

WORKSHEET: THESIS STATEMENTS

SAMPLE TOPIC: Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

WHO: Who was involved? Who was affected? Rosa Parks, Citizens in Montgomery, Civil Rights Movement leaders, Montgomery's government officials

WHAT: What happened? What was the main event? Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger, which violated a law enforcing segregation on Montgomery city buses. She was arrested and went to jail. Civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., organized a boycott of buses and challenged the law as unconstitutional.

WHERE: Where was/were the place(s) it took place? Montgomery, Alabama

WHEN: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it? Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955. The boycott started on December 5 and lasted for 381 days.

WHY: Why did it happen? What caused it? Civil Rights Movement leaders wanted to overturn segregation laws. Rosa Parks attended training for non-violent protest at the Highlander Folk School.

WHY: Why is it important? What were the outcomes? The boycott forced change in Montgomery and succeeded in overturning the law requiring segregation on public transportation. This success inspired other Civil Rights Movement protests and helped Martin Luther King, Jr. and others develop nonviolent strategies to fight segregation.

THEME CONNECTION: Frontiers in History

- **What was the frontier?** Parks and Montgomery residents demonstrated that they would not tolerate segregation and proved that nonviolent protest was an effective method for creating change, which expanded the frontier for other Civil Rights Movement victories.
- **How did things change?** The boycott and Supreme Court victory showed the power of collective action and nonviolent protest strategies.

Put it all together into a thesis statement.

Rosa Parks was arrested in 1955 for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger. This nonviolent protest aimed to expand the frontier of racial equality. Black citizens in Montgomery organized a year-long bus boycott, ending when the Supreme Court declared bus segregation unconstitutional, leading to other Civil Rights Movement victories.

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