Summary 1954-60

By the early 1950s, slavery had been abolished and black Americans were equal to white Americans by law. However, black Americans were not actually treated as equal, as all over the USA black Americans lived in the worst areas and had access to the worst facilities. This was at its worst in the South, as most Southern states had a system of segregation which kept black and white communities separate. For example, local laws meant black Americans could not use the same toilets or restaurants as white people. Black Americans had the right to vote, but were stopped by a system that deliberately discriminated against them, by threats and by violence. Some black Americans in the South tried to improve their lives by joining the civil rights movement to campaign for equality. During the early stages of the civil rights movement, progress was made in education and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, with the culmination of the Civil Rights Act in 1957. However, with this progress being made, Southern opposition to civil rights grew as attempts were made to hinder the success of the movement.

Progress in Education

One of the biggest segregation issues in the South was education. The Brown V. Topeka case was significant in ruling against segregation in schools. However, with no timescale placed on desegregation, this was stil a problem in Southern schools as seen in the case of the Little Rock Nine. As threats of violence increased, civil rights groups became aware of the power of the media to help their cause.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

Rosa Parks was arrested after refusing to give up her bus seat for a white man. This sparked the bus boycott which lasted 381 and almost all black people in Montgomery took part. As head of the MIA, Martin Luther King became the voice of the campaign. He understood the importance of publicity, which was crucial for success. The boycott ended in 1956 with the Supreme Court decision to segregate public transport.

1954 Brown v. Topeka case ruled AGAINST segregated education 1955 Murder of Emmett Till, a 14 year old African American, by the KKK 1955 Start of Montgomery Bus Boycott— December (Rosa Parks) 1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott ends. Segregation on public transport ruled unlawful

Enquiry Question: What kind of change could African Americans see in the period 1954-1960?





Key Figures		
Emmet Till	A 14-year-old from Chicago who was murdered in 1955 by two white men whilst visiting relatives in Mississippi. His mother insisted on an open-casket at his funeral which gained much publicity for	
Linda Brown	In 1951, the Browns and 12 other families went to court to fight for their black children to be able to attend the nearest school which was 'white' in the Brown V. Topeka case.	
Rosa Parks	In 1955, Parks was arrested after refusing to give up her seat on a bus for a white person. This sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott.	
Martin Luther King	Civil Rights leader who came to prominence during the Montgom-	

Challenge

Why did Emmett Till's mother decide to have an open viewing of his body at the funeral home?

Why did Rosa Parks become the figurehead of the Montgomery Bus Boycott?

What impact did the Little Rock 9 have on attitudes towards integration in the South?

1956 The Southern Manifesto signed by Southern Politicians to encourage segregation

1957 President Eisenhower used National Guard to protect 9 black students at Little Rock High School

1957 Civil Rights Act: all people had right to vote and Federal Government to look for racial discrimination

1960 Civil Rights Act: aimed to protect voting rights of black citizens







Other Resources

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ zcpcwmn/revision/1

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=S64zRnnn4Po

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=JeE2WgIHFTc



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1 2 1 2	Key Vocabulary	
<u>, </u>	Segregation	Separating groups due to their race e.g. separate housing, educa-
		tion, health care, or public transport for black and white people.
୷ଌ୷	Discrimination	Treating people unfairly because of their race or religion.
_ ነ <i>ስ</i> ም		
	Jim Crow Laws	'Black code' laws enforcing segregation, named after 'Jim Crow' (a
3		lazy, stupid black character played by a white comedian).
	Integration	Black and white people sharing facilities e.g. the same schools.
	NAACP	(National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People). A
		pressure group founded in 1909 that focused on eliminating racial
1111		discrimination and on fighting for civil rights in the courts.
─ ────────	CORE	(Congress of Racial Equality). Established in 1942, this group used
atata		non-violent direct action protests e.g. the first group to use the
Mallall.		tactic of sit-ins.
\oplus	Non-violent	Forms of protest that don't include violence e.g. boycotts, sit-ins.
~	direct action	
<u> </u>	Plessy V.	'Separate but equal' - A law of 1896 said segregation was allowed
★ ≠9,1°	Ferguson	if conditions for blacks and whites were equal
	Desegregation	Removal of the policy of segregation
	WPC	(Women's Political Council) set up in Montgomery in 1946 to fight
		discrimination.
	MIA	(Montgomery Improvement Association) led by Martin Luther
		King, set up to improve the lives of black people in Montgomery
		and to continue the bus boycott.
Ø	Boycott	Refusal to use a service if you believe it is doing something wrong
		(e.g. discriminating against black people on buses).
***	Dixiecrats	Democratic Party senators from Southern States who opposed
		black voting rights.
7	Ku Klux Klan	(Ku Klux Klan) A secret society of white people in the South who
	(KKK)	believed in white supremacy and used violence against black peo-
		ple (and other minority groups).
	WCC	(White Citizens' Council) petitioned and campaigned against de-
☐ ÅÎ 🛊 ☐		segregation .
	Southern	A document written by Congress in 1956 opposing racial integra-
	Manifesto	tion of public places.
† (0==	SCLC	(Southern Christian Leadership Council) set up church-based pro-
		tests, Martin Luther King was one of its leaders.