Pressure for Change

How social influences shape immediate action and lasting change

S.8.2 "Examine various social influences that can lead to immediate and long-term changes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two social influences that spread or sustained the boycott, and circle one influence that worked against it. Write 1 beside an immediate change and 2 beside a longer-term change.

How Montgomery Changed Its Buses

1. On December 1, 1955, police arrested Rosa Parks after she refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Her arrest did not create resistance from nothing. Black residents had challenged unfair bus rules for years, and local organizers knew how to spread news through churches and community groups. The Women's Political Council distributed leaflets urging Black riders to stay off buses on December 5. Ministers also announced the plan at church services. These overlapping networks turned news of one arrest into a citywide action within days. A shared experience of injustice made the call to act persuasive.

2. The one-day protest grew into a boycott that lasted more than a year. Black riders, who made up a large share of bus customers, walked, shared rides, or used organized carpools. Churches collected donations, while neighborhood volunteers helped coordinate trips. Those relationships made it possible for many people to keep participating even when travel was difficult. The empty seats put financial pressure on the bus system, but money was not the only influence. Seeing neighbors stay committed strengthened a sense that change was possible. Meanwhile, opponents used arrests and intimidation to try to break the boycott, showing that social pressure can resist change too.

3. At the same time, several Black women who had faced bus discrimination challenged segregation in federal court. In Browder v. Gayle, a federal court ruled that Montgomery's bus segregation violated the Constitution, and the U.S. Supreme Court let that ruling stand. The boycott ended in December 1956 when the city received the court order; bus integration began the next day. The order changed bus rules, while the boycott showed how organized communities could sustain pressure over time. Its example influenced later civil rights campaigns, though ending bus segregation did not end racial inequality. Legal action and collective action changed both a local policy and ideas about how to challenge injustice.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did two community networks help turn Parks's arrest into action within days?

2. How did help from churches, volunteers, and neighbors make a longer boycott possible?

3. What change were opponents trying to cause through arrests and intimidation?

4. How did the court case and the boycott contribute to different longer-term changes?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your school wants to reduce food waste in its cafeteria. In four or five sentences, explain two different social influences that could lead to an immediate change in student behavior and a longer-term change in school practice, and describe one influence that could slow change.

Pressure for Change

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two social influences that spread or sustained the boycott, and circle one influence that worked against it. Write 1 beside an immediate change and 2 beside a longer-term change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did two community networks help turn Parks's arrest into action within days?	**The Women's Political Council spread the call to stay off buses through leaflets, and ministers announced it at church services.**
2	How did help from churches, volunteers, and neighbors make a longer boycott possible?	**Donations and coordinated rides helped people travel without buses, while neighbors' commitment encouraged others to keep participating.**
3	What change were opponents trying to cause through arrests and intimidation?	**They were trying to make people stop participating and break the boycott.**
4	How did the court case and the boycott contribute to different longer-term changes?	**The court order ended segregation on Montgomery's buses. The sustained boycott provided an example that influenced later civil rights campaigns.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Student leaders could ask classmates to take only the food they will eat, so less food goes into the trash this week. A student club could share weekly waste totals at school meetings, building support for a permanent share table for unopened food. Concern about health rules could slow the plan while staff check which foods may be shared. If the school approves a safe procedure, the share table could become a regular cafeteria practice.

For the marking job, accept any two passage-based influences that spread or sustained participation, arrests or intimidation as opposition, the citywide action as an immediate change, and bus integration or the influence on later campaigns as a longer-term change. For Your Turn, look for two distinct social influences, both time scales, and a plausible obstacle.