

Civil Rights Timeline

1619

The first slaves arrive in what is now the United States of America from Africa.

**Why were slaves bought to America?
How did they travel?
Did slaves exist before 1619?**

1862

Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation frees Southern slaves.

**Who was Abraham Lincoln?
What work did slaves do?
What is emancipation?**

1865

The Thirteenth Amendment to the American Constitution is made.

**What did this amendment state?
Why is this significant?**

1875

The Civil Rights Act passes.

**What should this have meant in practice?
What was the outcome?**

1882 – 1901

Lynching becomes epidemic in the South. Thousands of African-American people are murdered by vigilante groups.

**What was lynching?
What is a vigilante group?
Why were African American people being murdered?**

1883

A Supreme Court ruling reverses part of the 1875 act. The policy of segregation becomes widespread in the South.

**What is segregation?
Can you think of any other examples of segregation?**

1896

The decision in the legal case of Plessy v. Ferguson means that idea of "separate but equal" is enshrined in law.

**What did "separate but equal" mean according to this case?
What could be segregated?
What other name was given to these laws?**

1909

The NAACP is formed.

**What does NAACP stand for?
What does the NAACP do today?**

1946

The Supreme Court declares that segregation on buses that cross state borders is illegal.

**How were buses segregated?
Were buses de-segregated after the ruling?**

1954

The Supreme Court declares segregation in schools to be unconstitutional.

**What earlier law from 1896 did the court overturn?
Did schools immediately de-segregate?
Are schools segregated today?**

1955

Rosa Parks is arrested.

**What did Rosa Parks do to get arrested?
What protest followed?**

1957

Dr Martin Luther King Jr. becomes the leader of the Civil Rights Movement.

What kind of doctor was he?

1957

The Little Rock High School clash occurs.

**What was the clash over?
What government organisation gets involved?**

1957

Civil Rights Act is passed.

What was the outcome of the Act?

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1960
Greensboro Diner Sit-in.

Who was involved?
Why were they protesting?

1961
The Freedom Riders are arrested.

What were The Freedom Rides?

1962
James Meredith attempts to attend Mississippi University.

Was he successful?
What intervention occurred?

1963
250,000 civil rights protesters march in Washington.

Why did the protestors march?
Did they achieve anything by marching?

1963
Four African-American children are killed in the Birmingham church bombing.

Why was the church bombed?
What charges were laid against the bombers?

1964
The Civil Rights Act is passed by Congress.

What does this act state?
How was this Act different from the one passed in 1957?

1965
Malcolm X is assassinated.

Who was Malcolm X?
Why was he assassinated?

1965
Dr Martin Luther King Jr. leads a civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery.

Why did people march?

1965
The Voting Rights Act is passed.

What did this mean?

1967
State laws forbidding interracial marriage are declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

What did this mean?

1968
Dr Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated.

Who assassinated Dr King?
What was their sentence?

1968
Black Power protest at the Mexico Olympics.

Who was involved?
What did they do?