

WORKSHEET: THESIS STATEMENTS

SAMPLE TOPIC: Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

WHO: Who was involved? Who was affected? Rosa Parks, Citizens in Montgomery, Civil Rights Movement leaders, Montgomery's government officials

WHAT: What happened? What was the main event? Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger, which violated a law enforcing segregation on Montgomery city buses. She was arrested and went to jail. Civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., organized a boycott of buses and challenged the law as unconstitutional.

WHERE: Where was/were the place(s) it took place? Montgomery, Alabama

WHEN: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it? Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955. The boycott started on December 5 and lasted for 381 days.

WHY: Why did it happen? What caused it? Civil Rights Movement leaders wanted to overturn segregation laws. Rosa Parks attended training for nonviolent protest at the Highlander Folk School.

WHY: Why is it important? What were the outcomes? The boycott forced change in Montgomery and succeeded in overturning the law requiring segregation on public transportation. This success inspired other Civil Rights Movement protests and helped Martin Luther King, Jr. and others develop nonviolent strategies to fight segregation.

THEME CONNECTION: Turning Points in History

- **What was the Turning Point?** The use of the boycott proved that nonviolent protests was an effective method for creating change and changed the strategy of fighting segregation by Civil Rights leaders.
- **How did things change?** The boycott and Supreme Court victory ended segregation on buses. The nonviolent protest showed the power of collective action and became an effective strategy for other Civil Rights Movement protests.

Put it all together into a thesis statement.

Rosa Parks was arrested in 1955 for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, leading to a year-long bus boycott. The success of this nonviolent protest against segregation was a turning point in strategies used during the Civil Rights Movement that opened the door to other victories.

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- **How did things change?**

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