Barriers to Change

How opponents tried to slow the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama

SS24.5.12d "Summarize how opponents of the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama sought to limit its success."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one action opponents took in each paragraph, circle who took it, and write beside each action how it could slow the movement.

The Push for Rights in Alabama

1. In the 1950s and 1960s, many Black Alabamians worked to end unfair laws and gain the right to vote. Opponents tried to stop that work. In some counties, voter registration officials used literacy tests and unfair rules to turn Black citizens away. A person who could not register could not vote for leaders who might change the rules. Some employers threatened to fire Black workers who tried to register.

2. In Birmingham in 1963, people marched against segregation, which kept Black and white people apart in public places. Police commissioner Bull Connor ordered police to use fire hoses and dogs against marchers, including young people. Police also arrested many protesters. These actions could hurt people, frighten others away from joining, and slow the push to end segregation. Yet news of the attacks drew more attention to the movement.

3. In 1965, marchers in Selma set out to demand fair voting rights. On the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Alabama state troopers attacked peaceful marchers with clubs and tear gas. Governor George Wallace opposed the march. The violence was meant to stop people from marching and discourage others from demanding change. Instead, marchers continued, and the attack helped build support for the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did voter registration officials try to limit the movement's success?

2. How could an employer's threat to fire a worker limit the push for voting rights?

3. How did the police actions in Birmingham try to slow the movement?

4. How did state troopers try to limit the Selma marchers' work for voting rights?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A student asks, “If opponents tried to stop the movement, how did it still move forward?” Write a four-sentence reply using evidence from two different paragraphs. Explain one result the opponents did not want.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 5 · SS24.5.12d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one action opponents took in each paragraph, circle who took it, and write beside each action how it could slow the movement. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did voter registration officials try to limit the movement's success?	**They used literacy tests and unfair rules to keep Black citizens from registering and voting for leaders who might change the rules.**
2	How could an employer's threat to fire a worker limit the push for voting rights?	**The threat could keep a Black worker from trying to register to vote.**
3	How did the police actions in Birmingham try to slow the movement?	**Police used fire hoses and dogs and arrested protesters, which could hurt marchers and frighten others away from joining.**
4	How did state troopers try to limit the Selma marchers' work for voting rights?	**They attacked peaceful marchers with clubs and tear gas to stop the march and discourage others from demanding change.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Opponents tried to slow the movement by using force against marchers in Birmingham and Selma. In Birmingham, police used dogs and fire hoses, but news of the attacks brought more attention to the movement. In Selma, state troopers attacked peaceful marchers, but marchers continued their work. The attack helped build support for the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Accept accurate summaries that connect an opponent's action to its intended effect. For Part 3, look for evidence from two paragraphs and an unintended result, such as increased attention or support for voting rights.