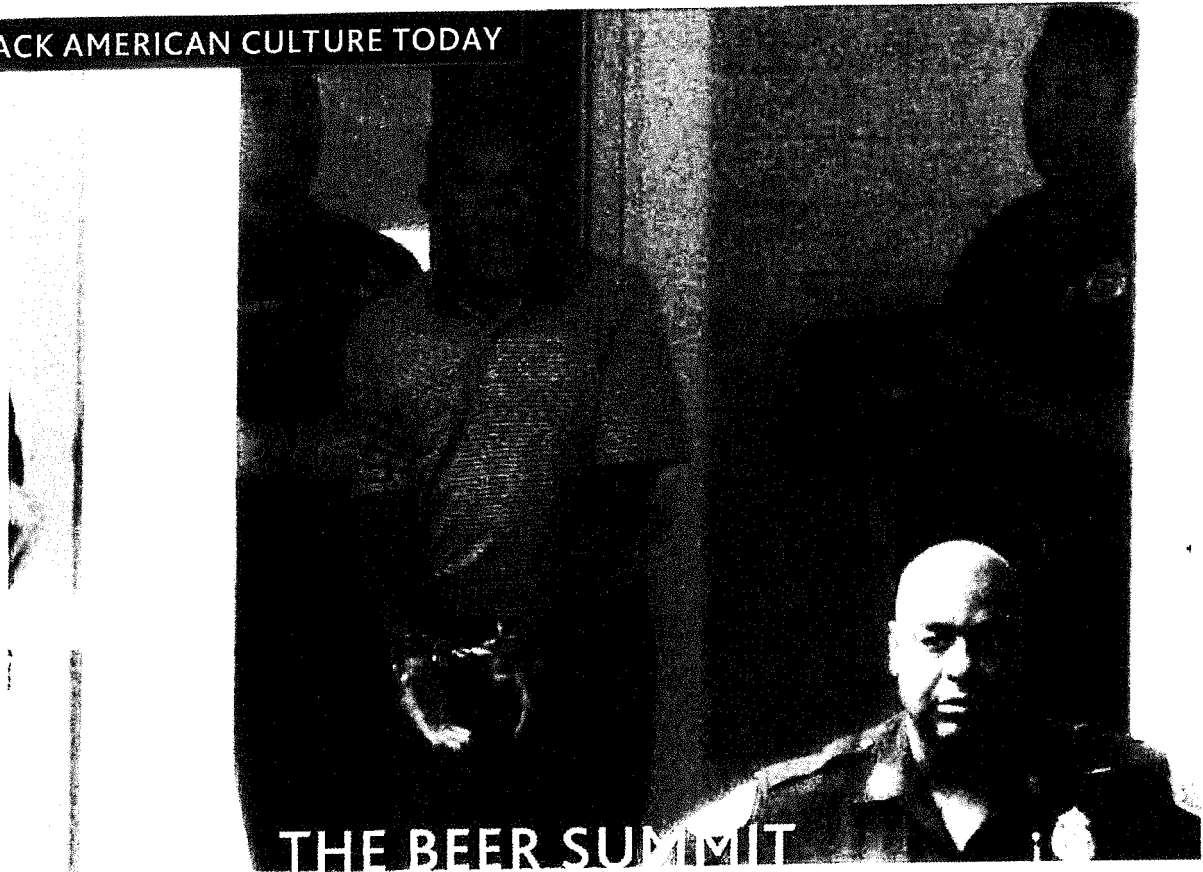


Michael Jackson.

Many black people would say that Martin Luther King's dream has not yet come true. Blacks, or African-Americans, make up America's largest minority. 30 million Americans trace their ancestry to Africa. Blacks have been part of America's history since the 17th century, but even today, blacks are not completely accepted by everyone in American society. However, things seem to be getting better.

In the 1960s, less than 5% of all blacks belonged to the middleclass. Nowadays, 40% are middleclass. Blacks are active in all aspects of American society from the sciences to politics. In 1967, Thurgood Marshall became the first black on the Supreme Court, and Toni Morrison received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1993. But 33% of all blacks are still poor. Many of them live in ghettos. Blacks feel frustrated that progress has taken so long. This frustration was seen in Los Angeles in 1992 when violent riots resulted in the deaths of 53 people and over \$1 billion in wrecked property because a Los Angeles court would not convict four white police officers that had beaten a black man, Rodney King.

Nevertheless, black culture is an important part of US culture. Music, entertainment and sports are important areas where blacks have had great success and have gained acceptance in American society. Black movie stars like Whoopi Goldberg, Eddie Murphy, Bill Cosby, Denzel Washington, and filmmaker Spike Lee are world famous. Jazz started out as a mixture of African rhythms and American and European music. Rap music and hip-hop culture show how dynamic even ghetto life and culture can be. Tina Turner is famous as a rhythm and blues singer. Michael Jackson's album *Thriller* has sold more than 50 million copies - a world record.



THE ARREST

Lucia Whalen, 40, works for Harvard Magazine in Cambridge, Massachusetts. On July 16, 2009 she calls the police on 911 and says that she has seen “two men with backpacks on the porch” of a smart 2-story house in Ware Street and one of them is “wedging his shoulder into the door as if he is trying to force entry.” She is not sure whether the men live there or not. She says one of the men may be Hispanic.

Sgt. James Crowley, 42, a white police officer, responds to the call. When he arrives, he finds a black man inside the house. The man claims he lives there and that the front door is jammed. He refuses to come outside and identify himself. “Why?” he asks Sgt. Crowley, “Because I’m a black man in America?”

Sgt. Crowley enters the house and demands proof of identification. The black man is very angry. He says he is Professor Henry Gates, and he hands the officer a Harvard University photo ID card and a driver’s license to prove it. He shouts at Sgt. Crowley, calls him a “rogue policeman” and accuses him of racial discrimination. He asks for his name and badge number, but instead, Sgt. Crowley arrests the man for ‘disorderly conduct’. He is handcuffed, taken to the

local police station, fingerprinted and photographed. He is released later that day on \$40 bail, and the court appearance is set for August 26.

HENRY GATES

Professor Henry Gates is in fact who he said he was! He is the most famous black professor in America. He has taught at Harvard University since 1991. In 1997 Time Magazine named him one of the 25 most influential Americans. In 2006 and 2008 he hosted two major TV series on PBS, African American Lives, in which he traced the family origins of among others Oprah Winfrey, Morgan Freeman and Tina Turner.

Some of Gates’s African American colleagues say his arrest is part of a pattern of racial discrimination in Cambridge. One of them, Allen Counter, has had a similar experience with Harvard police officers and says, “We do not believe that this arrest would have happened if Professor Gates was white.”

THE AFTERMATH

The County District Attorney’s office agrees to drop the case and calls the arrest “regrettable and unfortunate.” But through the Washington Post Gates asks for a direct apology from Sgt.

Crowley: "He should look into his soul and he should apologize to me. If so, I will be prepared to forgive him. There are one million black men in jail in this country, and last Thursday I was one of them."

Sgt. Crowley, on the other hand, teaches a course on racial profiling to police academy students! He tells Boston radio station WBZ-AM:

"I acted appropriately. I've done nothing wrong."

At a press conference President Obama takes sides. He says that the Cambridge Police Department "acted stupidly". But the police department rejects the criticism and says the officer was only doing his duty. Sgt. Crowley adds that while he supports the president, Obama is "way off base wading into a local issue without knowing all the facts."

President Obama then acknowledges that his language was inappropriate. Moreover, in a national survey of 1,506 adults conducted by

STATISTICS

1. 12% of Americans classify themselves as black
2. Black men are nearly 7 times more likely to be imprisoned than white men
3. Black men 15-24 years old are 9 times more likely to be shot dead than white men
4. Unemployment rate among blacks is 15.5%, among whites it is 7.6% (Jan 2012)
5. 57% of blacks gain a high school diploma as against 78% whites (2011)
6. 25.4% of blacks have a university degree, as against 37.6% whites (2011).
7. Blacks with a college degree earn 90% of whites' income with a similar degree
8. Blacks earn 22% less than whites in general
9. Black men are eight times more likely to suffer from AIDS than white men
10. Blacks have 51% more cases of obesity than whites

the Pew Research Center, no fewer than 41% agreed with Obama's handling of the Gates arrest, compared with 29% who disagreed. Among whites in general, more disapprove than approve of Obama's comments by a 2-1 margin.

THE BEER SUMMIT

To try to bring the matter to an end Obama invites Prof. Gates, Sgt. Crowley and Vice-President Joe Biden to the White House Rose Garden on July 30 for a beer and a chat that lasts 40 minutes. The press calls this meeting: the 'Beer Summit'.

After the meeting Obama says "I have always believed that what brings us together is stronger than what pulls us apart. I am confident that has

1. THINK-PAIR-SHARE® - IN PAIRS/GROUPS

- A. Why does Sgt. James Crowley ask Henry Gates to come outside and identify himself?
- B. Why does Gates accuse Sgt. Crowley of racial discrimination?
- C. Do you think Gates would have been arrested if he was white?
- D. Will the Beer Summit make a difference?

2. MAKE PICTURE TEXTS

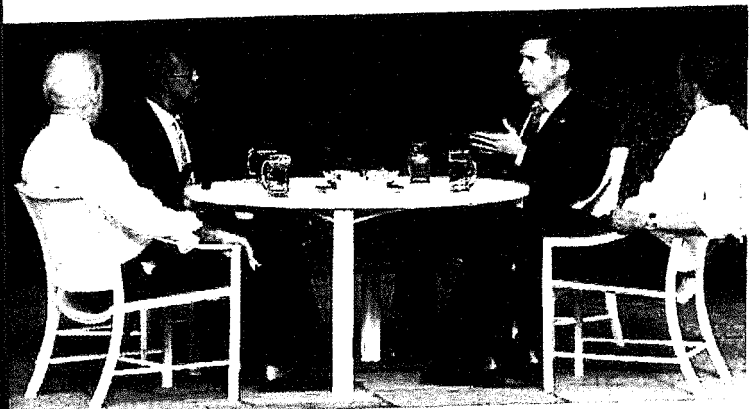
Write texts for the two photos that capture their atmosphere.

3. DRAMATIZE - IN GROUPS

Dramatize the Beer Summit and act it out for the rest of the class.

4. DISCUSS IN CLASS

You might be surprised by the statistics in the black box above and wonder why the situation for the black population is less favorable. Discuss in class why this is so.



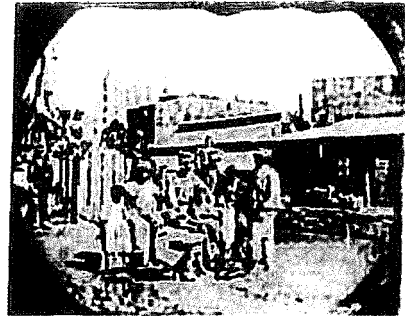
happened here tonight, and I am hopeful that all of us are able to draw this positive lesson from this episode. This is not a university seminar. It's an opportunity to have some personal interaction when an issue has become so hyped and so symbolic that you lose sight of just the fact that these are people involved, including myself – all of whom are imperfect."

Jim Crow

Name: _____

Slavery is over, now what?

In the years right after the Civil War, freedmen (former slaves) were able to vote and participate in government, thanks to the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments and the Civil Rights Acts. Sadly, some people did not understand that freedmen deserved equal rights and opportunities. The federal government had been protecting these rights, but in 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes became president and ended Reconstruction. All of a sudden, there was no one to enforce the new laws and amendments and no authority to punish those who treated blacks unfairly. From then on, people worked to *undermine* efforts at equality, and states passed laws that greatly restricted the rights and freedoms of blacks living in the South (and the North!).



Group of freedmen in Richmond, VA 1865

Making Adjustments

The end of slavery meant major social changes for all because slavery had kept black and white societies apart for so long. Once freed, former slaves acted quickly to create their own communities with new churches and schools. Some stayed in the South, while others migrated to the North hoping to find better living conditions and work.

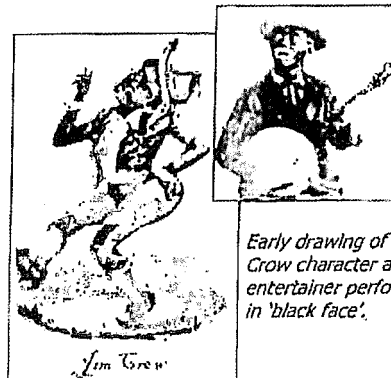
By the 1870s, most southern states adopted laws known as *Black Codes*, creating a legal form of segregation. *Segregation* is when people are separated by race. These codes limited the rights and freedoms of black people. Northern states varied in the way they accepted the new arrivals, but segregation was common all over the nation.



Examples of segregation

So, who is Jim Crow?

Before the iPod, before television, movies and radio, people went to the theater for entertainment. Daddy Rice, a white actor, would cover his face with charcoal and then sing and dance in a silly way. This character's name was Jim Crow. Just like we compare people to characters on TV, people began to use Jim Crow as a way to describe black people. (It wasn't a compliment.) For example, there were 'Jim Crow' cars on trains where all blacks were forced to sit, even if they bought a first-class ticket! As time went on, the term was also used to describe any racist law that restricted the rights and opportunities of black people.



Early drawing of the Jim Crow character and an entertainer performing in 'black face'.

You Say I Can't Do What?!

Jim Crow laws were found all over the South and even in many Northern states. It would have been very difficult to walk around any large town or city and *not* see a sign dividing whites and blacks. The segregation of public accommodations was only one way that Jim Crow laws controlled people's behavior. There were limits on whom people could marry, adopt, or where they could attend school. There was even one law limiting who could cut your hair! The laws don't make any sense today, but it was a fact of life for the millions of people living in America between the 1860s and the 1960s.

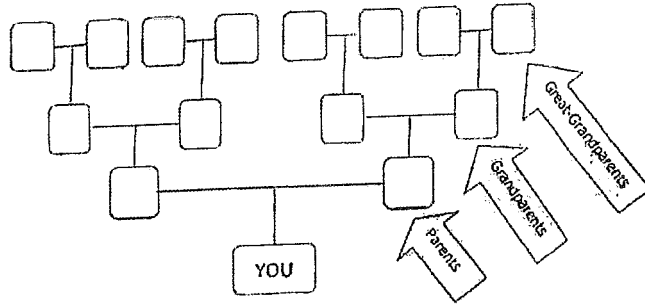


Jim Crow

Name: _____

Who is Black?

All of the Jim Crow laws were based on the difference between whites and blacks. But what does that mean? Most states decided that you were considered black if you had only one great grandparent who was black (1/8 African heritage). If there was doubt, a person would have to prove that they could go back three generations without any African heritage.



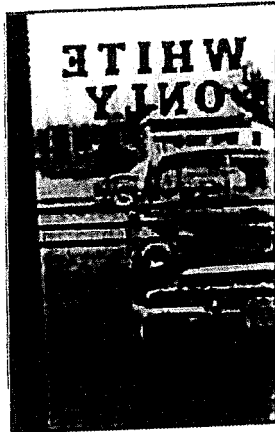
Jim Crow Laws

Education: Public schools were provided for black children, but they were not as nice as the schools provided for white children. Most lacked books, supplies and other resources. One law said that blacks and whites could not use the same textbooks, and another required bus drivers to be the same race as the children they drove around!

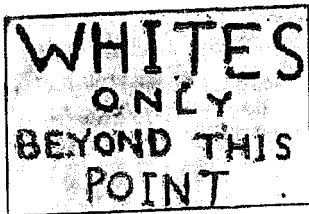
Marriage and Family: *Miscegenation* is a word that means the mixing of races. Both Northern and Southern states had a variety of laws that banned marriages and relationships between blacks and whites. There were also laws that either banned *interracial* (more than one race) adoptions or required the race of the baby and adopting parents to be written on the legal documents.

Public Accommodation:

Accommodation means a place where people spend time. This can mean anything from a restaurant to a prison to a hotel. Many of the Jim Crow laws were written to keep the races separate, and public spaces were the most visible area for interaction. Restaurants could not serve blacks and whites in the same dining room. Circuses and theaters had to provide two separate ticket booths, entrances, and seating areas. Missouri, Texas, and other states called for separate libraries for blacks and whites. 'White Only' signs were seen on bathroom doors, drinking fountains, public pools, waiting rooms and businesses all over the South and in some areas of the North.



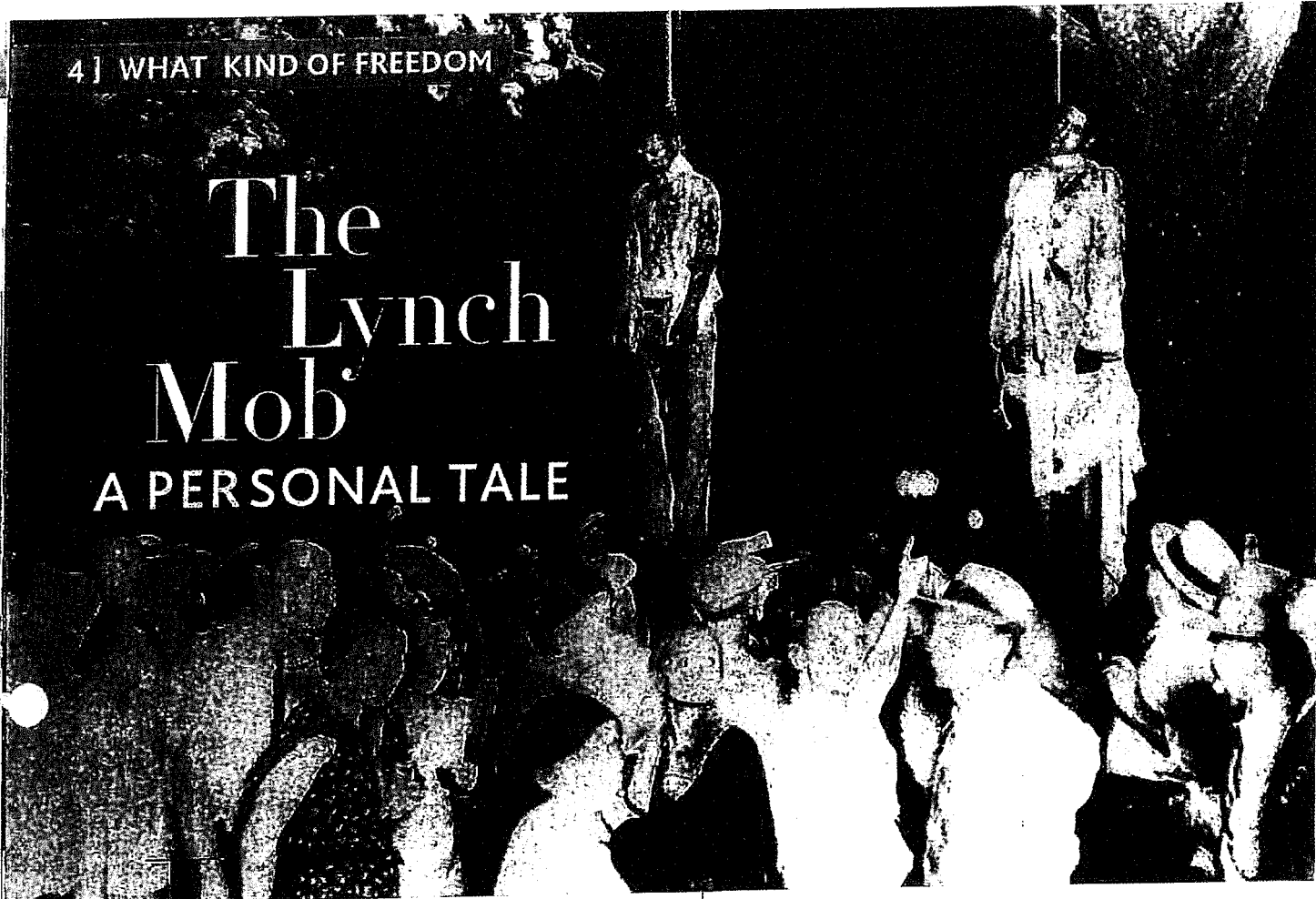
Voting Rights: We already know that freedmen were given the right to vote under the 15th Amendment in 1870. Between 1871 and 1889, almost all Southern states passed laws that restricted African Americans' right to vote. In Georgia and South Carolina black voting was cut in half between 1880 and 1888! Even when blacks did vote, many of their ballots were stolen or not even counted. These restrictive laws continued into the 1960s until President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act in 1965.



Transportation: Blacks were required to sit in the back of public buses and train cars, or in a separate car altogether. The famous Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson* established that it was okay to create 'separate but equal' public settings. This 1896 case set the stage for numerous state and local laws requiring blacks and whites to stay segregated in society.

The Lynch Mob

A PERSONAL TALE



James Cameron tells how he was saved from the lynch mob. His two friends Tom and Abram were not.

ABC News reported this story on February 23, 2005.

JAMES CAMERON was a 16-year-old shoeshine boy in Marion, Indiana, when on August 6, 1930 an incident – and what he claims was divine intervention – changed his life forever. Cameron accepted a ride home that night in a 1926 Ford Roadster from his 18-year-old classmate, Tom Shipp. Another teen, 19-year-old Abram Smith, also was in the car. By the end of the next night, Shipp and Smith would be dead – beaten and then lynched by an angry mob. But Cameron escaped.

The three teenagers, all of whom were black, drove along the river. At some point, they came across a car and a white man named Claude Deeter, as well as an 18-year-old white woman named Mary Ball. Cameron said one of the other teenagers ordered him to rob the couple at gunpoint.

“I opened the door and I said, ‘Stick them up,’ and this white fellow gets out of the car, and he didn’t recognize me because I had my hat pulled down,” he recalled. “And I noticed him just like that. He was my friend, a real nice white fellow. I was his shoeshine boy.

And his girlfriend got out of the car. Her face was so pale and lovely and frightened, and that scared me. So I took the gun, give it to one of my confederates. I said, ‘Here, I’m not going to have anything to do with you guys.’

And I left that scene of the crime. I had gone about two or three blocks when I heard some shots ring out – bang, bang, bang. Well, I was foolish for being out there, but I sure in hell wasn’t going to go back to see who was shooting who.”

SENT TO JAIL

The three teens were arrested late that night and taken to the county jail, where they were held throughout the next day. By dusk, a rowdy crowd was gathering outside the jail, but the sheriff ordered his deputies not to use their weapons because women and children were in the crowd.

“I was still sore from the beating the police

had given me," Cameron said. "Somebody came back and shook me and said, 'Wake up! Wake up! They're breaking the windows! They're trying to break into the jail!' And I got up and ran around the bullpen and looked out the window. From my second-floor perch, I could see the crowd below, and sure enough they were hollering, 'Turn them damn niggers over to us! We know how to treat them! We're going to hang every damn one of them!'"

The crowd grew to thousands of people, and spun off several dozen people who became a lynch mob. They broke into the jail through several steel doors and bars. Then they removed the prisoners one by one: first Shipp, who was taken to the courthouse square and hanged from the bars of one of the jailhouse windows; then Smith, who was lynched by a rope thrown over the branch of a maple tree.

Cameron said the mob came for him next. "They were beating me and tearing me apart ... clubs, fists, spitting on me, kicking me, cussing me out, calling me all kinds of names," he said. "It was awful.

When they got me down to street level, the uniformed police was helping the mobster members, who had their robes and open-face hoods on. They were helping ... to clear a path from the jail up to the courthouse square, which was just a half a block away. And one young lady was standing on the hood of an automobile that was parked on the jail lawn, and she was jumping up and down saying, 'Kill all the niggers! Kill all the niggers! Kill all the niggers!'"

A VOICE FROM HEAVEN

Cameron continues: "And they beat me up to the tree where Tommy and Abe was hanging, and they put the rope around my neck, and they pushed me up under, and they was getting ready to hang me when I prayed to God. Now, when I said, 'Lord, have mercy and forgive me of my sins,' a voice from heaven came down like an echo and said, 'Take this boy back. He had nothing to do with any killing or raping.'

When things came back to normal, they took that rope off my neck, and they allowed me to stumble and stagger back to the jail."

Strange Fruit

Pictures of the the lynchings went round the world, and led Lewis Allan to write a song, *Strange Fruit*, which became famous when it was recorded by Billie Holiday in 1939.

1. Southern trees bear strange fruit
 Blood on the leaves, blood at the root
 Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
 Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

2. Pastoral scene of the gallant south
 The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
 The scent of magnolia sweet and fresh
 Then the sudden smell of burning flesh

3. Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck
 for the rain to gather, for the wind to suck
 for the sun to rot, for the tree to drop
 Here is a strange and bitter crop



1. SUMMARY - IN PAIRS

Give a summary of the text 'The Lynch Mob - A Personal Tale' to your partner.

2. WRITE A LETTER

Write a text of 150 words.

Choose either A) or B):

- A) Imagine you are in the lynch mob. Write a letter to the sheriff in defence of your actions.
- B) Imagine you are a curious eye-witness to the lynching. Write a letter telling the sheriff what you saw.

3. CONTRASTS - IN PAIRS

There are many contrasts in the song *Strange Fruit* - list the contrasts and discuss why they are used. Example:

"The scent of magnolia sweet and fresh,
 Then the sudden smell of burning flesh".

The Death of Emmett Till Lyrics

Performed by Bob Dylan

'Twas down in Mississippi not so long ago,
When a young boy from Chicago walked through a
Southern door.
This boy's fateful tragedy you should all remember well,
The color of his skin was black and his name was Emmett Till.

Some men they dragged him to a barn and there they beat him up.
They said they had a reason, but I disremember what.
They tortured him and did some things too evil to
repeat.
There was screaming sounds inside the barn, there was
laughing sounds out on the street.

Then they rolled his body down a gulf amidst a blood-red rain
And they threw him in the waters wide to cease his
screaming pain.
The reason that they killed him there, and I'm sure it
was no lie,
Was just for the fun of killin' him and to watch him slowly die. ('cause he was born a black skinned boy, he was
born to die)
And then to stop the United States of yelling for a trial,
Two brothers they confessed that they had killed poor
Emmett Till.
But on the jury there were men who helped the brothers
commit this awful crime,
And so this trial was a mockery, but nobody seemed to mind.

I saw the morning papers but I could not bear to see
The smiling brothers walkin' down the courthouse stairs.
For the jury found them innocent and the brothers they went free,
While Emmett's body floats the foam of a Jim Crow southern sea.

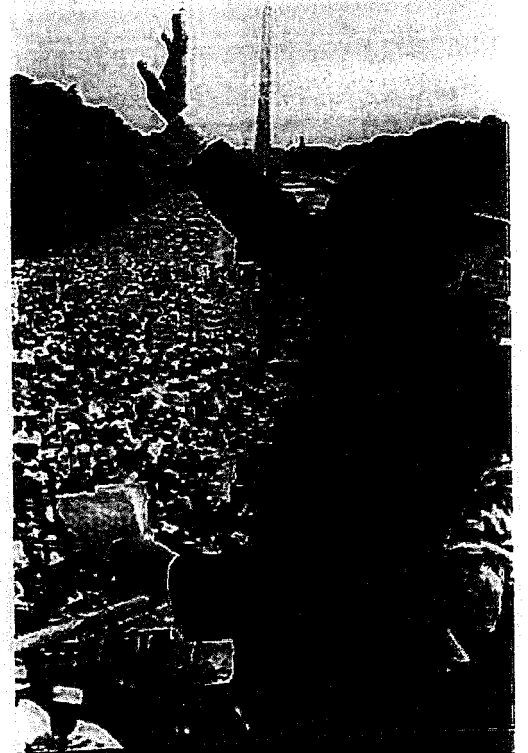
If you can't speak out against this kind of thing, a crime
that's so unjust,
Your eyes are filled with dead men's dirt, your mind is
filled with dust.
Your arms and legs they must be in shackles and chains, and
your blood it must refuse to flow,
For you let this human race fall down so God-awful low!

This song is just a reminder to remind your fellow man
That this kind of thing still lives today in that
ghost-robed Ku Klux Klan.
But if all us folks that thinks alike, if we gave all we
could give,
We could make this great land of ours a greater place to live

5] THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

And so let freedom ring from the
prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.
Let freedom ring from the
mighty mountains of New York.
Let freedom ring from the
heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.
Let freedom ring from the
snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.
Let freedom ring from the
curvaceous slopes of California.
But not only that:
Let freedom ring from
Stone Mountain of Georgia.
Let freedom ring from
Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.
Let freedom ring from
every hill and molehill of Mississippi.
From every mountainside, let freedom ring.
And when this happens, when we allow
freedom to ring, when we let it ring from
every village and every hamlet, from every
state and every city, we will be able to speed
up that day 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
in the words of the old Negro spiritual:
Free at last! Free at last!
Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

Martin Luther King,
end of 'I have a dream' speech, August 28, 1963



1. WHERE IS IT?

Find all the places mentioned by MLK on a map.

Discuss which parts of America MLK refer to and why he chose them. Use worksheet 3.

2. WATCH THE SPEECH

Read the whole speech on worksheet 4 and listen to it on the Focus on-website.

3. INSIDE-OUTSIDE CIRCLED

- A. The speech I have a dream is called a masterpiece - why?
- B. What is the most important message in the speech?

4. THINK-PAIR-SHARE

- A. Why does the incident with Rosa Parks start the civil rights movement?
- B. Why, because of the freedom rides do whites start fighting other whites?



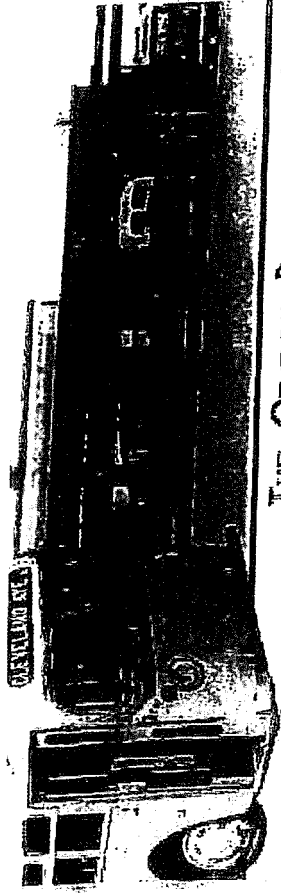
Rosa Parks and the Bus Boycott

THE MODERN CIVIL RIGHTS movement began on December 1, 1955. On that day in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks (1913-2005) refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger. These were the rules:

- Whites sit at the front, blacks sit at the back
- If the bus is full, the blacks stand, not the whites
- If a white gets on a full bus, a whole row of blacks must get up and stand, so a new row for whites can be made

Rosa Parks was arrested and had to pay a fine. The pastor at the local Baptist church was Martin Luther King (1929-1968). He called for a bus boycott and for a whole year blacks and some whites boycotted the buses. Finally, the Supreme Court overturned the fine and the buses were desegregated.

ROSA
PARKS
BUS



THE STORY BEHIND THE BUS

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a 42-year-old African American woman who worked as a seamstress, boarded this Montgomery City bus to go home from work. On this bus on that day, Rosa Parks initiated a new era in the American quest for freedom and equality.

She sat near the middle of the bus, just behind the 10 seats reserved for whites. Soon all of the seats in the bus were filled. When a white man entered the bus, the driver (following the standard practice of segregation) insisted that all four blacks sitting just behind the white section give up their seats so that the man could sit there. Mrs. Parks, who was an active member of the local NAACP, quietly refused to give up her seat.

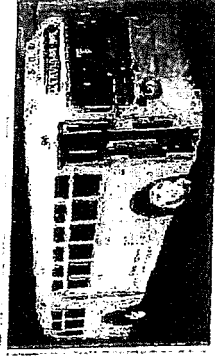
Her action was spontaneous and not pre-meditated, although her previous civil rights involvement and strong sense of justice were obvious influences. "When I made that decision," she said later, "I knew that I had the strength of my ancestors with me."

*National Assoc for the Advancement
of Coloured People*

She was arrested and convicted of violating the laws of segregation, ^{saving} known as "Jim Crow laws." Mrs. Parks appealed her conviction and thus formally challenged the legality of segregation.

At the same time, local civil rights activists initiated a boycott of the Montgomery bus system. In cities across the South, segregated bus companies were daily reminders of the inequities of American society. Since African Americans made up about 75 percent of the riders in Montgomery, the boycott posed a serious economic threat to the company and a social threat to white rule in the city.

A group named the Montgomery Improvement Association, composed of local activists and ministers organized the boycott. As their leader, they chose a young Baptist minister who was new to Montgomery: Martin Luther King, Jr. Sparked by Mrs. Parks' action, the boycott lasted 381 days, into December 1956 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the



The Rosa Parks bus in Henry Ford Museum before restoration.
Photo ID: 6876

Segregation laws were unconstitutional and the Montgomery buses were integrated. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the beginning of a revolutionary era of non-violent mass protests in support of civil rights in the United States.

It was not just an accident that the civil rights movement began on a city bus. In a famous 1896 case involving a black man on a train, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the U.S. Supreme Court enunciated the "separate but equal" rationale for Jim Crow. Of course, facilities and treatment were never equal.

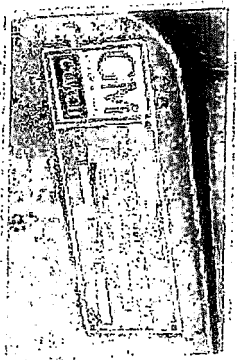
Under Jim Crow customs and laws, it was relatively easy to separate the races in every area of life except transportation. Bus and train companies couldn't afford separate cars and so blacks and whites had to occupy the same space.

Thus, transportation was one the most volatile arenas for race relations in the South. Mrs. Parks remembers going to elementary school in Pine Level, Alabama, where buses took white kids to the new school but black kids had to walk to their school.

"I'd see the bus pass every day," she said. "But to me, that was a way of life; we had no choice but to accept what was the custom. The bus was among the first ways I realized there was a black world and a white world" (emphasis added).

Montgomery's Jim Crow customs were particularly harsh and gave bus drivers great latitude in making decisions on where people could sit. The law even gave bus drivers the authority to carry guns to enforce their edicts. Mrs. Parks' attorney, Fred Gray remembered, "Virtually every African-American person in Montgomery had some negative experience with the buses. But we had no choice. We had to use the buses for transportation."

Civil rights advocates had outlawed Jim Crow in interstate train travel, and blacks in several Southern cities attacked the practice of segregated bus systems. There had been a bus boycott in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1953, but black leaders compromised before making real gains. Joann Robinson, a black university professor and activist in Montgomery, had suggested the idea of a bus boycott months before the Parks arrest.



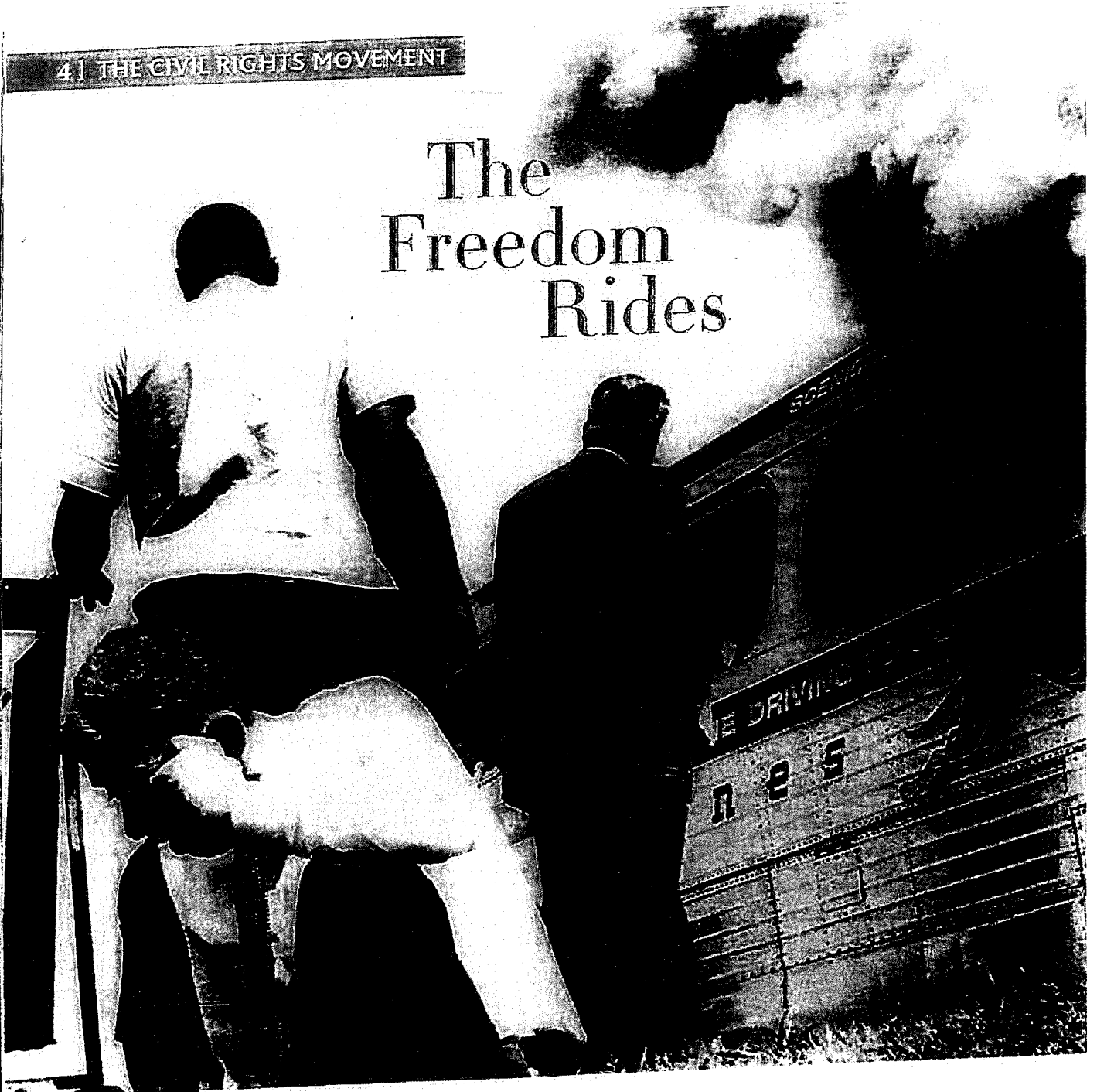
See the bus specifications

Two other women had been arrested on buses in Montgomery before Parks and were considered by black leaders as potential clients for challenging the law. However, both were rejected because black leaders felt they would not gain white support. When she heard that the well-respected Rosa Parks had been arrested, one Montgomery African American woman exclaimed, "They've messed with the wrong one now."

In the South, city buses were lightning rods for civil rights activists. It took someone with the courage and character of Rosa Parks to strike with lightning. And it required the commitment of the entire African American community to fan the flames ignited by that lightning into the fires of the civil rights revolution.

too slow

The Freedom Rides



In 1961 John F. Kennedy became President and his brother Robert became Attorney General (Minister of Justice). Both of them supported racial integration and black civil rights. More and more white people were now fighting alongside the blacks to end segregation. One famous action was the series of 'Freedom Rides' starting in 1961. The Freedom Riders, both whites and blacks, boarded two buses in Washington DC on May 4. Their plan was to drive south through racist areas and arrive in New Orleans by May 17. On May 14 in Aniston a white mob fire-bombed the lead bus and blocked the exits. 12 riders were hospitalized and the bus was destroyed.



Here's what two of the Freedom Riders said after the incident:

UNNAMED BLACK: "Jim Zwerg was a white fellow from Madison, Wisconsin. He had a lot of nerve! I think that's what saved me, Bernard Lafayette and Alan Cayson, 'cos Jim Zwerg walked off the bus in front of us. And they were so ... it was like they were possessed ... they couldn't believe that there was a white man that would help us. And they grabbed him and pulled him into the mob. I mean, it was a mob."

1. ACROSTIC POEM

An acrostic poem uses the letters in the word to begin each line. Write an acrostic poem with the word **FREE** or **FREEDOM**.

Example:

Future

Respect

Education

Effort

Decorate the classroom with the poems.

2. RECRUITMENT AD

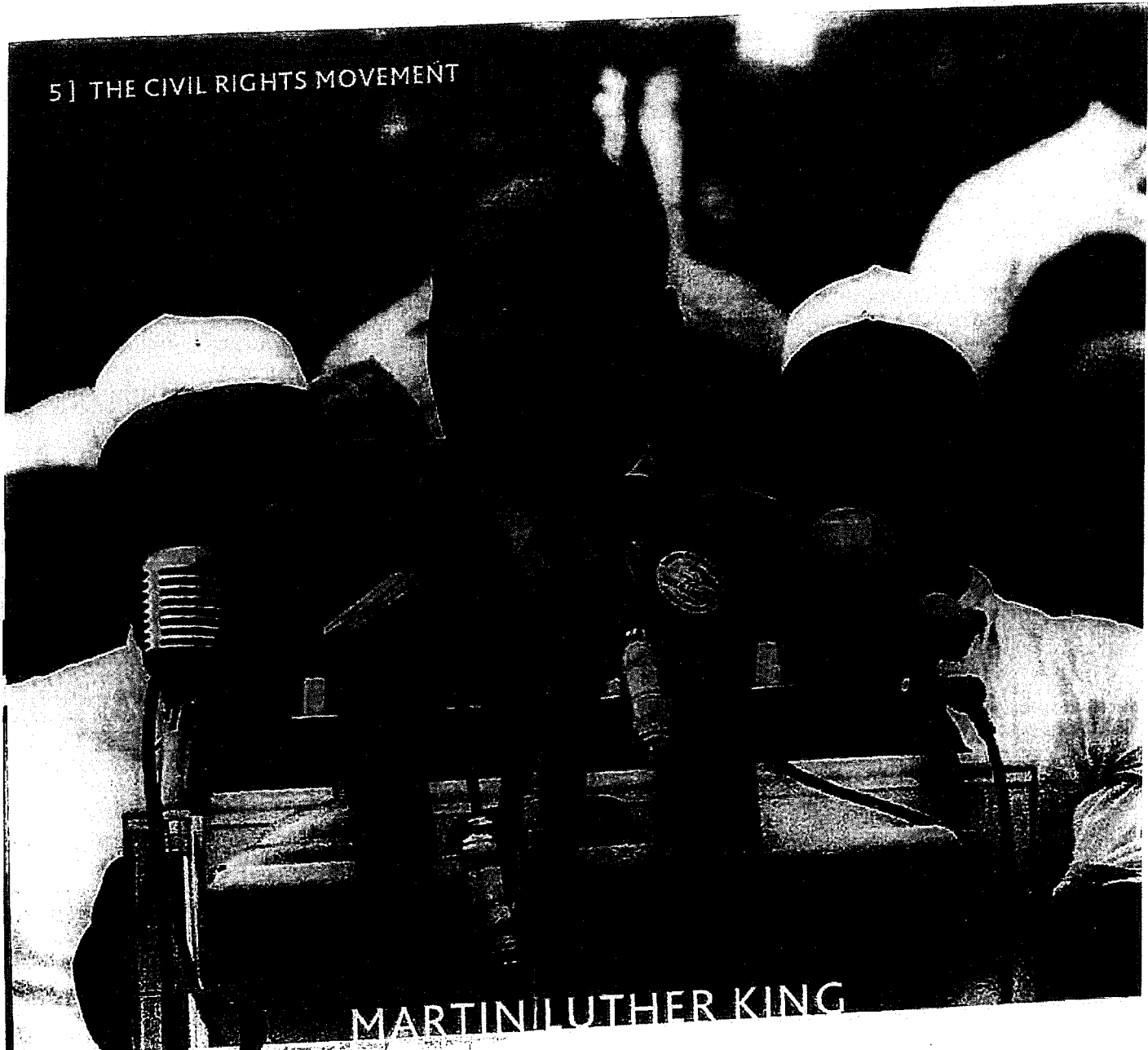
Make an ad trying to recruit people for the freedom rides. You can make a poster or a short video.

3. INSIDE-OUTSIDE CIRCLE

What makes a hero?

Is there a cause you believe is worth fighting for?

JIM ZWERG (from his hospital bed): "Segregation must be stopped. It must be broken down. Those of us who are on the Freedom Ride, we will continue the Freedom Ride. I'm not sure that I'll be able to, but we're going on to New Orleans no matter what happens. We're dedicated to this. We'll take hitting, we'll take beating. We're willing to accept death. But we're going to keep coming until we can ride from anywhere in the South to any place else in the South without anybody making any comments. - just as American citizens."



MARTIN LUTHER KING

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-68) became the leader of the Civil Rights movement. He was often arrested and his home attacked, but he followed the Christian idea to 'turn the other cheek' and not to use violence.

BETWEEN 1957 AND 1968 he traveled over 10 million km and made over 2,500 speeches as well as writing 5 books. His greatest success was the peaceful March for Jobs and Freedom in 1963 in Washington, D.C., where 250,000 people heard him declare "I have a dream".

In 1964 King, aged only 35, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. He gave the prize money to the civil rights movement. Because he was a Christian clergyman, he used the Christian

message of non-violence as part of his strategy. He said, for example:

"We don't have to argue with anybody. We don't have to curse and go around acting bad with our words. We don't need any bricks and bottles. We don't need any Molotov cocktails. We just need to go around to these stores, and to these massive industries in our country, and say, "God sent us by here, to say to you that you're not treating His children right. And we've

come by here to ask you to make the first item on your agenda 'fair treatment', where God's children are concerned. Now, if you are not prepared to do that, we do have an agenda that we must follow. And our agenda calls for withdrawing economic support from you."

THE LAST SPEECH

The night before he was murdered, Martin Luther King gave a speech about his readiness for death. For he had already been close to being killed before:

"You know, several years ago, I was in New York City autographing the first book that I had written. And while sitting there autographing books, a demented black woman came up. The only question I heard from her was, "Are you Martin Luther King?" And I was looking down writing, and I said, "Yes." And the next minute I felt something beating on my chest. Before I knew it I had been stabbed by this demented woman. I was rushed to Harlem Hospital. It was a dark Saturday afternoon. And that blade had gone through, and the X-rays revealed that the tip of the blade was on the edge of my aorta, the main artery. And once that's punctured, you're drowned in your own blood - that's the end of you.

It came out in the New York Times the next morning, that if I had merely sneezed, I would have died. Well, about four days later, they allowed me, after the operation, after my chest had been opened, and the blade had been taken out, to move around in the wheelchair in the hospital. They allowed me to read some of the mail that came in, and from all over the states and the world, kind letters came in. I read a few, but one of them I will never forget. I had received one from the President and the Vice-President. I've forgotten what those telegrams said. I'd received a visit and a letter from the Governor of New York, but I've forgotten what that letter said. But there was another letter that came from a little girl, a young girl who was a student at the White Plains High School. And I looked at that letter, and I'll never forget it. It said simply, "Dear Dr. King, I am a ninth-grade student at the White Plains High School." And

she said, "While it should not matter, I would like to mention that I'm a white girl. I read in the paper of your misfortune, and of your suffering. And I read that if you had sneezed, you would have died. And I'm simply writing you to say that I'm so happy that you didn't sneeze."

And I want to say tonight - I want to say tonight that I too am happy that I didn't sneeze. Because if I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been around here in 1960, when students all over the South started sitting-in at lunch counters. And I knew that as they were sitting in, they were really standing up for the best in the American dream, and taking the whole nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug



March for Jobs and Freedom, 1963.

deep by the Founding Fathers in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been around here in 1961, when we decided to take a ride for freedom and ended segregation in inter-state travel.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been around here in 1962, when Negroes in Albany, Georgia, decided to straighten their backs up. And whenever men and women straighten their backs up,

5. THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

they are going somewhere, because a man can't ride your back unless it is bent.

If I had sneezed -- If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been here in 1963, when the black people of Birmingham, Alabama, aroused the conscience of this nation, and brought into being the Civil Rights Bill.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have had a chance later that year, in August, to try to tell America

1. LISTEN

Listen to MLK's last speech on the Focus on-website.

2. TIMELINE - IN PAIRS

List all the historic incidents MLK would have missed if he had sneezed.

3. WRITE A SPEECH

Choose one of these messages:

- Democracy is worth fighting for
- Equal rights for all people
- Stop racism.

4. EQUAL RIGHTS? - IN GROUPS

Mention some places in the world where all people do not have the same rights.

about a dream that I had had.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been down in Selma, Alabama, to see the great Movement there.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been in Memphis to see a community rally around those brothers and sisters who are suffering.

I'm so happy that I didn't sneeze.

And they were telling me: Now, it doesn't matter, now. It really doesn't matter what happens now. I left Atlanta this morning, and as we got started on the plane, there were six of us. The pilot said over the public address system, "We are sorry for the delay, but we have Dr. Martin Luther King on the plane. And to be sure that all of the bags were checked, and to be sure that nothing would be wrong with on the plane, we had to check out everything carefully. And we've had the plane protected

and guarded all night."

And then I got into Memphis. And some began to say the threats, or talk about the threats that were out. What would happen to me from some of our sick white brothers?

Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountain top. And I don't mind.

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land! And so I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man! Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!!²³

The following evening, on April 4, 1968 Martin Luther King was shot dead in Memphis, Tennessee by James Earl Ray, a white man. Since 1983 the third Monday in January is celebrated in the USA as Martin Luther King Day.



Chicago, April 5, 1968: A man wears a placard proclaiming the death of MLK as he watches the violence and looting that flared after the murder.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Martin Luther King, Jr., was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 15, 1929. He was the oldest son of the Reverend and Mrs. Martin Luther King. He was named Michael Luther after his father, but later the Reverend King changed both their names to Martin Luther in honor of the great church leader.

Unhappily racial experiences made a deep and lasting impression on young Martin. One day his father took him to buy new shoes. When they sat down in the store, the clerk asked them to move to the back of the store. Dr. King took Martin by the hand and left the store rather than take that kind of treatment. Another time, the parents of boys Martin played with told him that they could no longer come out to play with him because they were white and he was black. Martin's feelings were hurt. His mother tried to explain about prejudice. She told him that blacks were no longer slaves, but they were not really free.

Martin liked sports. He played baseball, basketball and wrestling. But he especially liked reading. He liked reading about famous people in black history. He found out what it took for them to overcome difficulties and become successful. He liked to learn new words and use them.

He was fascinated by watching his father, Martin Luther King, Sr., Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, and other ministers control audiences with skillfully chosen words. He longed to follow in their footsteps.

He made words central to his life--weapons of defense and offense. His mother said that she could not recall a time when he was not intrigued by the sound and power of words. He once told her, "I'm going to get me some big words like that." . When he got to high school, his ability to use words enabled him to win an oratorical contest.

In September 1944, when he was only 15 years old, King entered Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. It was a black college, and his father and grandfather had gone there. He knew that his father would like him to become a minister, but at first Martin was not sure that was what he wanted to do. At first, he was undecided as to his course of study. However, his experiences at Morehouse shaped his direction for life. After meeting and talking with Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, the college president, and Professor George Kelsey, head of the religion department, he made up his mind. King was enormously impressed. He saw in Mays what he wanted "a real minister to be"--a rational man whose sermons were both spiritually and intellectually stimulating, a moral man who was socially involved. Thanks largely to Mays, King realized that the ministry could be a respectable force for ideas, even for social protest. And so at seventeen King elected to become a Baptist minister, like his father and grandfather. At eighteen he was ordained a minister. The next year he graduated from Morehouse College with a degree in sociology.

Martin was an excellent student and was the class valedictorian when he graduated in 1951 with a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Crozer. While at Crozer, King attended a lecture by Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson, who was the president of Howard University in Washington, DC. Dr. Johnson "explained how Gandhi had forged Soul Force--the power of love or

truth--into a mighty vehicle for social change." He "argued that the moral power of Gandhi-an nonviolence could improve race relations in America, too." King was mesmerized by Gandhi's concepts, and began reading profusely about his life and philosophy.

In 1951, King graduated from Crozer as valedictorian. He also received the Peral Plafkner Award for scholarship, \$1,200, and the Lewis Crozer Fellowship to continue his studies. While at Boston University, Martin met Coretta Scott. Coretta, a beautiful young lady from Marion, Alabama, a graduate of Antioch College in Ohio, was studying voice at the New England Conservatory of Music. She and Martin were married in June, 1953. His father performed the ceremony at her home in Alabama.

Coretta had grown up with segregation too. She shared Martin's dream of a time when everyone everywhere could enjoy equal rights. On June 5, 1955, when he had completed his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology, the couple decided that they could make the greatest contribution by going back down South to work. Martin was installed by his father as pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, in October of 1954. Just a little more that a year later, Yolanda, the first of the Kings' four children was born.

In December of 1955, Mrs. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus. Mrs. Parks was later tried in Montgomery City Court, charged with and found guilty of violating a state law mandating segregation. She was fined \$10. Her attorney appealed the conviction. Coincident with Mrs. Parks' trial a one-day boycott of the buses by many members of Montgomery's Black community, was planned. Dr. King was asked to help, as was his friend, the Reverend Ralph Abernathy. As a result of this, an organization was established, the "Montgomery Improvement Association," (MIA) to orchestrate a complete and ongoing response to Montgomery's segregation. Dr. King was chosen president. Blacks walked to work or took cars or taxis, but they did not ride the buses. The one-day boycott stretched out to 382 days. Finally, after more than a year of protest, on November 13, 1956, the United States Supreme Court ruled that segregation on buses was against the law.

Martin Luther King, Jr., knew that even though that battle against bus discrimination had been won in Montgomery, there was more that needed doing. As a result, on January 10-11, 1957, 60 Black leaders from 10 Southern states met at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and founded the Southern Conference on Transportation and Non-violent Integration. Its original agenda concerned "segregation in transportation facilities and voter registration."

In February 1957, the organization elected Dr. King as President and changed its name to the Southern Leadership Conference (SLC), organized to fight "Jim Crow" laws that discrimination against blacks. Offices for the new group were in Atlanta, and the Kings moved there. Martin became assistant pastor at his father's church, the Ebenezer Baptist Church. He spent much time traveling. He spoke all over the country, urging nonviolent ways of gaining civil rights. He and Mrs. King visited Europe and Africa. They went to India to study Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent ways of fighting for freedom.

King spoke of how a Pilgrimage would be an appeal to the nation, and the Congress, to pass a civil rights bill that would give the Justice Department the power to file law suits against discriminatory registration and voting practices anywhere in the South. On August 28, 1963, at least 250,000 people descended on Washington in the "largest single demonstration in movement history." Dr. King captured the day. Following the march, the organizers were invited to a reception at the White House, where President John F. Kennedy "was bubbling over the success of the event."

Perhaps the ultimate recognition of Dr. King's crusade to secure equal rights for all came on December 10, 1964, when, at age 35, he was the youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1966, he and his family moved to Chicago. People in the slums of big cities had problems that were as serious as the discrimination they faced in the South. King planned a Poor People's March on Washington, D.C. Shortly before the march, Dr. King went to Memphis, Tennessee, where garbage workers were on strike for better working conditions. He led marchers through the streets in support of the strike. Violence broke out, and a young man was killed.

On April 4, King stood on the balcony of his hotel in Memphis, talking with men who had been with him in his many civil rights efforts....

MARTIN LUTHER KING:

I HAVE A DREAM*August 28, 1963*

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But 100 years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

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

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens

4. WATCH THE SPEECH?

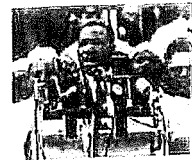
Read the whole speech below and listen to MLK on the Focus on-website.



of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.





It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end but a beginning. Those who hoped that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But that is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police

brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "for whites only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

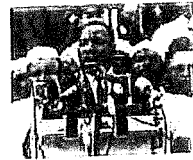
I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today my friend -- so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed:





"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

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

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a

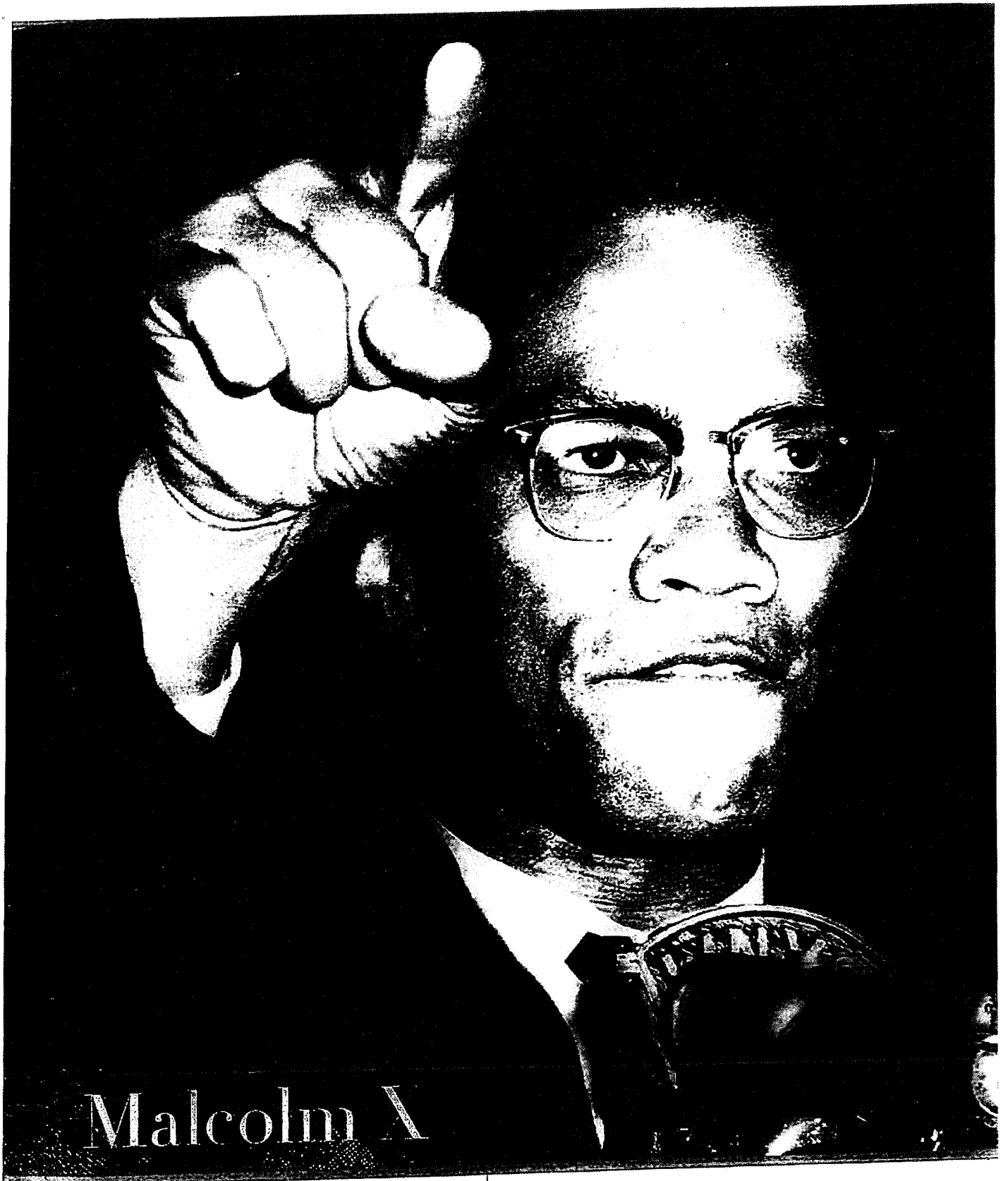
stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my father's died, land of the Pilgrim's pride from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi -- from every mountainside.

Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring -- when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day 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 in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"



Malcolm X

A POWERFUL CONTRAST to Martin Luther King's Civil Rights Movement was the Black Panther Party, a militant socialist organization that believed in 'Black Power'. Its program

demanded Land, Bread, Housing, Education, Clothing, Justice, and Peace and it spread throughout the black ghettos of the big cities.

Another call for black power came from the

5 | THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Muslim, Malcolm X, who was born Malcolm Little in 1925. His father, a Baptist minister, was murdered in 1929 by a splinter-group from the Ku Klux Klan. His mother tried to hold together the family of 8 children but she had a nervous breakdown and Malcolm was sent to a foster home. Growing up he got into so much trouble that he ended up doing 8 years for burglary.

In prison he studied hard and also joined the Black Muslim group, the Nation of Islam, led by Elijah Muhammad. On his release in 1952 Malcolm decided to fight for black self-respect with the motto: "You can't negotiate upon freedom, you either fight for it or shut up." In one of his speeches he said the following:

"We are Africans, and we happen to be in America. We are not Americans. We are a people who formerly were Africans who were kidnapped and brought to America. Our forefathers weren't the Pilgrims. We didn't land on Plymouth Rock; the rock was landed on us. We were brought here against our will; we were not brought here to be made citizens ... If you're interested in freedom, you need some judo, you need some karate - you need all the things that will help you fight for freedom ... You don't need a debate ... You need some action!"

THE BALLOT OR THE BULLET

Unlike Martin Luther King, who called for love and non-violence, Malcolm X demanded "to be respected as a human being, to be given the rights of a human being in this society, on this earth, in this day, which we intend to bring into existence by any means necessary." Later this was shortened to "the ballot or the bullet".

Such aggressive talk frightened not only all white people but also Martin Luther King, who was calling for love and non-violence as the only way for blacks to gain their rights and integrate fully into American society. Malcolm X rejected integration: "An integrated cup of coffee is insufficient pay for 400 years of slave labor." He called non-violence "the philosophy of a fool", and attacked Martin Luther King's speech, "I have a dream: "While King was having a dream, the rest of us Negroes are having a nightmare."

1. THINK-PAIR-SHARE

Explain why Malcolm X believed in fighting in contrast to MLK's non-violence.

Think of conflicts in your own country (political conflicts, gang related conflicts, etc). Give reasons for solving conflicts with or without violence.

2. VOCABULARY

List ten words that have to do with democracy.

Share them with three classmates. Explain why you chose them.

3. DISCUSS - IN GROUPS

Martin Luther King was shot dead, Malcolm X and John F. Kennedy too. Why do you think they were killed?



THE NEW MALCOLM X

After quarrelling with Elijah Muhammed, Malcolm left the Nation of Islam and visited countries in the Middle East, including the Muslim holy city of Mecca. He came home with a new message of integration of all races and a new-found acceptance of black and white living together:

“During the past eleven days here in the Muslim world, I have eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass, and slept in the same bed (or on the same rug) - while praying to the same God - with fellow Muslims, whose eyes were the bluest of blue, whose hair was the blondest of blond, and whose skin was the whitest of white. And in the words and in the actions and in the deeds of the ‘white’ Muslims, I felt the same sincerity that I felt among the black African Muslims of Nigeria, Sudan, and Ghana.

We were truly all the same (brothers) - because their belief in one God had removed the ‘white’ from their minds, the ‘white’ from their behavior, and the ‘white’ from their attitude.

I could see from this, that perhaps if white Americans could accept the Oneness of God, then perhaps, too, they could accept in reality the Oneness of Man - and cease to measure, and hinder, and harm others in terms of their ‘differences’ in color ...”

THE ASSASSINATION

Malcolm X had just begun to preach this new message in 1965 when he was shot dead by 3 members of the Nation of Islam who called him a traitor. Malcolm X's influence continues to this day, however. His speeches and style have been used in hip-hop culture, while Spike Lee's film featuring Denzel Washington as Malcolm X has been very influential.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X is a massive bestseller, and together with Martin Luther King he is read and studied in schools and universities - as well as on the street.

February 21, 1965: Malcolm X murdered by three members of the Nation of Islam.



UNITED STATES

RACE RELATIONS & GUN VIOLENCE

Ferguson



MP3 AUDIO TEXT

ON 9 August 2014, in the city of Ferguson, Missouri, Michael Brown, an 18-year-old African-American, was fatally shot in a confrontation with Darren Wilson, a 28-year-old white Ferguson police officer. At the time, Brown was together with a friend, Dorian Johnson. They had gone to a local store where Brown had stolen packets of cigarillos (small cigars). What happened after that is a matter of dispute. But the basic facts seem to be that policeman Darren Wilson had confronted the two young men about walking in the street and wanted them to move over to the pavement.

Whether they ignored him because they were almost home or made some provocative comment is not clear. However, Wilson then drove very aggressively towards them. An argument took place. After that policeman Wilson shot Michael Brown six times. He died about 50 metres from



(Photo: Janelle Bouie)

Police in Ferguson dressed in 'riot gear'. Darren Wilson, the police officer who shot Michael Brown, faced no criminal charges for his action. Wilson said that he was in fear of his life and has now resigned from the police department. However, there is still a heated debate about his actions. Although the police believed Wilson's story, Brown's family may seek to bring a civil action in court against him

Wilson's car, which suggests he was trying to get to his home.

Darren Wilson's actions on that day were the spark that caused rioting from the African-American communities both in Ferguson as well as nationwide. More importantly, his actions started a much needed debate on racial inequality

in the United States — an inequality that is still very much alive.

Michael Brown was obviously guilty of theft. Of that there is no doubt. And because he pushed the owner of the store it has been described as 'robbery with violence'. However, Darren Wilson's argument and confrontation with Brown appears to have

had nothing to do with the cigarillo robbery. The police officer appears to have lost control of the situation. And the fact that a young black man was shot six times while running away with no more than some stolen cigars seems out of all proportion.

On the evening of the shooting, a flower memorial was laid out for Michael Brown. It was soon destroyed — reportedly by police vehicles driving over it. This insensitive act inflamed tensions among bystanders and added even more fuel to the fire, a fire that is still burning today.

The next day, 10 August, people of the black community (which accounts for 67 per cent of residents in Ferguson), began looting shops, vandalizing cars, and having more confrontations with the police. This was the start of the 'Ferguson Riots'. In the following months, the riots continued and grew even more widespread than Ferguson.

continued on page 8

UNITED STATES

The black community has tried to confront the racial inequality which they feel 'rampant' in Ferguson. However, while some people protested peacefully, others took advantage of the situation — looting businesses and destroying property.

On the one hand, this violence focused the attention of the world's media on the events in Ferguson. On the other hand, the violence and rioting led to the actual reasons for the riots being forgotten. The fact is, the black community feels that it has suffered racial inequality for far too long. And the 9 August shooting of Michael Brown was the event that led to the anger of the black community boiling over.

As mentioned, 67 per cent of Ferguson residents are African-American. They are subject to various forms of inequality. For example, 94 per cent of the police force in Ferguson are white, and 83 per cent of the city's councilmen as well as the mayor are also white. Add to that the fact that all the members of the city's school board are white — and it's easy to see that African-American residents have very little influence on the way the city is run. This means that they can do very little to improve their living conditions.

Jaaa!

In practical terms, the African-American community is subject to

what is called 'inequality of resources.' The majority of the low-income communities are black, while the high-income communities are mostly white. Low-income has a direct effect on education and healthcare — two vital factors if people are to work their way out of poverty. In Ferguson then, the black community is living in very difficult conditions.

As mentioned earlier, 94 per cent of the police in Ferguson are white, and the African-American community feels that it is treated unfairly by the police. The black community is subject to what is called 'racial profiling'. This means that the Ferguson police use people's race as a key factor on how to deal with them. In other words, African-Americans are much more likely to be stopped, searched, and arrested — simply because

of their skin colour. If Michael Brown and his friend had been white would the meeting with Darren Wilson have ended with six shots being fired and a young black man lying dead on the street?

All in all, Ferguson has experienced what is known as 'systemic discrimination'. And so, a frustrated African-American community, in response to the shooting of Michael Brown, has used the only method of protest it has left — rioting.

As has been seen on the news, Ferguson was turned into something of a war-zone. The intense rioting resulted in even more police — heavily-armed police — trying to 'calm' the rioting.

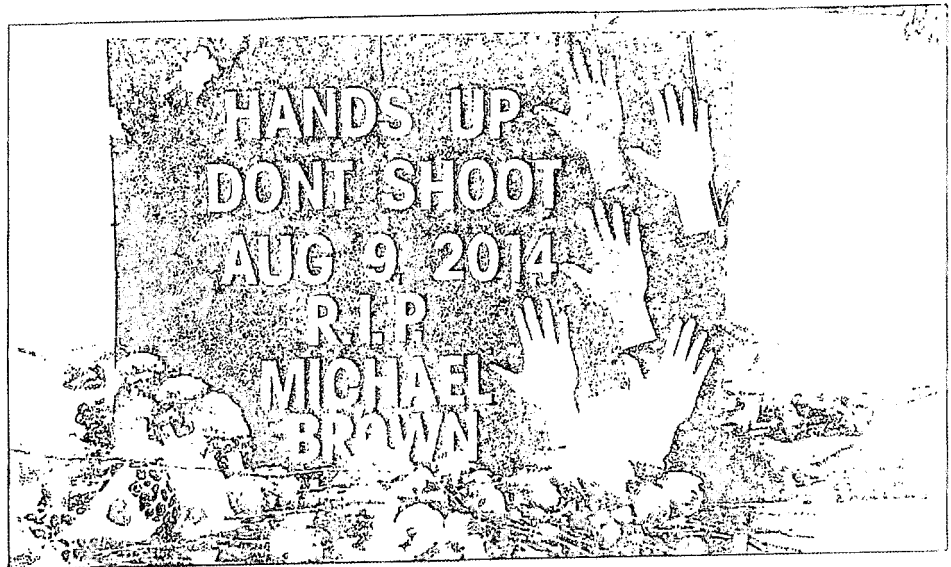
The Ferguson Riots spread to a national level. But this was mainly because of other cases where black men were shot or killed

by white police officers. It's probably fair to say that America's black communities are having a 'national awakening'. This awakening is matched only in scale by the civil rights movements of the 1960s. Racial inequality has once again become a mainstream topic.

People all over the United States have begun using twitter hashtags such as '#BlackLivesMatter'. Celebrities have also stood up to speak on behalf of the protesters. The international media, too, has highlighted the riots — and the reasons for them.

These events, combined with reports of America's shocking torture of terror suspects — many of whom were innocent — have led to the United States being viewed in a different light. The country which boasts

continued on page 9



(Photo: Jamelle Bouie)

This flower memorial to Michael Brown was created at the scene of the fatal shooting

UNITED STATES

of being 'the land of the free' is looking like a police state that supports torture and secret prisons.

Back at the local level, the rioting has left much of Ferguson in ruins. However, it did have one 'good' effect. It has focused attention on some major problems in the United States — systematic racial inequality and the almost military-style methods of the country's police. The use of excessive force, especially towards racial minorities, has been brought to people's attention.

While African-American communities in the United States face an uncertain future, one thing is sure — that black communities will no longer sit idly by and accept the unfair treatment they receive. The spirit of the 1960s civil rights movements has not been forgotten. In fact, the message of the 1960s song, 'We Shall Overcome', is perhaps more relevant now than ever.



⇒ 1,110 words
5,550 characters
(4¼ DK normalsider)

For more, see *Worksheet 2*

For more on this subject see *The School Times*, September 2010 (*The Story of Willie McGee*); April 2012 (*Trayvon Martin*) August 2013 (*Obama Speaks Out on Race & The Struggle for Justice*)

WORDS

bystanders – people looking on;
passers-by
confronted – faced up to
discrimination – treating a person or a group of people differently, because of their gender or, in this

case, their race. *Discrimination* usually means that one group is treated badly — or less fairly — compared to another group
excessive – too much
fatally – in a way causing death;
lethally
inflamed tensions – aroused or created conflicts
looting – stealing, usually by from shops or property during a riot
mainstream topic – in the text, a current issue; newsworthy
pavement (US sidewalk) – footpath beside a road
provocative – insulting;
aggressive
rampant – widespread; common
resources – in the text, income and opportunities
robbery – theft
sit idly by – do nothing
systemic – widespread
took advantage of – used (the situation); took the opportunity to
torture – torment someone or make them suffer
vehicles – in the text, police cars
viewed in a different light – seen in a different way
vital factors – key issues

Questions on the text

- 1 Where and when did the shooting of Michael Brown take place?
- 2 What had he and his friend done earlier that day?
- 3 What does the text say seemed 'out of all proportion'?
- 4 Some people took advantage of the situation. What did they do?
- 5 Where in Ferguson are African-Americans 'under represented'?
- 6 In practical terms, how does 'racial profiling' affect African-Americans in Ferguson?
- 7 The recent 'awakening' of America's black communities is matched only by what?
- 8 How can the problem of racial inequality be tackled?

The Racial Grid

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

Find the following words in the word grid above:

BLACK, EQUALITY, MINORITIES, POLICE,
POVERTY, PROTEST, RACIAL, SHOT, WHITE

The Equality Word Jumble

A type of organised stealing or theft

B R Y B E R O

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

It was an insensitive act to drive over flowers and candles, destroying them. They were a ...

R I A L M E M O

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

A violent protest

O T R I

--	--	--	--

Something used on Twitter to highlight important people, subjects or events

A H T H G A S

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

George Floyd: What happened in the final moments of his life

16 July 2020

George Floyd death

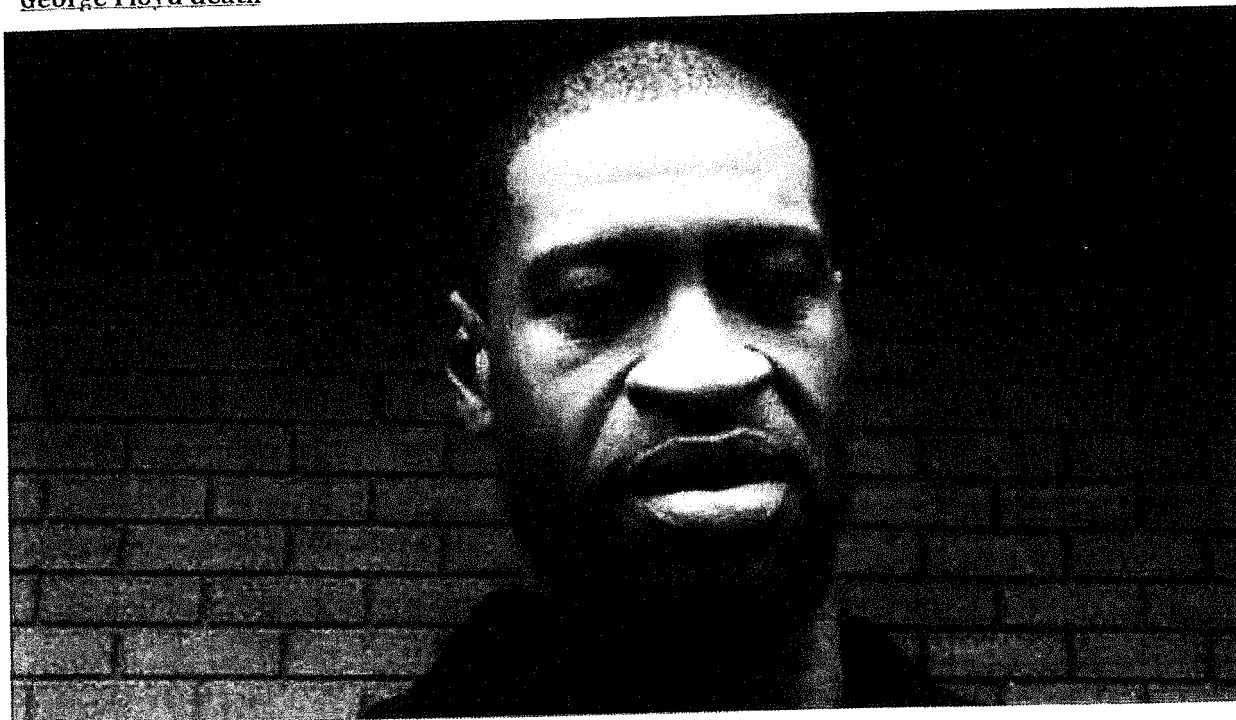


Image copyright TWITTER/RUTH RICHARDSON Image caption

George Floyd repeatedly told the police officers who detained him that he could not breathe

The US has been convulsed by nationwide protests over the death of an African-American man in police custody.

George Floyd, 46, died after being arrested by police outside a shop in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Footage of the arrest on 25 May shows a white police officer, Derek Chauvin, kneeling on Mr Floyd's neck while he was pinned to the floor.

Mr Chauvin, 44, has since been charged with murder.

Transcripts of police bodycam footage show Mr Floyd said more than 20 times he could not breathe as he was restrained by the officers.

The key events that led to Mr Floyd's death happened within just 30 minutes. Based on accounts from witnesses, video footage and official statements, here's what we know so far.

It began with a report of a fake \$20 bill.

A report was made on the evening of 25 May, when Mr Floyd bought a pack of cigarettes from Cup Foods, a grocery store.

Believing the \$20 bill he used to be counterfeit, a store employee reported it to police.

Mr Floyd had been living in Minneapolis for several years after moving there from his native Houston, Texas. He had recently been working as a bouncer in the city but, like millions of other Americans, was left jobless by the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr Floyd was a regular at Cup Foods. He was a friendly face, a pleasant customer who never caused

any trouble.

But Mr Abumayyaleh was not at work on the day of the incident. In reporting the suspicious bill, his teenage employee was just following protocol.

In a call to 911, made at 20:01, the employee told the operator he had demanded the cigarettes back but "he [Floyd] doesn't want to do that", **according to a transcript released by authorities**.

The employee said the man appeared "drunk" and "not in control of himself", the transcript says.

Shortly after the call, at around 20:08, two police officers arrived. Mr Floyd was sitting with two other people in a car parked around the corner.

After approaching the car, one of the officers, Thomas Lane, pulled out his gun and ordered Mr Floyd to show his hands. **In an account of the incident**, prosecutors do not explain why Mr Lane thought it necessary to draw his gun.

Mr Lane, prosecutors said, "put his hands on Mr Floyd, and pulled him out of the car". Then Mr Floyd "actively resisted being handcuffed".

Once handcuffed, though, Mr Floyd became compliant while Mr Lane explained he was being arrested for "passing counterfeit currency".

Court transcripts from police body cameras show Mr Floyd appears co-operative at the beginning of the arrest, repeatedly apologising to the officers after they approach his parked car.

Mr Lane asks Mr Floyd to show his hands at least 10 times before ordering him to get out of the vehicle.

It was when officers tried to put Mr Floyd in their squad car that a struggle ensued.



Media caption Minnesota governor on George Floyd death: "Thank God a young person had a camera to video it"

At about 20:14, Mr Floyd "stiffened up, fell to the ground, and told the officers he was claustrophobic", according to the report.

Mr Chauvin arrived at the scene. He and other officers were involved in a further attempt to put Mr Floyd in the police car.

During this attempt, at 20:19, Mr Chauvin pulled Mr Floyd away from the passenger side, causing him to fall to the ground, the report said.

He lay there, face down, still in handcuffs.

That's when witnesses started to film Mr Floyd, who appeared to be in a distressed state. These moments, captured on multiple mobile phones and shared widely on social media, would prove to be Mr Floyd's last.

Mr Floyd was restrained by officers, while Mr Chauvin placed his left knee between his head and neck. For seven minutes and 46 seconds, Mr Chauvin kept his knee on Mr Floyd's neck, the prosecutors' report says. The duration was initially given as eight minutes and 46 seconds until three weeks after Mr Floyd's death.

The transcripts of bodycam footage from officers Lane and J Alexander Kueng show Mr Floyd said more than 20 times he could not breathe as he was restrained. He was also pleading for his mother and begging "please, please, please".
At one point, Mr Floyd gasps: "You're going to kill me, man."

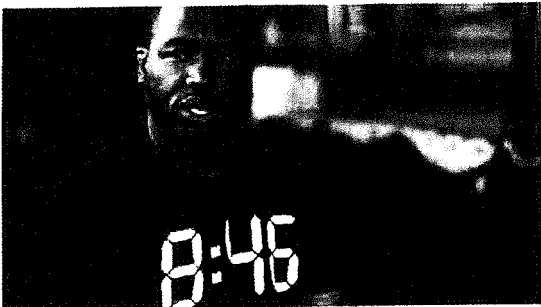


Image copyrightREUTERSImage caption
Derek Chauvin is charged with second degree murder

Officer Chauvin replies: "Then stop talking, stop yelling. It takes heck of a lot of oxygen to talk."
Mr Floyd says: "Can't believe this, man. Mom, love you. Love you. Tell my kids I love them. I'm dead."
A female bystander told the police: "His nose is bleeding, come on now."

About six minutes into that period, Mr Floyd became non-responsive. In videos of the incident, this was when Mr Floyd fell silent, as bystanders urged the officers to check his pulse.
Officer Kueng did just that, checking Mr Floyd's right wrist, but "couldn't find one". Yet the other officers did not move.

At 20:27, Mr Chauvin removed his knee from Mr Floyd's neck. Motionless, Mr Floyd was rolled on to a gurney and taken to the Hennepin County Medical Center in an ambulance.
He was pronounced dead about an hour later.



In June Panorama spoke to local people to piece together the moments leading up to George Floyd's death.

On the night before his death, Mr Floyd had spoken to one of his closest friends, Christopher Harris. He had advised Mr Floyd to contact a temporary jobs agency.

Forgery, he said, was out of character for Mr Floyd.

"The way he died was senseless," Harris said. "He begged for his life. He pleaded for his life. When you try so hard to put faith in this system, a system that you know isn't designed for you, when you constantly seek justice by lawful means and you can't get it, you begin to take the law into your own hands."

Source: BBC.com, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52861726>