

Civil Rights

Postwar United States
(1945–1975)



Challenging segregation

A national movement

Equal rights

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will know about the following aspects of the Civil Rights Movement:

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Nonviolent protests
- Civil rights legislation
- Tension between nonviolent and militant civil rights factions
- Various civil rights groups.



Leading the Montgomery Bus Boycott was 26-year-old Reverend Dr. **Martin Luther King, Jr.** Through his work in the Civil Rights Movement, King became one of the most influential leaders in American history.

Press **start** to learn more.

start





In 1960, a group of black students in Greensboro, North Carolina sat at the all-white lunch counter of Woolworth's.



The students refused to move until they were served. Soon, more students, both black and white, joined the **sit-in**.

Despite verbal and physical abuse, they refused to give in.

Televised coverage of the sit-in led to similar protests around the country. By the end of the year, dozens of cities had integrated lunch counters.





In 1961, the **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)** decided to test desegregation laws in interstate bus facilities.

They organized **freedom rides**, in which interracial groups would travel through the South.

In Anniston, Alabama, police allowed a racist mob to attack and beat the riders senseless. Local hospitals then refused to treat them.

Attorney General **Robert Kennedy** sent U.S. Marshalls to protect the riders as they completed their journey.





Civil Rights Act of 1964



By the early 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement had gained enormous publicity. Americans across the country were horrified by the brutal treatment of peaceful protestors.

When JFK was assassinated in 1963, his successor, **Lyndon B. Johnson**, promised to carry out his civil rights agenda.

On July 2, 1964, Johnson signed the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**, which outlawed discrimination and segregation based on race, religion or gender.





Voting Rights Act of 1965



In the **Freedom Summer** of 1964, volunteers from CORE and the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)** poured into the South to register black voters.

Their efforts were met with violence. In response, King organized a march in Selma, AL. When police attacked the marchers with clubs and tear gas, roughly 25,000 more supporters joined the protest.



Johnson proposed the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**, which banned literacy tests and allowed federal officials to oversee voter registration. By 1966, 250,000 new black voters had registered.



Press on the tabs to read more about key civil rights groups and activists during the Civil Rights Movement.

Press **start** to begin.

start





While some civil rights leaders believed in nonviolent protest, others supported a more militant approach. This was especially true in Northern cities, where de facto segregation could not be controlled by legislation. Press the buttons to learn more.

Press **start** to begin.

start





On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King was gunned down outside his Memphis, Tennessee hotel room.



That night, Robert Kennedy announced the assassination to a shocked crowd in Indianapolis.

“For those of you who are black ... you can be filled with bitterness, and with hatred, and a desire for revenge. ... Or we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to ... replace that violence [with] compassion and love.”

Despite Kennedy’s plea, cities across the nation exploded in violence.



Civil Rights Act 1968



In March, the **Kerner Commission** on urban violence had issued a report stating that violence was the result of segregation and white racism, and called for improvements in inner cities.

The report was mostly ignored. However, on April 11, seven days after King's assassination, Johnson signed the **Civil Rights Act of 1968**.



Also known as the Fair Housing Act, it prohibited discrimination in the sale or rental of housing on the basis of race, religion, or national origin.





Can you match these civil rights leaders with their descriptions?
Press the orange information buttons to see a photograph and a quotation from each of them.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Legacy of the Movement



The Civil Rights Movement ended legal segregation in the U.S. Black voter registration increased enormously, and black officials were elected for the first time since Reconstruction.



Yet blacks and other minorities still faced serious discrimination. The conservative backlash ended policies like busing, and white flight increased de facto segregation throughout the nation.

Was the Civil Rights Movement a success or failure?



Can you sort these key events in the Civil Rights Movement into chronological order?
More information about each event can be found by pressing the orange information button.
Press **start** to begin.

start

