

Class Starters & Enders

Making the Most of Instructional Time Five Minute Lessons

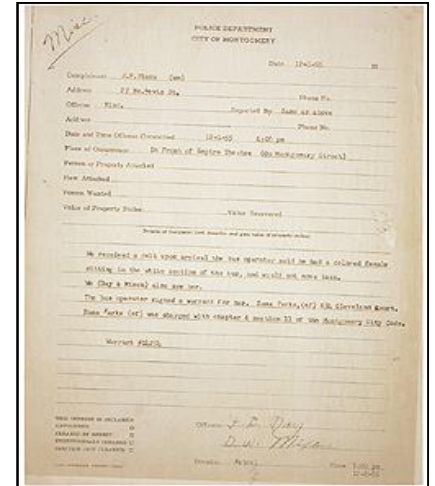
Class Starters and Enders help utilize the last minutes of class when a lesson ends but there is not enough time to start another, or for an interest approach at the beginning of class. Mini-lessons correlate to GPS in the programs areas below.

One Day on the Bus

Program Areas: Family & Consumer Sciences, Foundation Skills, Law & Public Safety, Transportation

Instructions: Read the material and make notes of important points, answer questions, and be ready to discuss this topic.

It was December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama when 42-year-old seamstress, Rosa Parks, took a seat on the bus on her way home from work. Before reaching her destination, she quietly began a social revolution when she was arrested for violating a city law requiring racial segregation of public buses. Police records show that she was sitting in the middle of the bus and the first 10 seats were reserved for white passengers only. However, when the bus became crowded and she refused to give up her seat to a white passenger the bus driver called the police. With her refusal to relinquish her seat, Rosa Parks was arrested, lost her tailoring job, received numerous death threats and inspired a young Baptist minister, new to Montgomery, named Martin Luther King Jr. to take action. Martin Luther King Jr. almost immediately initiated and led a boycott on the Montgomery bus system.



Rosa Parks' police report from the day she was arrested on December 1, 1955.

In cities all across the South, segregated bus systems stood as a constant reminder of the existing inequalities in American society. African Americans constituted a large percentage of the citizens who used public transportation in Montgomery, so the boycott was a serious threat to the city's economy. This would not be the first attempt to fight segregated bus companies; a bus boycott had been attempted in Baton Rouge, LA in 1953, but was unsuccessful. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a well coordinated, peaceful movement that lasted 381 days with commitment and support from much of the community.

Rosa Parks was convicted under city law, however her lawyer filed a notice of appeal and while her case was tied up in court, the U.S. District Court ruled in another case that racial segregation on public buses was unconstitutional. The case, *Browder v. Gayle*, was decided on June 4, 1956 and was upheld by the United States Supreme court on November 13, 1956. This helped spark the end of the "separate but equal" legal doctrine in the United States.

Rosa Parks remained an active member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and worked for Congressman John Conyers(MI) from 1965-1988 helping the homeless find housing. The Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute of Self-Development was established in 1987 in Detroit, Michigan to offer job training for black youth. In 1999, Parks received the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor, the highest honor a civilian can receive in the United States. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) also sponsors an annual Rosa Parks Freedom Award in her honor.

Review Questions

1. What famous civil rights leader led the Montgomery Bus Boycott and where did he draw his inspiration from?
2. How long did the Montgomery Bus Boycott last, and why was it successful?
3. What is the highest honor a civilian can receive in America?
4. What Supreme Court case deemed racial segregation on public buses unconstitutional?
5. Why would boycotting the public transportation system be such a treat to the city of Montgomery?

History Connection

Students can create a time line of the civil rights movement and research other key civil rights leaders.

Georgia CTAE Resource Network - Written by Lauren Woodliff and Shannon R Lawrence

Portions of this text, originally from Wikipedia, were modified and the information independently verified. Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. See Terms of Use for details. - <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>