Paths to Equality

Compare the tactics behind six civil rights campaigns

USH.C.7.1.D "Identify the tactics used at different times to achieve racial equality (e.g., Montgomery Bus Boycott, desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, Oklahoma City lunch counter sit-ins..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one action protesters or their allies took in each of the six campaigns. Circle the barrier or goal each action addressed so you can compare the tactics.

Different Actions, Shared Goal

1. In Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955, Black residents challenged rules that forced them to give up bus seats to white riders. After Rosa Parks was arrested, they refused to ride city buses for more than a year. The boycott cut fare revenue, while daily carpools helped riders sustain their protest. A federal court ruling, upheld by the Supreme Court, ended segregation on Montgomery buses. In 1957, nine Black students enrolled at Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas. When a hostile crowd and the state's governor blocked their entry, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to protect the students and enforce a federal court order.

2. In 1958, young Black activists led by Clara Luper sat at a whites-only lunch counter in Oklahoma City's Katz Drug Store and asked to be served. Staff refused, but the group returned, using peaceful sit-ins to press businesses to end exclusion. Katz agreed to serve Black customers at its lunch counters. In 1961, the Congress of Racial Equality, or CORE, organized Freedom Rides across state lines. Black and white riders traveled together by bus and entered segregated terminals to test federal bans on segregation in interstate travel. Mobs attacked some riders, but the rides drew national attention and pushed federal officials to enforce desegregation at interstate bus facilities.

3. Large marches turned local demands into national questions. In 1963, civil rights groups gathered at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom to demand equal rights and economic opportunity. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC, took part, and its chairman John Lewis spoke. The crowd's size helped bring attention to rights legislation. In 1965, voting-rights advocates marched from Selma toward Montgomery, Alabama, after years of barriers to Black voter registration. SNCC organizers had worked with local residents to register voters, while other groups helped lead the marches. Televised violence against marchers increased pressure for federal protection of voting rights; Congress passed the Voting Rights Act that year.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Montgomery boycott put pressure on the bus system, and what helped riders keep the boycott going?

2. How did the tactics at Little Rock Central High School and the Oklahoma City lunch counter differ?

3. What did CORE's Freedom Riders do to challenge segregation in interstate travel?

4. How did the March on Washington and the Selma-to-Montgomery marches draw attention to different demands?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a town in the 1960s bars Black residents from its public library. In four sentences, propose two different nonviolent tactics from the passage adapted to this problem, and explain how each might help end the rule.

ANSWER KEY

Paths to Equality

HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.7.1.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one action protesters or their allies took in each of the six campaigns. Circle the barrier or goal each action addressed so you can compare the tactics. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Montgomery boycott put pressure on the bus system, and what helped riders keep the boycott going?	**Riders withheld fares by refusing to ride the buses, and carpools helped them continue the boycott.**
2	How did the tactics at Little Rock Central High School and the Oklahoma City lunch counter differ?	**At Little Rock, federal troops protected students entering a school under a court order. In Oklahoma City, activists repeatedly sat at a lunch counter and asked to be served.**
3	What did CORE's Freedom Riders do to challenge segregation in interstate travel?	**Black and white riders traveled together across state lines and entered segregated bus terminals to test federal bans on segregation.**
4	How did the March on Washington and the Selma-to-Montgomery marches draw attention to different demands?	**The March on Washington gathered a large crowd to demand equal rights and economic opportunity. The Selma-to-Montgomery marches drew attention to barriers to Black voter registration and the need for federal voting-rights protection.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Residents could hold a peaceful sit-in at the library's reading tables and ask to use the books. Their presence would make the unfair rule visible to other patrons. They could also march to city hall and demand that officials open the library to everyone. A public march could bring more people together to press for a change in the rule.

Accept accurate descriptions of the tactics and their purposes, even if students use different wording. For the open task, look for two distinct tactics adapted to the library rule and a plausible explanation of how each could help.