

Good Morning (or Afternoon)!

- Grab a copy of the Civil Rights Movement Notes from the back table along with your binder.
- **Complete and/or check your answers from yesterday.**
 1. **How did television affect the Election of 1960?**
 2. **How did the Cold War continue during the 1960s?**
 3. **Compare and contrast JFK's New Frontier and LBJ's Great Society.**
 4. **Why did the Great Society ultimately fail?**

The Civil Rights Movement

Origins of the Civil Rights Movement

- One of the key developments of the 1950s was the struggle of African Americans for equal rights.
- During the early years of our nation, slavery had been permitted.
- At the end of the Civil War, the U.S. had held out the promise of equality to Americans of all races.
- Laws were passed to enforce change, but promises were cut short in the aftermath of Reconstruction.
 - **13th Amendment** – (1865) abolished slavery
 - **14th Amendment** – (1868) provided for equal protection under the law and gave those born here citizenship.
 - **15th Amendment** – (1870) gave former male slaves suffrage or the right to vote.
- Many Americans felt that the treatment received by African Americans was inconsistent with the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
- Indeed, it seemed ironic for America to pose as the defender of freedom and democracy around the world, while denying equality to many of its citizens at home.

The Truman Years, 1945-1953

- In 1947, **Jackie Robinson**, the grandson of a slave, became the first African American to play professional baseball.
- That same year, the Truman administration issued a report – *To Secure Those Rights* – calling for civil rights laws.
- One year later (1948), Truman proposed civil rights legislation to Congress that did not pass.
- When he was re-elected, Truman demanded his inauguration be integrated.
- In 1948, he also issued executive orders to desegregate the armed forces and end discriminatory hiring practices in the federal government.



Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Background

- Civil rights were won in large part through **litigation** (*resolving disputes in court*) – the Supreme Court decided most of these cases.
- After Reconstruction, Southern states passed laws requiring the segregation of races in public places, including public schools.
- In ***Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)***, the U.S. Supreme Court had upheld the constitutionality of these state segregation laws.
 - The Court ruled that the “**separate-but-equal**” standard was constitutional.
 - States could provide segregated facilities to different races, so long as they were equal in quality.
 - Although schools were supposed to be equal, most schools in the South were greatly inferior to white ones.
 - Beginning in the 1930s, NAACP lawyers began challenging this “separate-but-equal” doctrine through the American court system.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Background

- In ***Sweatt v. Painter (1950)***, the NAACP won a case involving the right of Herman Sweatt, an African American, to attend law school at the University of Texas at Austin.
- Texas argued that its constitution prohibited integrated education, and even created a separate law school for African Americans – just to keep Sweatt out.
- The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that this separate school failed to qualify as “separate but equal” since differences in its facilities, such as the isolation of its students from future lawyers being trained in Austin, with whom its students would later interact.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

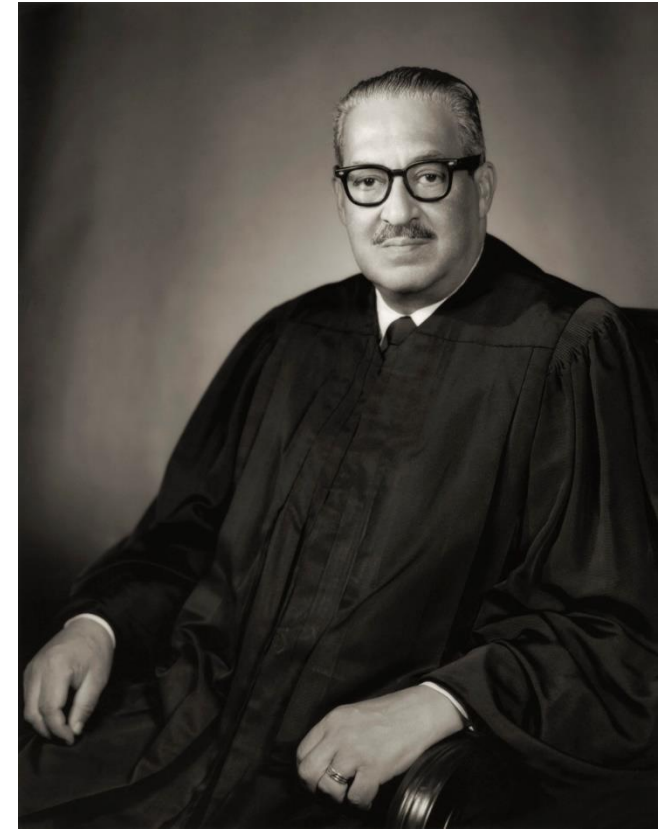
- In 1953, NAACP lawyers appealed a Kansas court ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court – Linda Brown and other African American students had been denied admission to an all-white public school near their homes.
- The NAACP alleged that segregated public schools denied African-American children the “equal protection” of the law due to them under the 14th Amendment.
- In addition, the NAACP lawyers argued that the education received by African-American students was **inherently** (*by its very nature*) inferior since it sent African American children the message that they were not good enough to be educated with others.



The Brown Decision

- **Thurgood Marshall** argued the case for the NAACP.
- Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote the unanimous decision the Supreme Court, stating:

We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other tangible factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does ... We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of separate but equal has no place. Separate education facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

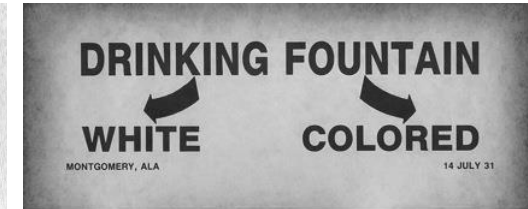


The Brown Decision

- The *Brown* decision overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* and marked the end of the legal segregation in public schools.
- In a subsequent ruling, the Supreme Court ruled that desegregation in public schools should be conducted “with all deliberate speed.”
- Enforcement of the decision was left to the lower federal courts, which were to oversee that local school districts complied with the order.
- Because the phrase “with all deliberate speed” was vague, many states were able to delay the Court’s order to desegregate their schools.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-56)

- The Supreme Court had overturned legal racial segregation in the public schools, but this still left other segregation laws – known as **Jim Crow laws** – in place throughout the South.
 - These laws prevented African Americans from sharing beaches, theaters, restaurants, water fountains, or public buses with whites.
- In December 1955, **Rosa Parks**, an African American seamstress and local NAACP member, refused to surrender her bus seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, AL.
- When Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat, local African American leaders began a boycott of the city's public buses.



The Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-56)

- **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**, a pastor in Montgomery, was the leader of the boycott.
- The boycott lasted 13 months and brought Rosa Parks, Dr. King, and their cause before the attention of the world.
- King rallied the boycotters at meetings in his church, and they carpooled to take each other to work.
- King himself was arrested and his home was bombed, but the boycott lasted and the case was eventually taken to federal court.
- The court ruled that segregation on the buses operated by the city of Montgomery violated the “equal protection” clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.
- The boycott had shown that African Americans could unite successfully to oppose segregation.

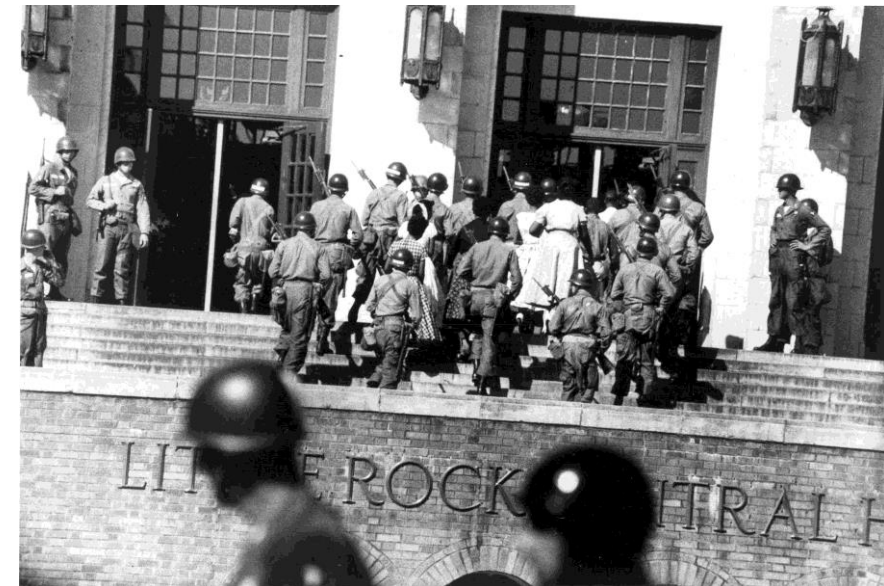


The Civil Rights Act of 1957

- In 1957, the Eisenhower administration passed the **Civil Rights Act** to increase African American voting in the South.
 - The act created the Civil Rights Commission and established a Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department.
 - The law gave federal courts the power to register African American voters.
- Registration procedures were so complex the act proved ineffective, but it helped set the pattern for later civil rights legislation.

The Little Rock Nine (1957)

- Most Southern states delayed putting the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision into effect.
- **Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas** was a WWII veteran and a liberal Democrat, who favored segregation.
- Governor Faubus ordered the Arkansas National Guard to surround the all white Little Rock High School to prevent nine African American students from entering the building.
- He also refused to provide protection to the African American students, known as the “**Little Rock Nine**,” who were being threatened by angry mobs.
- Some historians claim that Faubus simply acted to win white segregationist votes, but his actions hurt the students and defied the law.
- President Eisenhower ordered federal troops to Little Rock to ensure that the Little Rock Nine could attend school.
- Faubus closed the school until the courts ordered its reopening.



Southerners Resist Integration

- Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Southern Democrats in Congress banded together to obstruct attempts to pass federal civil rights legislation.
 - Many of these Southern legislators held important committee chairmanships, which gave them the power to prevent such legislation from even coming to the floor of Congress for a vote.
- 1963 - Alabama Gov. **George Wallace** stood in the doorway of University of Alabama to prevent blacks from enrolling.
 - He cited the constitutional rights of states to operate their public schools, but was forced to step down.
- 1964 - **Lester Maddox**, a white restaurant owner wielded an axe at African Americans wanting to enter his whites-only restaurant.
 - When ordered by the courts, Maddox sold his restaurant rather than admit African Americans, and was later elected the governor of Georgia.



Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides (1960-61)

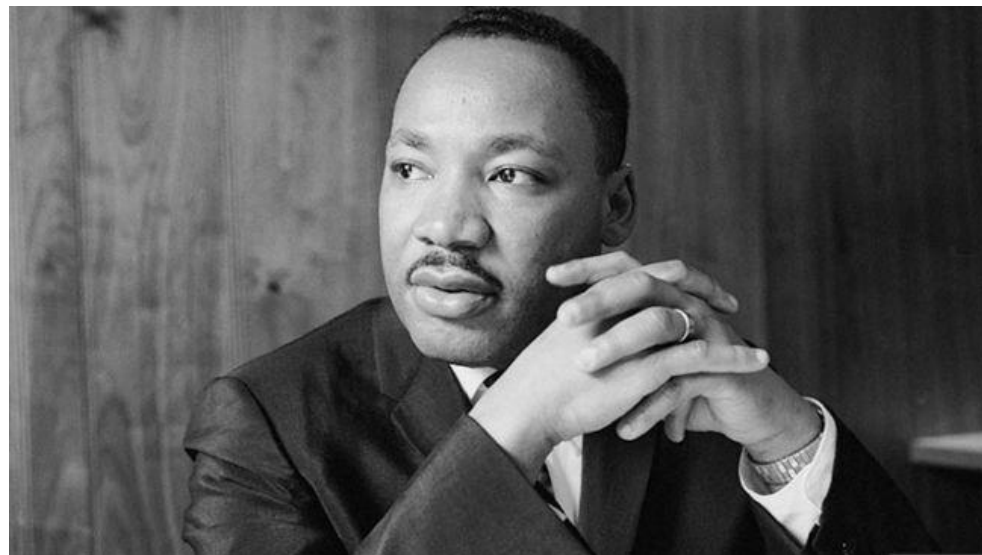
- In 1960, African American students held a sit-in at a “Whites Only” lunch counter in North Carolina.
- The tactic was soon copied by other students throughout the South.
- In 1961, interracial groups rode buses in Freedom Rides in the South.
- As a result of these protests, downtown stores finally agreed to desegregate lunch counters and hire African American workers.
- The Freedom Riders sought to overturn racial segregation on public transportation.
- They created confrontations so that the federal government would be forced to intervene.
- These riders often faced the risk of violence and even death from those who opposed integration.





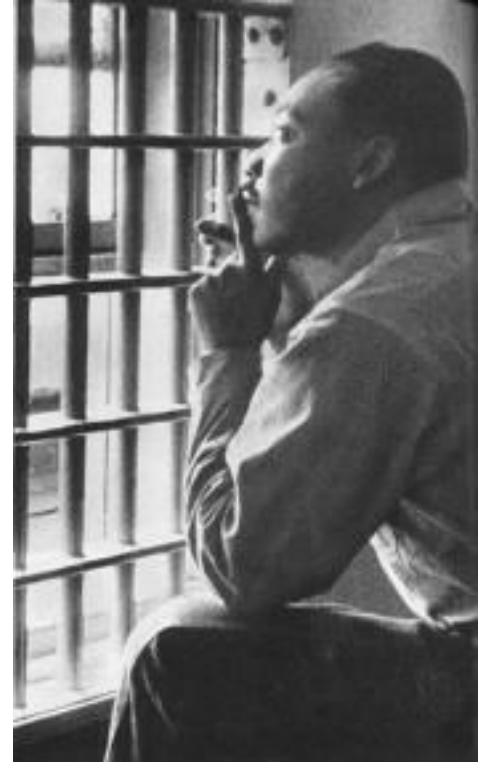
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** emerged as the leader of the Civil Rights Movement.
- King believed in **non-violence** (that passive resistance to unjust laws could change the attitudes of oppressors), and modelled his actions after **Gandhi**.
- During the 1950s and 1960s, he achieved international fame for carrying out resistance to injustice through **civil disobedience**.
 - He believed that if the government passed an unjust law, people should oppose it with non-violent tactics such as peaceful marches, boycotts, picketing and demonstrations.



King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail (1963)

- When MLK led a march at Birmingham, Alabama, he was arrested.
- Television then revealed to the nation the brutal tactics often used by the police to break up peaceful demonstrations.
- Dr. King wrote a “**Letter from a Birmingham Jail**” explaining the reasons why African Americans could no longer patiently wait for their constitutional rights.
- His critics felt that the fight against racial segregation should take place in the courts and not in the street.
- King argued that civil disobedience was justified not only because it was effective, but because “everyone has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.”



The March on Washington (1963)

- In 1963, Dr. King and other Civil Rights leaders organized a **March on Washington** to pressure Congress to pass the new Civil Rights bill put before Congress.
 - A quarter of a million people attended the march, and it was the largest demonstration for human rights in U.S. history.
 - It was here that King gave his “I Have A Dream” speech.
 - The March on Washington ended with a special meeting between Dr. King, other leaders of the march, and President John F. Kennedy at the White House.
- Only a few months after the March on Washington, President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas.
- After his tragic assassination, there was a new willingness in Congress to pass legislation he had proposed before his death.
- The march eventually led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



The Civil Rights Act of 1964

- On the plane ride back to Washington, D.C., **Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson** was immediately sworn in as President.
- A Texan, Johnson had been the Democratic leader in the Senate in 1957, and had helped to steer the Civil Rights Act of 1957 through Congress.
- With the lobbying efforts of Civil Rights supporters, President Johnson was now able to push an even more important bill through Congress.
- The Southern Democratic bloc tried to stop the bill with ceaseless speeches, but they were prevented by a vote of two-thirds of the Senate.

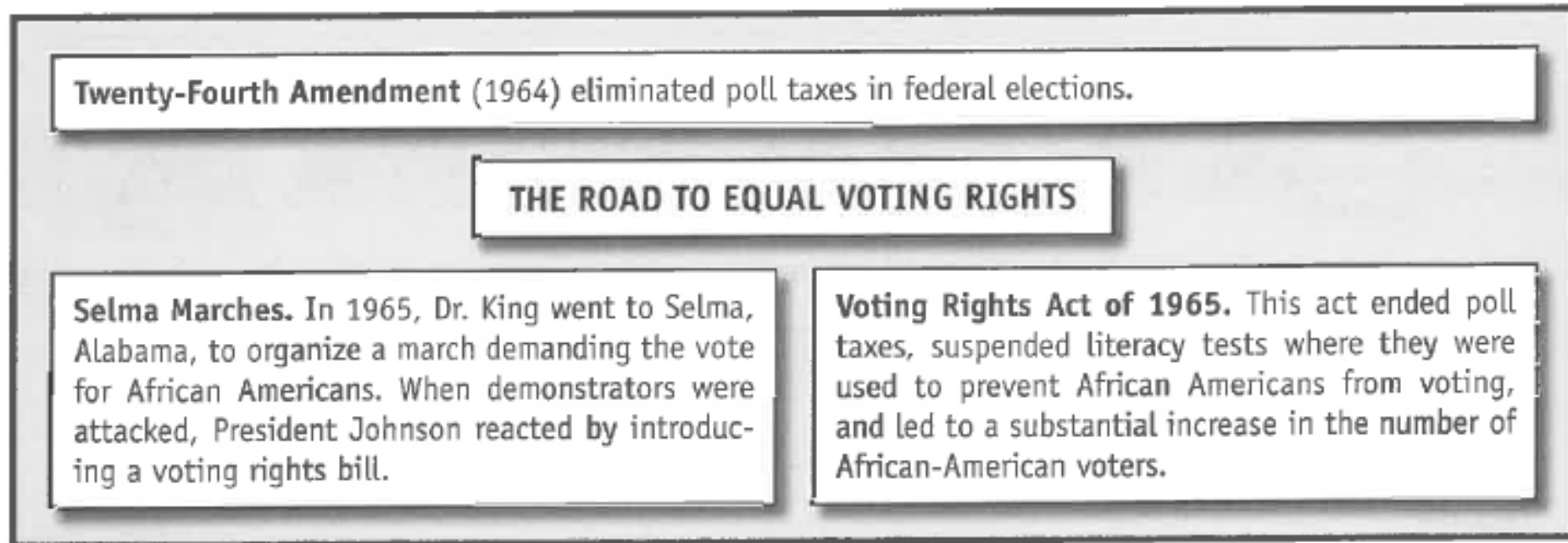


The Civil Rights Act of 1964

- The resulting **Civil Rights Act of 1964** prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion or ethnic origin in hotels, restaurants, and all places of employment doing business with the federal government or engaged in interstate commerce.
- The act cut off federal aid to school districts with segregated schools.
- Finally, the act gave the federal government the power to register voters to establish the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to enforce the act's provisions.
- This meant that all businesses involved in interstate commerce could no longer discriminate.

The Struggle to Achieve Voting Rights

- After the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights leaders turned their energies to registering African American voters and encouraging them to vote.



Affirmative Action (1965)

- In 1965, President Johnson signed an Executive Order requiring employees with federal contracts to take positive steps to raise the number of their minority employees to correct past imbalances.
- This went beyond not discriminating: companies and institutions were now required to actively recruit minority candidates.
- **Affirmative action** programs increased minority representation in colleges, the professions and many businesses.
 - The act had some unintended consequences, and some critics challenged these programs as a form of reverse discrimination.
 - In *Regents of University of California v. Bakke*, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld affirmative action, but not the use of racial quotas.
 - Many affirmative action programs have been phased out over time as American has become a more **pluralistic society** (*diverse; where the people hold a wide range of beliefs and tolerate each other's beliefs even when they don't match their own*).