

HISTORY / SOCIAL STUDIES · Y4–Y6

# The Civil Rights Movement

Knowledge Organiser — Y4–Y6

## Key vocabulary

1

**Segregation**

The legal separation of Black and white Americans in public spaces — schools, buses, restaurants, parks. In force across the southern USA.

2

**Jim Crow laws**

State and local laws enforcing racial segregation in the southern United States from 1877 to 1965.

3

**Civil disobedience**

Refusing to obey unjust laws peacefully. Used by civil rights protesters to highlight injustice.

4

**Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–56)**

Black residents of Montgomery, Alabama boycotted the city's bus system for 381 days after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat.

5

**March on Washington (1963)**

250,000 people marched in Washington D.C. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his 'I Have a Dream' speech.

6

**Civil Rights Act (1964)**

Landmark US legislation that outlawed discrimination based on race, colour, religion, or national origin.

## Key figures

People who shaped the movement



- ROSA PARKS (1913–2005): Refused to give up her bus seat in Montgomery, Alabama, sparking the bus boycott.
- MARTIN LUTHER KING JR (1929–1968): Baptist minister and leader of the non-violent civil rights movement. Nobel Peace Prize, 1964. Assassinated April 4, 1968.
- MALCOLM X (1925–1965): Civil rights activist who argued for Black self-determination and Black pride. A counterpoint to King's non-violence.
- THURGOOD MARSHALL (1908–1993): NAACP lawyer who argued *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) before the Supreme Court — the case that desegregated schools.
- JOHN LEWIS (1940–2020): Led the Selma to Montgomery march; beaten on Bloody Sunday (1965). Later served in Congress for 33 years.
- HARRIET TUBMAN (1822–1913): Enslaved person who escaped and then led hundreds of others to freedom via the Underground Railroad.

