Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching
A Resource Guide for K–12 Classrooms

Edited by
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School desegregation protest, year unknown. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.


Disability rights activists march from their hotel to blockade door and hallway in U.S. Capitol, where they met with HHS Secretary Donna Shalala. Here they enter the Capitol building. © 1993 Rick Reinhard.


The buttons on the back cover, and all uncredited buttons throughout the book, are courtesy of Roger Lowenstein of the L.A. Leadership Academy.
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Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching
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Just as the Civil Rights Movement was the result of the work of countless people whose names did not make the headlines, so too was this book the result of the work of many more people than those acknowledged on the cover.

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To view more of the photographers’ and artists’ work and for contact information, visit www.civilrightsteaching.org.

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Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword
by Congressman John Lewis ........................................... xiii
National Standards met by this Publication .......................... xiv

INTRODUCTION
Introduction
by Jenice L. View ........................................................ 3
The Mountain and the Man Who Was Not God: An Essay on the Life and Ideas of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
by June Jordan ............................................................ 12
Uprooting Racism and Racists in the United States
by James Boggs and Grace Lee Boggs ............................... 20

SECTION 1
Reflections on Teaching About the Movement
The Politics of Children’s Literature: What’s Wrong with the Rosa Parks Myth
by Herbert Kohl .......................................................... 25
Advanced Ideas about Democracy
by Vincent Harding ...................................................... 32
The Complexities of Encouraging Social Action
by Bob Peterson ........................................................... 41
From Snarling Dogs to Bloody Sunday: Teaching Past the Platitude of the Civil Rights Movement
by Kate Lyman ............................................................. 44
Reinventing My Teaching about the Civil Rights Movement
by Alana D. Murray ..................................................... 51
Teaching Eyes on the Prize: Teaching Democracy
by Judy Richardson ....................................................... 55
Sharing the Story of the Movement: The Project HIP-HOP Experience
by Nancy Murray .......................................................... 61
Uncovering the Movement: A Staff Development Seminar
by Alana D. Murray ..................................................... 68

SECTION 2
Citizenship and self-determination
Women’s Work: The Untold Story of the Civil Rights Movement
by Deborah Menkart, Alana D. Murray, and Jenice L. View MS HS ........................................ 75
Patriotism Over Democracy: A Critical Analysis of U.S. History Textbooks
by James W. Loewen ..................................................... 79
Lynch Law in America
by Ida B. Wells-Barnett HS .............................................. 91
Nonviolence v. Jim Crow
by Bayard Rustin HS ..................................................... 93
The Montgomery Bus Boycott—Organizing Strategies and Challenges
by Alana D. Murray MS HS ............................................ 96
Boycott Dramatization for First and Second Grade
by Maggie Nolan Donovan ES ........................................ 101
The Enactment
by Rita Dove (poem) ES MS ........................................... 104
Claudette Colvin Goes to Work
by Rita Dove (poem) MS HS ........................................... 105
Freedom’s Children: An Oral History Unit on the Civil Rights Movement
by Laurel R. Singleton ES MS ........................................ 106
The Man I Am
by Thaddeus Freeman (poem) ES .................................. 109
Democracy and Empowerment: The Nashville Student Sit-Ins
by Rändi Douglas MS HS .............................................. 110
Voices of Black Liberation
by Larry Miller MS HS ................................................. 117
The Borning Struggle: An Interview with Bernice Johnson Reagon
by Dick Cluster HS ...................................................... 120

Table of Contents
Freedom Song: Tactics for Transformation  
by Alana D. Murray  
\[ MS HS \] ................................. 131

Mississippi at Atlantic City  
by Charles M. Sherrod  
\[ HS \] ...................................... 137

Black Nationalism and Black Pride: The Ballot or the Bullet  
by Malcolm X  
\[ MS HS \] .................................... 142

The Black Panther Party: Legacy and Lessons for the Future  
by Debbie Wei  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 145

What We Want  
by Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael)  
\[ HS \] ........................................ 149

What We Want, What We Believe  
by Wayne Au ...................................... 153

The Massacre at Tlatelolco, Mexico  
by Octavio Madigan Ruiz et al.  
\[ HS \] ......................................... 159

Vietnam: An Antiwar Comic Book  
by Julian Bond and T. G. Lewis  
\[...........\] 160

Letter from George Jackson  
by George Jackson  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 180

Movers and Movements: Fighting for Social Justice in South Africa  
by Brenda Randolph  
\[ MS HS \] ........................................ 186

The Bloody Wake of Alcatraz: Political Repression of the American Indian Movement During the 1970s  
by Ward Churchill  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 191

That Day at Oglala: June 28, 1975  
by Leonard Peltier  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 197

American Exported Black Nationalism  
by Yohuru R. Williams  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 202

Remarks at the Second Circuit Judicial Conference  
by Thurgood Marshall  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 204

The Color of Elections  
by Bob Wing  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 207

Contemporary Police Brutality and Misconduct: A Continuation of the Legacy of Racial Violence  
by the Black Radical Congress  
\[ HS \] .......................................... 211

Hidden in Plain Sight: Martin Luther King Jr.’s Radical Vision  
by Craig Gordon  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 216

The Power of Language and Literacy: Student Historians for Social Justice  
by Irene McGinty, Monica Larenas et al.  
\[ ES \] ........................................ 220

Bring It On!: Stories and Strategies for First Grade  
by Maggie Nolan Donovan  
\[ ES \] ........................................ 230

SECTION 3

Eager to Learn, Ready to Defend: Education for Reconstruction  
by Deborah Menkart  
\[ MS HS \] ........................................ 249

Each School Had a Graveyard: Native-American Boarding Schools  
by Pauli Murray  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 256

Brown v. Board: Parents Take A Stand  
........................................... 260

Mexican-American Parents Fight Segregation  
by Jesus Treviño  
\[ MS HS \] ........................................ 262

Court Cases in Prelude to Brown, 1849–1949  
by Jody Allen, Brian Daugherity, and Sarah Trembanis  
\[ HS \] .......................................... 270

The March on John Philip Sousa: A Social Action Project  
by Elizabeth A. Davis  
\[ MS HS \] ...................................... 274

Desegregation  
by Eloise Greenfield  
\[ poem \] ................................. 280

Acting for Justice  
by Linda Christensen  
\[ MS HS \] ......................................... 281

The Chicago Defender Sends a Man to Little Rock  
by Gwendolyn Brooks  
\[ poem \] ................................. 286

A School Year Like No Other: Eyes on the Prize  
by Bill Bigelow  
\[ MS HS \] .......................................... 288

The Plaintiff Speaks  
by Clarissa T. Sligh  
\[ HS \] ........................................... 291

Literacy and Liberation  
by Septima P. Clark  
................................. 291

Mississippi Freedom Schools: A Project from the Past Suggests a Lesson for the Future  
by David Levine with teaching ideas  
\[ HS \] .......................................... 304

Material Things and Soul Things, from the Freedom Schools Curriculum  
\[ HS \] .......................................... 313

Freedom to Liberation: Politics and Pedagogy in Movement Schools  
by Daniel Perlstein  
................................. 316
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Acto: Studying the Mexican-American Experience through Farmworkers’ Theater</td>
<td>George W. Chilcoat</td>
<td></td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Happened to the Revolt of the Black Athlete?</td>
<td>An Interview with Harry Edwards</td>
<td>David Leonard</td>
<td>HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Felton X” (Bill Russell)</td>
<td>Josh Ozersky</td>
<td></td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting a Picture of the Movement: From Aaron Douglas to the Memphis Sanitation Workers</td>
<td>Patty Bode and Stephanie Schmidt</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African Unions Struggle for Justice</td>
<td>Bill Bigelow</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¡Si, Se Puede! Yes We Can!</td>
<td>Marcy Fink Campos</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Jobs for All”: A Fitting Tribute to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.</td>
<td>Mathew Forstater</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Down with the Brown!</td>
<td>Elizabeth Martinez</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norma</td>
<td>Sonia Sanchez</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busing in Boston</td>
<td>Robert Coles</td>
<td></td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Came from a Yellow Seed</td>
<td>Nelson Nagai</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Make a Path through Shouting</td>
<td>Cyrus Cassells</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisters in Arms</td>
<td>David Hill</td>
<td></td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisiting the Struggle for Integration</td>
<td>Michelle Fine and Bernadette Anand</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New Civil Rights Movement By Any Means Necessary</td>
<td>BAMP and Eric Foner</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Public Education of Equal High Quality</td>
<td>Congressman Jesse L. Jackson Jr.</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Walk in the History of My People</td>
<td>Chrystos (poem)</td>
<td></td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolás Guillén: The Struggle against Two Racisms</td>
<td>Carmen Gómez García</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrighting the Wrongs</td>
<td>Sonia Arora</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin and My Father</td>
<td>David Hernandez (poem)</td>
<td>MS   HS</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If You Miss Me from the Back of the Bus</td>
<td>Jenice L. View</td>
<td>ES   MS HS</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Art and Black Liberation</td>
<td>Larry Neal</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul Power and the People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murals: Redefining Culture, Reclaiming Identity</td>
<td>Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sanchez</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking Tea with Both Hands</td>
<td>Nancy Hom</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I Have Not Signed a Treaty with the United States Government  
*by Chrystos* (poem)  
**HS** ........................................... 476

Understanding Self-Defense in the Civil Rights Movement through Visual Arts  
*by Sonia James-Wilson* ........................................... 477

“Solo le Pido a Dios” ........................................... 487

Black Youth Black Art Black Face—An Address  
*by Ras Baraka*  
**HS** ........................................... 489

What Happened to Your Generation’s Promise of “Love and Revolution”: A Letter to Angela Davis  
*by Eisa Nefertari Ulen*  
**MS**  
**HS** ........................................... 492

Malcolm Is ’Bout More Than Wearing a Cap  
*by Michael Warr* (poem) ........................................... 495

Black History Month Shall Set You Free  
*by Jimi Izrael*  
**HS** ........................................... 496

Where Is the Activism of the Hip-Hop Generation?  
*by Todd Steven Burroughs*  
**MS**  
**HS** ........................................... 498

We the Peeps: After Three Decades Chillin’ in the Hood, Hip-Hop Is Finding Its Voice Politically  
*by Teresa Wiltz*  
**HS** ........................................... 500

The Hip-Hop Revolution  
*by Manning Marable* ............................................ 507

Freedom Camp: A Teach-In on the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday  
*by Katie Kissinger*  
**ES** ........................................... 513

Stepping into History through Art and Literature  
*by Lynda Tredway*  
**MS**  
**HS** ........................................... 519

Big Shoes to Fill  
*by Debora Kodish and Teresa Jaynes*  
**ES**  
**MS**  
**HS** ........................................... 525

**LOOKING FORWARD**

Each Generation Must Discover Its Mission  
*by Grace Lee Boggs* ............................................. 533

A Message to Humanity  
*by Leonard Peltier* ............................................. 536

Poem for July 4, 1994  
*by Sonia Sanchez* ............................................. 537
FOREFORWARD

By Congressman John Lewis

You are about to embark on a wonderful journey, a journey into our collective identity as an American people. That is why I have always loved history, because it is through the study of our past that we discover who we are today as a nation. And the more you explore the American experience, the more you realize that the cry for freedom has inspired some of the greatest events of our history.

The Civil Rights Movement is just that kind of American story. We were a congregation of “ordinary” men and women who had an extraordinary vision. Some of us had examined our nation’s philosophy simply and eloquently described in the Constitution, but most of us just answered a whisper deep in our souls that something was amiss in America. We faced the truth that generations of racial prejudice, segregation, and discrimination were not fair; they were not right, they were not just. And it was that deep urging for liberation that ignited our courage to act.

We determined to make this nation live up to its creed of “freedom and justice for all.” And we found a way to get in the way. We found a way, through nonviolent protest, to dramatize our issues. We held up a mirror to America so it could see the true face of its democracy. That revelation brought change. It transformed the landscape of this nation. It also shook the spirits of people around the globe who modeled their own freedom movements on the achievements of these “ordinary,” inspired Americans of the Civil Rights Movement.

History expresses who we are, but it also reveals who we must become. The ideals of this nation are noble and great.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” —Declaration of Independence, 1776

But they are yet to be fully realized. Our past calls us to awaken to our future, to answer the soul’s eternal quest for liberation. Call it the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement or the spirit of history. We must recapture this spirit. As a nation and as a people, we must make this spirit part of our thoughts, our actions, and our lives.

All of us—Black, White, Latino, Asian, and Native American—must pull together for the common good. This is our American mission. This is our charge, to build what I call the Beloved Community, a nation at peace with itself, one nation, one people, one house, and one family. This is, above all, the greatest lesson of the Civil Rights Movement, that our work is not done until our collective dreams of freedom, equality, and justice are made real for every life in this country. Let the stories of these “ordinary” Americans inspire your own dreams. Let the history of this Movement help lead you to your passion. Let it help you find your voice, your way. And then go out and do something great for humanity.

John Lewis was born the son of sharecroppers on February 21, 1940, outside of Troy, Alabama. From 1963 to 1966, Lewis was the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which he helped form. Lewis, at the age of 23, was one of the planners and a keynote speaker at the historic “March on Washington.” After leaving SNCC in 1966, he remained active in the Civil Rights Movement through his work as associate director of the Field Foundation and his participation in the Southern Regional Council’s voter registration programs. John Lewis’ first electoral success came in 1981 when he was elected to the Atlanta City Council. Elected to Congress in November 1986, Lewis represents Georgia’s Fifth Congressional District. He is currently serving his ninth term in office. His autobiography, Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement (1998, authored with Michael D’Orso), provides a powerful history of the Movement.
The lessons and readings in Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching are aligned with national standards in many subject areas. Below are just a few examples. See www.civilrightsteaching.org for more detailed information about the standards aligned with this book and for articles on how to prepare standards-based lessons and on the politics of standards.

**Civics Grades K-4 (CCE)**
- How can people work together to promote the values and principles of American democracy?
- What are the roles of the citizen in American democracy?

**Civics Grades 5-12 (CCE)**
- How has the United States influenced other nations, and how have other nations influenced American politics and society?
- How can citizens take part in civic life?

**Language Arts Grades K-12 (NCTE)**
- Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

**Music Grades K-12 (CNAE)**
- Students identify and describe roles of musicians (e.g., orchestra conductor, folksinger, church organist) in various music settings and cultures.

**Theatre Grades K-12 (CNAE)**
- Researching by using cultural and historical information to support improvised and scripted scenes.

**U.S. History Grades K-4 (NCHS)**
- Identify historical figures in the local community and explain their contributions and significance.
- Identify ordinary people who have believed in the fundamental democratic values such as justice, truth, equality, the rights of the individual, and responsibility for the common good, and explain their significance.
- Analyze in their historical context the accomplishments of ordinary people in the local community now and long ago who have done something beyond the ordinary that displays particular courage or a sense of responsibility in helping the common good.
- Describe how historical figures in the United States and other parts of the world have advanced the rights of individuals and promoted the common good, and identify character traits such as persistence, problem solving, moral responsibility, and respect for others that made them successful.
- Understands how democratic values came to be and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols.

**U.S. History Grades 3-4 (NCHS)**
- Compare the dreams and ideals that people from various groups have sought, some of the problems they encountered in realizing their dreams, and the sources of strength and determination that families drew upon and shared. [Compare and contrast]
- Analyze songs, symbols, and slogans that demonstrate freedom of expression and the role of protest in a democracy. [Consider multiple perspectives]

**U.S. History Grades 5-12 (NCHS)**
- Understands Federal Indian policy and United States foreign policy after the Civil War.
- Understands how the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics.
- Understands domestic policies after World War II.
- Understands the struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil liberties.
- Understands recent developments in foreign and domestic politics.
- Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in contemporary United States.

**Visual Arts Grades K-4 (CNAE)**
- Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories.
- Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art.

**Visual Arts Grades 5-8 (CNAE)**
- Students describe how people’s experiences influence the development of specific artworks.
- Students integrate visual, spatial, and temporal concepts with content to communicate intended meaning in their artworks.

**World History, Grades 5-12 (NCHS)**
- Students understand major global trends since World War II