

The Peaceful Protest

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, an African American woman, refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus to a white passenger. The buses were divided into two sections. The white passengers rode in front, and the black passengers rode in the back of the bus. It had been this way for years. Parks' actions spurred a boycott. The young minister, Martin Luther King, encouraged his people to refuse to obey these unjust laws. The people agreed with him. That year, the African Americans in Montgomery, Alabama decided they would not ride the city's buses. After one year, the bus company did away with the divisions.



Students holding a sit-in at a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, 1960.

Martin Luther King encouraged African Americans to protest. He also explained that they should not strike back or use violence if they were attacked. He insisted that the protests be peaceful.

African Americans protested with "sit-ins". They would enter a segregated restaurant and sit down. Once there, they would refuse to leave until they were served. Many times, the protestors were arrested but they did not use violence. There were many peaceful parades and meetings. Both black and white people attended.

Progress was slow. Many wanted to take stronger action, but Martin Luther King refused. He continued to lead nonviolent protests to get equal rights. He was awarded the Nobel peace price in 1964.

Use complete sentences to answer the questions below.

1. Write the sentence in paragraph one that tells what African Americans in Alabama decided to do in 1955.

2. Write the sentences in paragraph one that tells what the buses were like in 1955.

3. Write the sentence in the second paragraph that tells what Martin Luther King encouraged African Americans to do.

4. Write the sentence in the last paragraph that tells what award Martin Luther King was given.

5. Write two or more sentences about Martin Luther King.

Complete the story using the words from the word list below.

attended**equal****obey****peaceful****bus****not****passengers****Rosa**

On December 1, 1955, _____ Parks, an African American woman, refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus to a white passenger. The buses were divided into two sections. The white _____ rode in front, and the black passengers rode in the back of the bus. It had been this way for years. Parks' actions spurred a boycott. That year, the African Americans in Montgomery, Alabama decided they would not ride the city's buses. The young minister, Martin Luther King, encouraged his people to refuse to _____ these unjust laws. The people agreed with him. After one year, the _____ company did away with the divisions.

Martin Luther King encouraged African Americans to protest. He also explained that they should _____ strike back or use violence if they were attacked. He insisted that the protests be _____.

African Americans protested with "sit-ins". They would enter a segregated restaurant and sit down. Once there, they would refuse to leave until they were served. Many times, the protestors were arrested but they did not use violence. There were many peaceful parades and meetings. Both black and white people _____.

Progress was slow. Many wanted to take stronger action, but Martin Luther King refused. He continued to lead nonviolent protests to get _____ rights. He was awarded the Nobel peace price in 1964.

**On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions.
Use complete sentences.**

PROBLEM/SOLUTION

1. What were two problems for African Americans? How did African Americans try to solve these problems?

INFERENCE

2. Did all whites oppose equal rights for African Americans? Support your answer with information from the passage.

CAUSE & EFFECT

3. What was one result of the “sit-ins”?

COMPARE/CONTRAST

4. What were the differences between the two protests described in the passage?

INTEGRATE

5. Look at the information in this passage and the “Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka” passage. Make one conclusion. Support your conclusion.

RESEARCH

Use the Internet or another source to learn more about this topic.
Write several sentences about what you learn.