

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



<i>Grades</i>	6 – 12
<i>Core Content Area</i>	Social studies, language arts
<i>Themes</i>	Civic action, civil unrest, community, standing up for beliefs
<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), 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 a few white 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.

## **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. Recent boycotts in 2017 have targeted companies ranging from Uber and Trump brands, to McDonald's, Starbucks, Netflix and Wells Fargo. Historic boycotts include the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Delano Grape Boycott and the student walkouts of the 1970s. 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.) Plan a Boycott**

Plan a boycott. What is the goal/message you want to communicate? What company or government agency will your boycott target? Explain how this boycott will serve your goal. Present your action plan to the class and field questions and criticisms about your plan.