

Although slavery ended in 1865 in the **USA**, laws in some parts of America stopped black and white people from being treated equally. Cinemas, buses, trains, drinking fountains, public toilets and schools were all divided between those suitable for white people and those suitable for black people (**segregated**).

# THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

## Martin Luther King Overview

Martin Luther King was an American **campaigner** who tried to make sure that everyone was treated equally.

Lots of people had racist attitudes in America at the time. There were even laws meaning that black people did not have the same rights as white people.

He was a very brave man who believed in non-violent protest. He was also a brilliant public speaker.

His most famous moment was in August 1963, when he gave his 'I have a Dream' speech'. He was also the youngest person to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Unfortunately, he was killed in April 1968 for his beliefs. Martin Luther King Day is now celebrated in the **USA** every January (on the Monday closest to his birthday).

A photo of Martin Luther King



Dear Parents,

Our next topic is Protest and Politics - The Civil Rights Movement. Please help your children to prepare for this topic by helping them to learn the key words (in purple) and the facts on this sheet.

There are some homework activities on the back of this sheet. Your child can complete these at any time. Your child's teacher would love to see what they have created.

Thank you for your support.

Kind regards - Year 6 teachers

## The March on Washington

In 1963, Martin Luther King led a march of 20,000 black and 50,000 white people to the centre of the American government in Washington D.C. The march was entirely peaceful and finished with Martin Luther King's famous 'I Have a Dream' speech:

'I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character.'



A photo showing the protest in Washington D.C.



## Vocabulary

**boycott** - A form of protest when you stop using a service for a reason.

**campaigner** - Somebody who protests about something they disagree with.

**discrimination** - Treating one group more unfairly than another.

**integration** - The opposite of segregation; combining different groups of people fairly.

**Ku Klux Klan** - This was a group of white people who did not believe that black people should be treated the same as white people.

**NACA (later called NASA)** - An American organisation that carries out research about space and space travel. NACA stands for National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics and NASA stands for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

**racist** - A person who treats other people badly based on the colour of their skin or their ethnicity.

**segregation** - The separation of black and white people in transport, education, housing and facilities.

**USA** - United States of America

## The Brown vs Board of Education Court Case

In 1954, a group of black people took the board of education (who were in charge of the schools) to court to allow an African-American school girl (called Linda Brown) to attend a white school in Kansas. Linda had to travel several miles and cross a dangerous railway track to attend her nearest blacks-only school, when there was a whites-only school nearby.

The board of education lost and the judge ordered that **segregated** schools were unfair and that all schools should allow black and white children to attend.

### Rosa Park Overview

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 1955, after a long day at work, Rosa Park boarded a bus for home. At this time in Montgomery (USA), seats at the front of buses were reserved for white passengers only and the seats at the back were reserved for black passengers.

The bus filled up and the driver asked the black passengers to give up a seat for a white man who didn't have a seat. Rosa refused and she was arrested.

On hearing the news of Rosa's arrest, the black citizens decided to **boycott** the buses (and some white people joined them). The bus company lost a lot of money. Eventually (after 381 days of boycotts) the court decided that the **segregation** laws on buses and in other places were not fair and they had to change. Because of this victory, Rosa became known as 'the mother of the civil rights movement.'

A photo of Rosa Park



### Homework Ideas

- (1) Make a model of the bus that Rosa Park was arrested on.
- (2) Draw a portrait of Rosa Parks or Martin Luther King.
- (3) 'I have a dream' was a line used in one of Martin Luther King's speeches. Draw a picture of your dream world, where everybody is treated fairly.
- (4) Carry out some research about one of the people on this knowledge organiser. What facts can you find out about them? Think about the best way to present this information.
- (5) Make a model of Mercury rocket.
- (6) Create a mini lolly pop sticker protest placard demanding equality for all.



### The Hidden Figures

In the 1950s, **NACA** (later known as **NASA**) began hiring mathematicians as they were trying to attach rockets to aeroplanes to make them go faster and higher, which is something nobody had done before. They recruited a number of black ladies who, because of the **segregation** laws, had to work in a different place to their white colleagues (The West Area) and they also had to use separate toilets and sit at the back of the dining room away from white people at dinnertime.

These ladies were just as clever as their white colleagues and their calculations helped to send people into space for the first time and allowed the first men to step foot on the moon. This was particularly impressive when you realise that they had to do most of these calculations in their heads, as there were no powerful computers like we have today. These people were called human computers! Mary Jackson, Dorothy Vaughan and Katherine Johnson were three such human computers.

Overtime, there was more integration at NASA as white and black people worked side by side and had the same rights and opportunities. Black people can do any job at NASA, including being astronauts.



### The Ku Klux Klan

This was a **racist** group made up of white people that intimidated, hurt and sometimes killed black people. They believed that black people should not have the same rights as white people. They wore distinctive pointy hoods and face coverings so they could not be identified.

