

## The Road to Civil Rights Teacher's Notes **B1**

**This B1-level article recapitulates the beginnings of the Civil Rights movement in the U.S.A. It is an opportunity for pupils to understand or review the complexity of the relationships amongst Americans.**

It is also an excellent topic for an **EPI** « *Information, communication, citoyenneté* » on equality and forms of discrimination, in connection with the **3<sup>ème</sup> History curriculum** « *Le monde depuis 1945* » and the **EMC Cycle 4 curriculum** « *Le jugement: penser par soi-même et avec les autres* »

### **Vocabulary and structures**

- Cultural and historical aspect with specific vocabulary around segregation, Civil Rights and protests
- Dates and numbers
- Modals
- Past tense
- The passive
- Phrasal verbs

### **Interaction**

- We suggest video projecting the photos first. The opening photo needs close observation to spot “White” and “Colored” above the doors. This may surprise pupils (in which case, just leave it as a question to be answered when reading the article), or they may be able to share some information they already know about segregation. Project the pictures of Rosa Parks, then MLK, then Obama and asking pupils to comment on them (if they recognise them and what they know about them). Then ask the pupils if they know what the three people have in common.
- You may need to give or elicit some historical context:  
Segregation followed on from slavery. The American Civil War (1861-65) was over the abolition of slavery. (The Northern states wanted to abolish it, the Southern states,

which depended on slaves for their cotton, tobacco and sugar production, refused.) Yet, despite the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution (1865) abolishing slavery, the 14th (1868) providing citizenship to all, and the 15th (1870), which guaranteed the right to vote, the Southern states in particular re-introduced laws that effectively maintained African-Americans in the situation of being second-class citizens. Various ploys (taxes and literacy tests) prevented them from exercising their right to vote. The 1896 Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* allowed public places and services to be segregated as long as they were equivalent: “separate but equal”.

### **Reading + writing**

- **Activity A** enables the pupils to read the article in depth so as to understand the different protagonists in the Civil Rights movement.
- **Activity B** is a review of the important dates and numbers in the Civil Rights movement.
- **Activity C** helps the pupils check they have correctly understood how the African Americans lived segregation by reviewing modals of obligation, capacity and prohibition as well as the passive. Before

asking pupils to do the activity, you could point out passive constructions in the text and ask who was the agent: *Who arrested MIA activists? Who bombed the leaders' homes? Who gave Mrs Parks the Medal of Freedom?*

■ **Activity D** activity enables the pupils to work on phrasal verbs and realise that if you change the adverb/preposition, the verb changes meaning.

## Speaking + interaction

■ A role-play activity will revise what pupils have learned.

■ To check comprehension, and revise modals, pupils can role-play the scene in the bus on 1 December, 1955, when Rosa Parks was arrested, and the scene after 20 December, 1956, when the buses were desegregated.

■ Depending on the size of the groups, roles can include Rosa Parks, the bus driver, the white passenger who she was asked to give her seat up for, the police, the three other black passengers who did move to the back of the bus, and other passengers on the bus. For the purposes of the exercise, assume that desegregation happened smoothly on 21 December, 1956, and that the driver and white and black passengers were all polite and friendly to each other!

■ It's worth moving desks out of the way and using chairs to create the inside of the bus for pupils to act in. This small artifice can really help pupils get into their role, and remember to use body language as well as speech. (Define the rules ahead of time though – make it clear that the police mustn't be too rough with Rosa Parks.)

■ A more sophisticated option, which requires more understanding of the civil-rights struggle, and would work well with a

History/EMC EPI, would be to ask pupils to role-play boycott participants persuading other African-Americans to join the boycott. The role play could help develop more ways of expressing feelings and emotions of injustice as well as fairness and forgiveness (preached by MLK).

## Solutions

### A. Gap Filling

1. movement 2. refused 3. leave/give up / white 4. African / equal 5. Southern 6. racial 7. schools / restaurants / cinemas 8. protest 9. peaceful/non-violent 10. walk / cycle 11. intimidation 12. illegal 13. victory 14. negative / husband / jobs 15. Congressman / foundation.

### B. Numbers and dates

1. f 2. h 3. e 4. i 5. l 6. a 7. d 8. k 9. g 10. j 11. b 12. c

### C. Living Segregation

1. **Chart:** forbidden/allowed/required

**Forbidden:** 3, 4, 5, 6

**Allowed:** 2

**Required:** 1

### 2. The passive

a. A committee called the MIA was formed by...

b. A young leader named Martin Luther King Jr was chosen by...

c. The continuation of the bus boycott was voted by...

d. Black churches and leaders' homes were bombed by...

e. Rosa Parks was given the Medal of Freedom for her courage and combat for equal rights by...

f. Martin Luther King Jr was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1963 by...

g. In 1968, Martin Luther King Jr was assassinated by...

### D. Phrasal verbs

1. c 2. e 3. f 4. d 5. b 6. a