From Protest to Policy

Trace how local action shaped national civil rights change.

SS24.US2.10 "Evaluate the influence of events, organizations, and individual actions on the expansion of the Civil Rights Movement nationally. 10a Identify and explain key events from 1945 to 1955 that brought about the emergence of a large-scale..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two actions by civil rights activists and circle the federal response linked to each. Number one barrier that made change difficult.

When Local Action Reached Washington

1. In 1948, President Harry Truman ordered the armed forces desegregated, showing that federal action could challenge racial barriers. Yet segregation and voter suppression continued in many states. The Supreme Court's 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision ruled public school segregation unconstitutional, but it did not immediately integrate schools. In Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat in 1955. E. D. Nixon helped organize the resulting bus boycott, turning local resistance into a sustained, widely watched campaign.

2. Boycott leader Martin Luther King Jr. urged nonviolent protest and integration. Malcolm X, who became a national voice through the Nation of Islam, emphasized Black self-determination and the right to self-defense. He questioned integration as the movement's main goal. In 1963, Fred Shuttlesworth and other organizers challenged segregation in Birmingham, Alabama. Police attacked demonstrators with dogs and fire hoses. National outrage increased pressure for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned segregation in public accommodations and employment discrimination.

3. Opponents used political rules, threats to people's jobs, and violence to preserve segregation. Alabama governor George Wallace resisted school integration, while employers could fire protesters and attackers could threaten them. In 1965, Alabama activists, including John Lewis, marched from Selma toward Montgomery to demand voting rights. State troopers beat marchers on Bloody Sunday, bringing national attention to blocked Black voting. Congress passed the Voting Rights Act that year, targeting discriminatory voting barriers. Activists' campaigns helped produce federal laws, but those laws did not end discrimination.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the 1948 and 1954 federal actions show progress while leaving a need for a larger movement?

2. Compare the Birmingham and Selma campaigns. What federal measure followed each?

3. How did King and Malcolm X differ in their stated goals or methods?

4. Name two different means opponents used in Alabama to limit civil rights progress. How did activists respond to one of them?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Which turning point in the passage most expanded the movement's national influence? In 3 to 4 sentences, defend your choice by comparing it with another event and acknowledging one limit on change.

ANSWER KEY

From Protest to Policy

GRADE 11 · SS24.US2.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two actions by civil rights activists and circle the federal response linked to each. Number one barrier that made change difficult. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the 1948 and 1954 federal actions show progress while leaving a need for a larger movement?	**They challenged segregation in the military and public schools, but segregation and voter suppression continued, and schools did not integrate immediately.**
2	Compare the Birmingham and Selma campaigns. What federal measure followed each?	**Birmingham organizers challenged segregation; national outrage increased pressure for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Selma marchers demanded voting rights; Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965.**
3	How did King and Malcolm X differ in their stated goals or methods?	**King urged nonviolent protest and integration. Malcolm X emphasized Black self-determination and self-defense and questioned integration as the main goal.**
4	Name two different means opponents used in Alabama to limit civil rights progress. How did activists respond to one of them?	**Wallace resisted school integration, employers could fire protesters, and attackers used violence. Activists responded to barriers to Black voting by marching from Selma.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Selma marches most expanded the movement's national influence because the attack on marchers brought attention to blocked Black voting. The Birmingham campaign also drew national outrage, but Selma's demand was followed by a law targeting voting barriers. The Voting Rights Act showed that a campaign in Alabama could help change federal policy. Even so, the law did not end discrimination.

Accept other turning points if students support a comparison and identify a limit using passage evidence. For question 4, accept any two distinct political, economic, or physical means described in the passage.