

Eleven Days in the Life of Dr. King Boycott!!



<i>Grades</i>	4 & up
<i>Core Content Area</i>	Social studies, language arts
<i>Themes</i>	Civil unrest, community, organized social action
<i>Materials</i>	Research materials, writing materials <i>Extension:</i> Video technology, props/backdrops, poster paper, markers

Background

Boycott: Refusing to buy a something (like clothes, a food product, or certain brand), or a service (like paying for bus transportation) in order to protest an unfair practice.

When Dr. King was just starting out as a preacher, he learned that Rosa Parks had been arrested for not giving up her seat on the bus. What people may not know is that Rosa Parks was a leader in a community effort that had long-planned to challenge unjust laws. Other leaders including Dr. King got together to figure out what to do to help Rosa Parks and to end bus segregation. They decided to begin a bus boycott. They decided if enough Black people (and other supporters) didn't take the bus, the bus company would eventually run out of money or the government would make a change. It took 381 Days, but eventually the people won the fight in that community. But, the struggle to integrate public facilities and interstate travel would continue for years.

Lesson Procedure

1.) Research a Boycott

People continue to use the power of boycotts to protest something that they think is unfair or to encourage large institutions to change their behavior. Research an example of a boycott in present day or recent history. Using informational texts, gather details about this boycott.

- Why did it start?
- Who were the prime movers in the boycott?
- What did they hope to accomplish or change?
- How did they execute their boycott?
- What was the result of the movement?
- What was the opposing viewpoint and the reasons for their perspective?
- What led to the disagreement?

Answer these questions and present your findings to your class.

Further Exploration

For further exploration, research boycotts from various periods in history and compare.

- How have boycotts changed over time?
- How are they similar?

Besides the bus boycott, consider the grape and lettuce boycotts of the United Farmworkers, or environmental boycotts of certain products.

Extensions:

1.) Presentations

Find a creative way to present your findings to the class. Consider filming a video or doing a live mock news report, creating visual aids to help share your information, or portraying people involved in the boycott and share the information through dialogue between the people involved.

2.) Create a Boycott

What are some of the issues that are important to you? It might relate to civil rights or another issue like climate change, or even something at your school. Is there a company or a product that makes the situation worse? Maybe it makes fun of people, or harms animals or the environment. Is there a practice at your school that you think could be more fair? What could you do to organize with others to change it?