

Striving for Equality: The Civil Rights Movement

Learning objective: To understand the significance of the Civil Rights Movement and the importance of equality in society.

Read the text carefully, ensuring you look for key dates and themes. Use your best handwriting and full sentences to answer the questions below.

In the mid-20th century, the United States faced a period of profound social change known as the Civil Rights Movement. During this era, many public facilities, schools, and transport systems were affected by segregation, a system that unfairly separated people based on the colour of their skin. This discrimination meant that citizens were not treated with equal respect or given the same opportunities. Courageous individuals began to challenge these unjust laws through peaceful protests, marches, and powerful speeches. Figures like Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her seat on a bus, became catalysts for change. These actions highlighted the urgent need for legislation to guarantee the rights of all people, regardless of their background. Ellie the elephant, who loves history, notes that this movement was not just about changing laws, but about shifting the hearts and minds of a nation to recognise that true justice requires everyone to be treated with dignity. By the late 1960s, significant legal victories had been won, dismantling many institutional barriers and paving the way for a more inclusive future.

Word bank: segregation · equality · discrimination · justice · protest · legislation · courageous

1. What was the main purpose of the system known as 'segregation' mentioned in the text? (2 marks)

2. Identify two methods that people used to peacefully challenge the unfair laws during the movement. (2 marks)

3. Why does the author suggest that changing laws was only one part of the Civil Rights Movement? (3 marks)

4. Explain why the actions of individuals like Rosa Parks were considered a 'catalyst' for change. (3 marks)

5. Do you believe that peaceful protest is the most effective way to create social change? Justify your answer using evidence from the text or your own historical knowledge. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a symbolic image representing 'Equality'. Think about how you can use shapes, colours, and patterns to show people standing together in harmony.



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast the Civil Rights Movement with another historical struggle for justice that you have studied. Explain why it is important for societies to continue striving for equality today. What might happen if a society stops working towards these values?