

ACTIVITY 11**Document-Based Activities**
Civil Rights Movement**Using Source Materials**

HISTORICAL CONTEXT The movement for African American equality gained strength in the 1950s. Despite violent opposition the struggle continued. Congress responded by passing laws against discrimination.

TASK

Using information from the documents in Part A and your knowledge of U.S. history, answer the questions that follow. Your answers will help you write the Part B essay, in which you:

- identify the barriers to equality faced by African Americans in the South
- explain the methods used by African Americans to win their civil rights

PART A

DIRECTIONS Read and examine the following documents. Underline key words and make notes in the margin if you wish. Then answer the questions using complete sentences.

DOCUMENT 1

—Birmingham, Alabama, May 3, 1963

1a. How did Birmingham authorities respond to these peaceful civil rights demonstrators?

1b. How might pictures like this influence national opinion of the civil rights movement?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 2

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *relinquish, entitle, refrain*. You may want to use a dictionary to look them up.

WHEREAS, there are thousands of Negroes in the city and county of Montgomery who ride busses . . . and . . .

WHEREAS, the drivers of said busses have never requested a white passenger riding on any of its busses to relinquish his seat and stand so that a Negro may take his seat; however, . . . drivers have on many occasions . . . requested that Negro passengers . . . relinquish their seats and stand so that white passengers may take their seats, and

WHEREAS, said citizens of Montgomery city and county pay their fares just as all other persons . . . and are entitled to fair and equal treatment, and

WHEREAS, there has been any number of arrests of Negroes . . . and they are constantly put in jail for refusing to give white passengers their seats . . .

Be it Resolved As Follows:
That the citizens of Montgomery are requesting that every citizen in Montgomery, regardless of race, color, or creed, [to] refrain from riding busses owned and operated in the city of Montgomery . . .

—Resolution of the Citizen’s Mass Meeting
Montgomery, Alabama, December 5, 1955

2a. What injustice is described in the resolution?

2b. What did the citizens of Montgomery hope to accomplish with this resolution?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 3



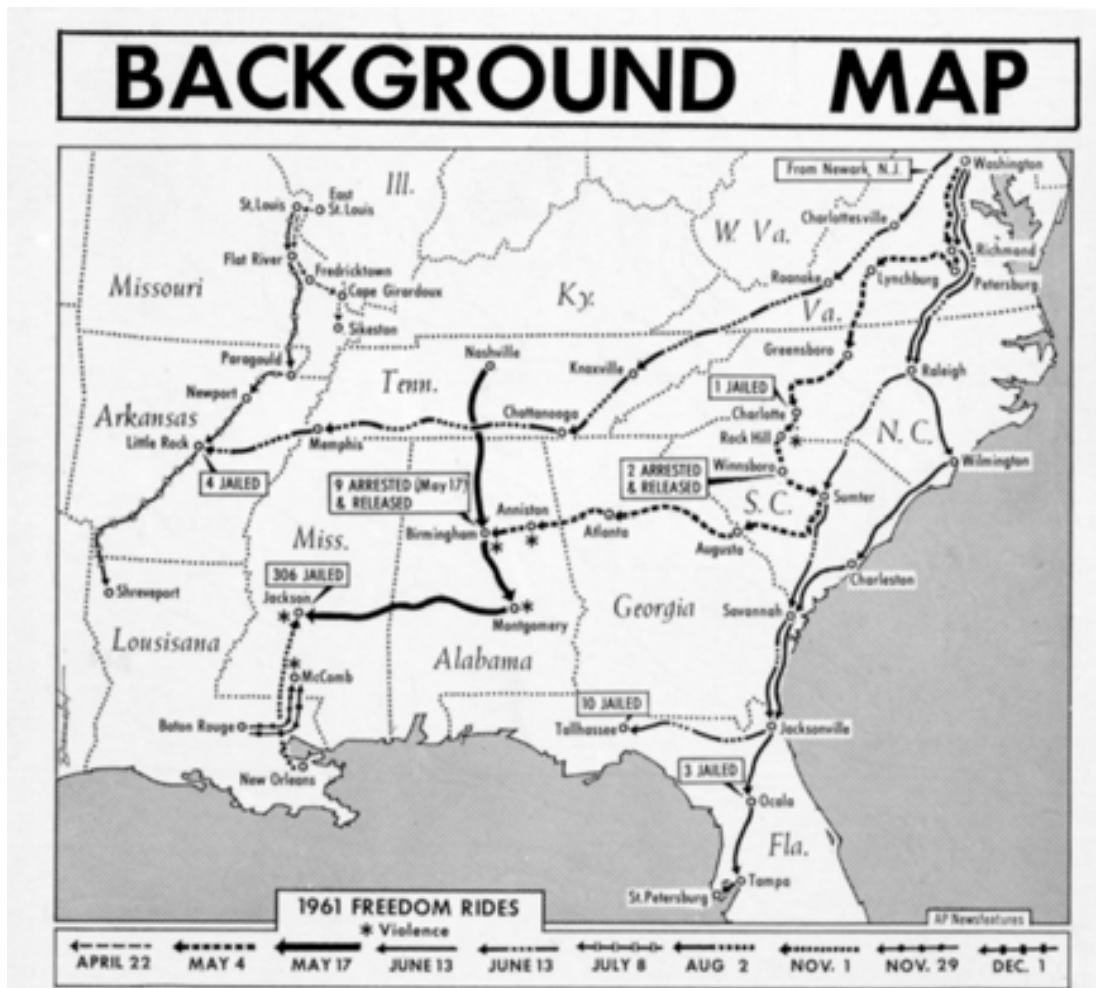
© Bettman/CORBIS, photo courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-114749 (9-9)].

3a. Why did Woolworth's refuse service to the students seated at the lunch counter?

3b. What were the students protesting?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 4



1961 Freedom Rides
Associated Press Newsfeature,
New York, 1962

4a. Freedom Rides were bus trips by groups of young blacks and whites. The riders were trying to force the desegregation of interstate bus stations. What region of the country did the Freedom Rides take place in? Why?

4b. What happened to the people who took part in the Freedom Rides? Explain your answer.

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 5



Library of Congress [LC-U9-10364-37]

—Washington, D.C., 1963

5a. What is happening in the photo?

5b. Are the people in the picture using an effective strategy to gain their civil rights? Why or why not?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 6

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *degenerate, militancy, engulf, inextricably*. You may want to use a dictionary to look them up.

Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred . . . We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence . . .

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, . . . have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny, and . . . that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom . . . We cannot walk alone . . .

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
in his speech titled “I Have a Dream,”
August 23, 1963

6a. What did Dr. King want civil rights protesters to avoid?

6b. According to Dr. King, why was the civil rights campaign not just an African American cause?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 7

Before You Read: The following word in the document below may be new to you: *registrar*. You may want to use a dictionary to look it up.

I went up to the county courthouse . . . and the [registrar] . . . said: “What you want boy?” I said, “I wants to register to vote.” So he got a registration form . . . and I tried to figure it out. He came back and looked at it, balled it up and threw it in the wastebasket. All he said was, “You disqualified, you didn’t answer the question.”

—Leon Alexander, coal miner
about voting in Alabama in the 1950s

Well, we had to go upstairs, and the whites went downstairs. The picture was so popular the whites filled up downstairs, and . . . wanted to go upstairs and sit down and asked the blacks to stand up. And this particular group of Monroe High School students told them, “No, we’re not going to get up and give y’all our seats. We’re up here in our place. This is our place upstairs.”

So they went down and told the manager of the theater and he came up and said, “Well, y’all are going to have to get up and let those people sit down.”

—Thomas Chatmon, high school student
about seating in a movie theater in the 1950s

7a. What were the speakers prevented from doing?

7b. What common experience did the two men face?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

DOCUMENT 8

Before You Read: The following words in the document below may be new to you: *advocate, disarm*. You may want to use a dictionary to look them up.

You can't take a black man who is being bitten by dogs and accuse him of advocating violence because he tries to defend himself from the bite of the dog . . . Any Negro who teaches other Negroes to turn the other cheek is disarming that Negro. Any Negro who teaches Negroes to turn the other cheek in the face of attack is disarming that Negro of his God-given right, of his moral right, of his natural right, of his intelligent right to defend himself. Everything in nature can defend itself, and is right in defending itself except the American Negro. And men like King—their job is to go among Negroes and teach Negroes, "Don't fight back."

—Malcolm X
in a National Educational Television interview, 1963

8a. How do Malcolm X's ideas about the civil rights movement contrast with those of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

8b. What does the passage above suggest about the overall unity of the civil rights movement in 1963?

Activity 11, Civil Rights Movement, continued

Writing a Document-Based Essay

PART B

DIRECTIONS Write a well-organized essay. It should include an introduction, a body of several paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use evidence from at least *four* documents in Part A to support your response. You may draw on any additional knowledge you have acquired about the subject.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT The movement for African American equality gained strength in the 1950s. Despite violent opposition the struggle continued. Congress responded by passing laws against discrimination.

TASK

Using information from the documents in Part A and your knowledge of U.S. history, write an essay in which you:

- identify the barriers to equality faced by African Americans in the South
- explain the methods used by African Americans to win their civil rights

GUIDELINES

In your essay, be sure to:

- Provide a thorough response to the Task. Be sure to cover all parts of the assignment.
- Include specific information from at least *four* of the sources in Part A.
- Incorporate relevant information you remember from your textbook and class work.
- Organize your essay in a clear and logical way.
- Support your statements with facts and information that address the topic.
- Write a conclusion that sums up your ideas.

Note: Do not simply restate the Task or Historical Context. Your essay should include more information.