

# Chapter **10**

## **What Does It Mean to Be a Good Citizen?**

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Figure 1. *Septima Clark and Rosa Parks*



**Note.** Rosa Parks was a trained activist who spent a summer at the Highlander Folk School learning about non-violent political protest. *Mrs. Septima Clark and Rosa Parks at Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee.* (1955). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2015652115/>

## What Does It Mean to Be a Good Citizen?

C2 Disciplinary Focus Government/citizenship	C3 Inquiry Focus Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions	Content Topic Good citizenship
<p><b>C3 Focus Indicators</b></p> <p><b>D1:</b> Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration the different opinions people have about how to answer the questions. (D1.5.3-5)</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families. (D2.Civ.6.3-5)</p> <p>Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others' points of view about civic issues. (D2.Civ 10.3-5)</p> <p><b>D3:</b> Use evidence to develop claims in response to compelling questions. (D3.4.3-5)</p> <p><b>D4:</b> Present a summary of arguments and explanations to others outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, and reports) and digital technologies (e.g., internet, social media, and digital documentary). (D4.3.3-5)</p>		
<b>Suggested Grade level</b> 5	<b>Resources</b> Cited throughout and at the end of the chapter	<b>Time Required</b> Variable

Citizenship is an important concept that is taught in the elementary grades. Abowitz and Harnish (2006) argued that citizenship education in schools is taught in a way that focuses on civic republican literacy in which students learn facts associated with American history and government combined with learning to adopt a patriotic identity. Central to this method of citizenship education is the teaching of historical figures such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Helen Keller, Harriet Tubman, and Eleanor Roosevelt. By learning about historical figures, students are shown examples of exemplary citizens who had the qualities and characteristics that made them good citizens. According to Loewen (2007), history textbooks are compromised with historical narratives that mythologize and *heroify* historical figures through a process he calls *heroification*. Heroification is a “degenerative process (much like calcification) that makes people over into heroes. Through this process, our educational media turn flesh-and-blood individuals into pious, perfect creatures without conflicts, pain, credibility, or human interest” (p. 11). He argues that social studies teachers, the curriculum, and textbooks heroify historical figures through omission: purposely neglecting unfavorable, or “un-American” qualities, acts, or decisions of the person. This one-sided, uncomplicated portrayal of historical figures erases historical figures’

“human-ness” and leaves students with an unrealistic role model they are unable to emulate (Kohl, 1994; Loewen, 2007).

This chapter will use critical historical thinking (Salinas et al., 2012; Vickery & Salinas, 2019) to explore the many ways in which Black women as critical citizens fought for civil and human rights. According to Crowley and King (2018), critical inquiries are designed to “identify and to challenge master narratives that legitimate systems of oppression and power” (p. 15). Using primary sources from the Library of Congress, this critical inquiry will introduce you to the different approaches teachers can take to explore this often-silenced history in the elementary grades.

## Rationale for Classroom Practice

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) argues that the purpose of social studies is “the promotion of civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life” (NCSS, 2010). This national organization highlights that this discipline should be devoted to promoting civic competence and the development of future citizens in our democratic society. The social studies classroom is an important space where students learn what it means to be a citizen through the transmission of “official knowledge” (VanSledright, 2008). Official knowledge is seen as common-sense knowledge that is accepted without question or asking where the knowledge came from or whose perspective it represents (Apple, 2004). Oftentimes in the social studies, the official knowledge takes the form of the “master narrative” (Takaki, 2012), which is defined as stories that are created by the dominant culture and braided into social structures in order to maintain power while justifying the subjugation of marginalized communities (Giroux, 1991). According to historian Ronald Takaki (2012),

The Master Narrative says that our country was settled by European immigrants, and that Americans are white. People of other races, people not of European ancestry, have been pushed to the side lines of the Master Narrative. Sometimes they are ignored completely. Sometimes they are merely treated as the “Other”—different and inferior. Either way, they are not seen as part of America’s national identity. The Master Narrative is a powerful story, and a popular one. It is deeply embedded in our culture, in the writings of many scholars, and in the ways people teach and talk about American history. But the Master Narrative is inaccurate. Its definition of who is an American is too narrow. (pp. 6–7)

Scholars have noted how the dominant narrative that is taught in social studies classrooms ignores issues of social stratification and the struggles of women and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) (Banks; 1993; McCarthy, 2005). This view of knowledge ignores the premise that knowledge and meanings are socially constructed by human beings as they interact with the world they are interpreting. The struggle over the “official knowledge” and what is included in the curriculum is linked to the broader concern over who holds power in

society and who should control the school curriculum (Apple, 1992).

While the NCSS definition of the social studies encompasses teaching students to become citizens in a global and diverse world, citizenship education that is occurring in schools continues to be comprised of “Enlightenment” ideas of citizenship (Abowitz & Harnish, 2006) in elementary and secondary school curriculum (Hahn, 2008). According to Hahn (1999, 2002, 2008), most children are first exposed to civic ideals in elementary school social studies lessons on holidays (Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President’s Day) and patriotic symbols (such as the flag, bald eagle, monuments), and our founding fathers (all of whom were wealthy white men, and many enslavers). Students are also taught and led through multiple performance rituals of citizenship such as the recitation of the pledge of allegiance, the singing of the national anthem, and in some schools a moment of silence that oftentimes is presented as an opportunity to pray for our nation and leaders. The transmission of civic knowledge and a carefully crafted narrative of American history serve the purpose to teach a very narrow and specific kind of citizenship that glorifies the United States and raises uncritical, loyal, and patriotic citizens.

While citizenship education has been premised on all students acquiring a common body of knowledge (i.e., the dominant narrative) that unifies them as American citizens, it is problematic because white middle-class cultural identity is synonymous with an “American identity” (Ladson-Billings, 2004, p. 113). Also, this framework for viewing citizenship “does not acknowledge that the nation systematically violated people’s rights, enslaved or expropriated people of color, or legally considered women to be second class citizens” (Epstein, 2009, pg. 8). Race has been used as a method to include and exclude certain groups of people from the body politic. In the present day, “Black people [continue to] exist in the social imagination as (still) Slave, a thing to be possessed as property, and therefore with little right to live for herself” (Dumas & ross, 2016, p. 429). While the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed to reiterate African Americans’ status as full citizens of this country, it did not end racism or acts of racial violence towards Black Americans by the state (e.g., the “War on Drugs” and mass incarceration of African Americans, the beating of Rodney King, etc.). Recent events demonstrate that Black Americans continue to be positioned outside the realm of citizenship and do not consistently enjoy the rights of due process and equal protection under the law. Therefore, it is no wonder that many Black Americans express cynicism in regard to traditional notions of citizenship in the nation-state (see Vickery, 2017). The term “citizen” is problematic when considering the tenuous status of BIPOC in this country, where their safety and place within this society is questioned, delegitimized by policies enacted and enforced by law enforcement and the government, and in a constant state of uncertainty.

Ladson-Billings (2004) called for a “new citizenship” education that integrates social, cultural, political, and legal concerns into the classroom and curriculum. Pang and Gibson

(2001) offer the following description on what it means to be a citizen in our pluralistic society:

It means to be a citizen in a constitutional democracy—in a racialized society—challenges us all.... Civic education with a view of social justice helps to uncover and confront the inconsistencies between the ideals of equality and pluralism and lived experiences of many of its citizens. (p. 37)

I echo Pang and Gibson's vision of civic education and propose that social studies teachers must teach students about the realities of being a citizen in a racialized and gendered society where there is still injustice and inequality. We must teach citizenship education through a justice lens and help our students recognize that structural issues exist that can lead to oppression and the silencing of voices.

It is important for teachers to view the act of teaching as political (Apple, 1992; Bartolome, 1994; Freire, 2007) and that your decisions about what and how to teach have ramifications in terms of issues of power, representation, recognition, and how students view themselves as citizens of this nation. Therefore, we must consider:

- What kind of citizens are we preparing and how can social studies be a space where students learn how to be critical citizens?
- How do we teach citizenship in a way that validates and attends to different experiences and identities and creates a sense of belonging and unity?

Teachers can do this by utilizing counter narratives to teach notions of citizenship. Counter narratives are a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society). The counter narrative is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the dominant narrative of power and privilege. Moreover, counternarratives showcase “traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). Delgado (1989) reminds us that “oppressed groups have known instinctively that stories are an essential tool to their own survival and liberation” (p. 2436).

As a future elementary teacher, you need to rethink how you understand and teach students about citizenship and the ways in which citizens contribute to our society. And you can use Black women's activism as a guide and model for how you think about citizenship and civic engagement. It is critical that you teach about the significant role Black women have played fighting for civil and human rights in their work in racial, gender, and community politics and organizations. Black women have a long history fighting for citizenship while at the same time battling both racism and sexism that kept them from achieving prominence or visibility in social justice movements.

Figure 2. *Rosa Parks*



**Note.** *Rosa Parks*. (1956, November). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2015645700/>

## Finding Sources

While visiting the Library of Congress in December of 2019, I was able to visit an exhibition dedicated to Rosa Parks. I was excited to visit the exhibit and see sources and artifacts about one of the most significant individuals and activists in U.S. history. But I would also argue that Rosa Parks is one of the most heroified people taught in U.S. history. Students learn that Rosa Parks was a “quiet seamstress,” and she was famous because she refused to give up her seat on the bus because she was “tired” (Kohl, 1994). And that is often all students learn about Rosa Parks. But to call Rosa Parks a tired seamstress and not talk about her role as a leader and activist is to turn an organized struggle for freedom into a personal act of frustration

(Kohl, 1994) and is a misrepresentation of the Civil Rights Movement and an insult to Parks as well. Historian Jeanne Theoharis (2013) has written an entire book on Parks, and the Library of Congress exhibit ([Source A](#)) did a wonderful job of attempting to reframe the narrative on Rosa Parks and shed a new light on her lifetime of activism.

Most people do not realize that Parks spent her entire life being “rebellious” (Theoharis, 2013). Rosa Parks once recalled a childhood encounter with a white boy ([Source B](#)) who threatened her, and she responded by picking up a small piece of brick and taking aim at the little boy as a warning not to mess with her. Parks was one of the first women in Montgomery Alabama to join the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) where she served as a field secretary in the 1940s for the organization ([Source C](#)) and was responsible for traveling all over the state to investigate instances of sexual violence against Black women by white mobs. Mrs. Parks was a trained activist who spent a summer at the Highlander Folk School<sup>1</sup> learning about non-violent political protest ([Source D](#)).

**Figure 3.** *NAACP Meeting, Montgomery, Alabama*



**Note.** *Montgomery, Alabama branch, NAACP meeting.* (ca. 1947). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2015648524/>

<sup>1</sup> The Highlander Folk School was a center in Tennessee that trained civil rights and labor leaders in non-violent protest.



But Rosa Parks is most famous for a single act of civil disobedience when in December of 1955, she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on the city bus to a white man. Unfortunately, most students learn that Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus because she was “tired and her feet hurt” (Source M). That myth and lie completely disregards Parks’s history of fighting against injustice. Later, she reflected on the reason for her protest:

I had been pushed around all my life and felt at this moment that I couldn’t take it anymore. When I asked the policeman why we had to be pushed around? He said he didn’t know. “The law is the law. You are under arrest”. I didn’t resist. (Source E)

After her infamous protest in 1955, she and her family had to leave the South because both she and her husband lost their jobs due to her activism (Source F), but she continued her activism in Detroit working for U.S. Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (Source G). In Detroit, she attended Black Power meetings (Source I), supported the candidacy of Shirley Chisholm as the first woman to run for President (Source H), and later in the 1980s, she protested against Apartheid in South Africa (Theoharis, 2013). Learning about the long and rebellious history of Parks demonstrates the importance of deconstructing one-dimensional or flat narratives about a person or historical moment often presented in history textbooks and historical narratives. We do a disservice to these great women and men when we reduce them to a single event or decade. Moreover, we must also take care to integrate diverse narratives into the curriculum that show how different people and communities have engaged in civic activism.

**Figure 4.** *Rosa Parks with Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm*



**Note.** *Rosa Parks and Honorable Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm.* (ca. 1968). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/201564570/>

While Rosa Parks is a historical figure with whom elementary students are familiar, her life of activism is reduced to that one single instance of civil disobedience in 1955. Students are not challenged to fully understand her political protest as an act of critical patriotism (Tillet, 2012) to resist an unjust white supremacist system, structure, and laws that disenfranchised and harmed Black Americans. Moreover, her activism is not placed within the context of a long line of Black Americans, especially Black women, engaging in critical patriotism (Tillet, 2012). Black women are often not seen or presented as leaders in history when, in fact, Black women have a long history of engagement as critical citizens that is often overlooked or ignored (Vickery 2017, 2018). Black women have played a momentous role in the struggle for citizenship and human rights through their activism within social and political organizations. That is why students can learn a great deal about what it means to be a good citizen by studying various Black women throughout history and the unique ways they engaged in civic activism.

I first began brainstorming various Black women in different historical time periods that students often do not learn about such as Ella Baker, Septima Clark, Georgia Gilmore, etc. Then, I started to list different picturebooks that featured these women. I did this because I know that picturebooks are a great way to introduce historical topics to students. But picturebooks alone will not tell the full and complete story of Black women's civic activism; teachers must pair these texts with primary sources to help students learn, see, and understand the fullness of Black women's lives and experiences. Then, I decided to search the library's digital collection for primary sources about Black women activists. Moreover, I wanted to show that Black women's activism took place before, during, and after the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. I began compiling primary sources (photographs, artifacts, letters, etc.) in a Google Doc and sorted the documents chronologically to show the long fight for human rights. In the end, I selected a number of primary sources from the Library of Congress collection and other institutions and museums that tell the story of Black women's civic activism.

## **Connections to the C3 Inquiry Arc**

This inquiry utilizes critical historical thinking (Salinas et al., 2012; Vickery & Salinas, 2019) to uplift the lived experiences and voices of Black women throughout U.S. history. Critical Historical Thinking (CHT) (Salinas et al., 2012; Vickery & Salinas, 2019) focuses on creating a dialogue between students and the teacher, utilizing student experience, and introducing subjugated narratives into the curriculum. Through CHT, students begin to understand, disrupt, and challenge the dominant narrative and explore new and diverse perspectives that recognize and honor the unique experiences of diverse communities. This framework allows students to do the work of historians by critically reading and analyzing primary

sources in order to construct meaning and craft a historical narrative. This is done through the use of primary sources and document-based questions (DBQs) to help students reason about history. DBQs should encourage students to “read” primary sources and really get at the nature of the source. This pedagogical approach to the teaching and learning of history is meant to complicate, nuance, or counter the dominant narrative, and multiple perspectives from primary sources become key to this approach.

In this inquiry, teachers will utilize primary sources from the Library of Congress to teach elementary students about the unique ways Black women engaged in civic activism to fight for civil and human rights. I used the four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Design Model (IDM) Blueprint (Swan et. al., 2018) to frame this historical inquiry learning experience for elementary students. Dimension 1 of the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework centers on the importance of developing the right questions to frame an inquiry. Questioning is at the center of the inquiry process and should help students develop a sense of wonder and curiosity about the topic they are about to explore. Additionally, questions should be written in a way that explicitly critiques systems of oppression and power (Crowley & King, 2018). I developed the following compelling question for this inquiry: “What does it mean to be a good citizen?” This particular question allows students to think about the different aspects of a citizen and to challenge the dominant narrative that excludes Black women from traditional representations of citizenship. This question would be paired with the following supporting questions: (a) “Why did the Montgomery bus boycott succeed?” and (b) “What are the different ways that Black women supported their community?” These two supporting questions will allow students to understand the different ways that Black women served and contributed to their country but also their communities.

Dimension 2 of the C3 framework allows us to consider how the inquiry fits within the multiple social studies disciplines. Because this inquiry revolves around historical figures and civics, this inquiry focuses on the disciplines of history and civics (see Table 1). In order to be a good and productive member of society, students must understand the complex history of our democracy and how this country continues to strive to achieve its founding ideals of equality and justice for all.

While questions are just the starting point in an inquiry, the primary sources must be carefully selected to help students investigate the topic and answer the compelling and supporting questions. For the supporting questions, students will use a variety of primary and secondary sources and engage in tasks that help them to uncover the long history of Black women’s civic activism to their country and community. Dimension 3 of the C3 framework covers evaluating sources and using evidence. Primary sources must be carefully selected with the goal to expose students to sources that center the perspectives of marginalized communities (Crowley & King, 2018). Elementary students need experience gathering information from a wide variety of sources, evaluating the sources, and then generating claims and conclusions based on their analysis. The Library of Congress has a number of primary sources for teachers to use in the elementary classroom. It is important that teachers

use a variety of different primary sources to present these narratives: visuals (photographs and paintings), artifacts (campaign banners, monuments, murals), and participant accounts (quotations, diary entries, newspaper texts, etc.). Visual sources like photographs and paintings are wonderful sources to start with if students are new to historical thinking. They are also wonderfully accessible to a variety of student learners and students learning English as an additional language.

With that said, since the purpose of this inquiry is to center the experiences of Black women, it is important to ensure that teachers select primary sources that allow Black women to speak their own truths and define their own realities. That is why it is vital that teachers use a variety of different sources, particularly participant accounts, to help students better understand this history and time period. While the language in historical texts can be difficult, teachers can help students understand primary sources by crafting document-based questions (DBQs) to pair with sources. This would provide elementary students with the opportunity to do the work of historians and think and read sources critically. Pairing primary sources with picturebooks can complicate and counter the dominant narrative that positions Black women as non-citizens.

## Supporting Question One and Tasks

On the first day of the inquiry, it is important that teachers first gauge what students already know about citizenship and what it means to be a citizen. They can begin a whole class discussion by discussing the following questions: (a) “What have you learned about what it means to be a good citizen?” (b) “Who are examples of good citizens?” and (c) “What makes them good citizens?” The teacher can take notes on the board or chart paper listing the different people students name as examples of good citizens as well as their reasons. Then, the class can revisit the list and examine whether the list is made up of people who are reflective of our diverse country (in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.). Who is overrepresented? Who is underrepresented? Why? What message does that send about who we think are good citizens and who is not? The teacher can explain that Black women are often not seen or treated as leaders in history or good citizens. But we are going to change that! We are going to learn about a number of Black women who were exemplary citizens who served their country and communities in a lot of different ways.

Supporting question one has students consider the many different ways that Black women served their country. The goal is for students to examine the different ways that Black women served their country other than in the traditional ways taught in the social studies curriculum and standards (such as military service, volunteer work, voting, etc.). Traditional methods of service were not always available to Black women throughout history. Issues of power and privilege are vital when teaching students about historical empathy and agency. Historical agency is characterized by “who makes historical change, and in what ways are

Table 1. *Inquiry Design Model (IDM) Overview*

What does it mean to be a good citizen?	
<b>Staging the Compelling Question</b>	<p>As a class discuss the following questions: “What have you learned in the past about what it means to be a good citizen?” “Who are examples of good citizens?” “What makes them good citizens?” The teacher can take notes on a chart paper to list the different people students consider to be model citizens and what attributes make them good citizens. The teacher can have students examine the list of individuals and ask students if the list is made up of people who are reflective of our diverse country (in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.). If it is not, ask students why they think that is.</p> <p>The teacher can explain that Black women are often not seen or treated as leaders in history or in protest movements. We are going to change that. We will read the book <i>Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters</i> by Andrea Davis Pinkney to learn about a number of Black women who were good citizens who served their country and their community in different ways.</p>
<b>Supporting Question 1</b>	<b>Supporting Question 2</b>
Why did the Montgomery bus boycott succeed?	What are the different ways that Black women supported their community?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	<b>Formative Performance Task</b>
Fill out the L & Q portions of the KWLQ chart (Table 2)	Create a poster that demonstrates the different ways Black women worked to uplift and serve their communities.
<b>Featured Sources</b>	<b>Featured Sources</b>
<b>Sources J–T</b>	<b>Sources U–Z</b>
<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	<p>Construct a written argument that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical sources while acknowledging competing views.</p> <p><b>Extension:</b> Create a body biography poster that lists the different characteristics of a good citizen. When listing different attributes students should cite specific primary sources and Black women who also had that attribute.</p>

<p><b>Taking Informed Action</b></p>	<p>Students will explore how Black women in the present day continue to follow in their ancestor’s footsteps in terms of enacting critical patriotism and working to uplift their community. Students will read current events articles about different Black women and girls (such as the Black women founders of the Black Lives Matter movement, Mari Copeny, Isra Hirsi, Elsa Mengistu, Bree Newsome, Kamala Harris, etc.) fighting for Black person-hood and civil rights in the present day.</p> <p>Students will research these women and work together to create a book or a series of posters about the activism of Black women to share with others.</p>
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their efforts constrained by the social, political, and economic structures in which they find themselves” (Seixas & Peck, 2004, p. 114). It is important that we teach students to understand the actions and decisions of those considered powerless in the past. In order to get a fuller account of the past, we must consider how power and structures shaped and constrained the lives of marginalized groups.

But in order for elementary students to fully understand the experiences, perspectives, actions, and decisions of those in the past (and present day), teachers must teach students about power and the structures of racism, sexism, classism, etc. that impacted the lives and experiences of those in the past. Moreover, teach students to recognize the overlapping structural oppression many faced on account of their different identities. In her writings on Black women, Anna Julia Cooper (1988) often wrote on the “double enslavement of Black women by being confronted by both a woman question and a race problem” (p. 13). With that said, Black women served their country and supported their community in a variety of different ways, and it is important to acknowledge and recognize them as actions of a good citizen.

Now that students have had an opportunity to learn that Black women experienced oppression on account of their race and gender but fought for society to see them as Black women and human beings, students can learn more about the different ways that Black women served their country by fighting to help it live up to its founding ideals of equality and equal rights under the law. Black Americans have been known to engage in the practice of *critical patriotism* in the past and present to hold the government and systems accountable for failing to live up to its founding ideals of equal justice under the law. According to Salimisha Tillet (2012), critical patriotism is an essential part of our democracy. She argued that dissidence and dissent have been essential components of U.S. history and important ways in which Black Americans have participated as citizens.

An example of critical patriotism would be the Montgomery Bus Boycott, beginning with Rosa Parks’s infamous act of civil disobedience and the response of the Women’s Political Council (WPC) and the Black community. The WPC was a civic organization, composed

primarily of Black women, that was formed in 1946 and quickly became central in the fight for civil rights in Alabama. This organization first started organizing efforts to register Black people to vote and later moved to combating segregation. The WPC first called for the boycott of the Montgomery bus system to protest segregation in the early 1950s. Following Parks's arrest, the WPC, led by their president Jo Ann Robinson, quickly organized the boycott by making and passing out over 35,000 flyers informing the community that

Another Negro woman has been arrested and thrown into jail because she refused to get up out of her seat on the bus for a white person to sit down. It is the second time since the Claudette [Colvin] case that a Negro woman has been arrested for the same thing. This has to be stopped. Negroes have rights. (Source P)

After the enormous success of the one-day boycott, it was extended indefinitely until the Montgomery Bus system was desegregated and the city met the demands of the Women's Political Council. The WPC organized a system of transportation and carpool arrangements for the thousands of Black people who participated in the boycott.

It is important to teach students that while Rosa Parks was incredibly brave, she could not have ended segregation on her own: It took an entire community to create meaningful change. Teachers can show students a number of primary sources showing countless Black Americans participating in the boycott [by walking to work instead of taking the bus](#) and attending meetings to support the boycott (Source K). These sources would be perfect to use with K-2 students to introduce them to the concept of a boycott. It is important for students to understand the definition of boycott and how it causes economic harm to businesses, which is why it is a useful tool for political protest. Teachers can use a political cartoon created by Herbert Block to understand how white Montgomery citizens felt about the Montgomery bus boycott<sup>2</sup> (Source L).

Teachers can use the work of the WPC during the Boycott to illustrate the concept of historical agency, which is "who makes historical change, and in what ways are their efforts constrained by the social, political, and economic structures in which they find themselves" (Seixas & Peck, 2004, p. 114). Teachers can ask students to think about why the WPC decided to take a stand and engage in a public protest against segregation and to consider the (social, political, and economic) risks the women were taking by participating in this protest.

Teachers can begin by introducing students to the supporting question and the objective of investigating why the boycott was successful. First, teachers can start by asking students about their prior knowledge about the boycott. I recommend having students fill out the K and W parts of a KWLQ chart (Table 2). After students write down their prior knowledge of the Montgomery bus boycott, they can share their knowledge with their table group and then debrief as a whole class. The process can be repeated for the W portion of the chart.

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<sup>2</sup> Link to Library of Congress page for the cartoon <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00652205/>.

**Table 2. KWLQ chart**

<b>K</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>Q</b>
What do I <b>know</b> ?	What do I <b>want to know</b> ?	What did I <b>learn</b> ?	What <b>questions</b> do I still have?

Most likely the student’s prior knowledge about the boycott will revolve around Rosa Parks and her infamous 1955 arrest. But it is important for students to know that it was the effort of the entire Montgomery Black community and white allies who came together to create change. Local Black women protested the segregated bus system by participating in the boycott, arranging rides for protesters, and using their many talents to fund the boycott. For example, Georgia Gilmore was a Montgomery resident who contributed to the boycott by using the money she raised cooking and selling meals from her kitchen. Teachers can conduct an interactive read-aloud of the picturebook *Pies From Nowhere: How Georgia Gilmore Sustained the Montgomery Bus Boycott* (2018) by Dee Romito and illustrated by Laura Freeman to introduce students to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the many different ways that Black women citizens contributed to the movement. To dig deeper into the history of the boycott and the role Black women played in planning the boycott, teachers can print each source ([Source T](#), [Source S](#), [Source Q](#), [Source P](#), [Source O](#), and [Source R](#)) and place them on a piece of chart paper to hang around the room. Students can work in small groups to complete a gallery walk to visit each source. Teachers can consider writing document-based questions



(DBQs) to pair with each source or ask students to fill out a [primary source graphic organizer](#) from the Library of Congress as a way to examine and analyze each source.

After visiting each primary source poster, teachers can assign each student group a poster to present to the class to describe what is happening in the primary source and how it helps us understand why the Montgomery Bus boycott was successful. Collectively, the primary sources will demonstrate to students that it was the collective efforts of the WPC and the hundreds of women community members that sustained the 381-day boycott. However, once the boycott gained national attention, civil rights organizations pushed the Women’s Political Council and the women activists out of leadership positions and instead selected Dr. King to lead the boycott. The predominantly male leadership did not credit the WPC for planting the seeds of a national nonviolent civil rights movement.

The formative performance task is for students to revisit their KWLQ charts and to complete the L and Q columns with what they learned about the boycott and what questions they still have ([Table 2](#)). The WPC and women like Rosa Parks and Georgia Gilmore show students that there are many different ways that citizens can support their country and contribute to a cause: standing up for Black human dignity, participating in a boycott, or using your talents to raise money for an important cause. Teachers can extend the conversation by asking students what causes are meaningful to them and to brainstorm what are some ways they can use their talents to help further a cause and make their community a better place for everyone.

## Supporting Question Two and Tasks

Supporting question two challenges students to consider the different ways that Black women supported their community. The second question allows us to expand upon the traditional notion of citizenship as service to the nation-state. Instead, we must recognize the community as an important site of citizenship where Black women focused their attention and energies in serving and uplifting. Even though Black women were the backbone of the churches and the movement (Ransby, 2003), their roles and contributions have been reduced in history textbooks to professional bridge leaders (Barnett, 1993; Robnett, 1997) because they were believed to be incapable of formal leadership (Rouse, 2001). Margaret Walker wrote the following on the contributions of women:

Even in pre-civil war days, black women stood in the vanguard for equal rights; for freedom from slavery, for recognition of women as citizens and co-partners with men in all of life’s endeavors.... However, because of the nature of American history, and particularly because of the institutions of slavery and segregation, the names of black women leaders are all but unknown in American society. (Sterling, 1988, pp. vii-viii)

Black women’s participation in the struggle for equal rights has remained largely invisible

in the mainstream collective memory. Civil and human rights activist Ella Baker not only described women as the “backbone” of the civil rights movement, but also noted that it was Black women who assembled when the community came together to demonstrate.

Another reason their leadership and contributions remained invisible is because a number of Black women devoted their time and activism to uplifting the community. As previously stated, Black women’s activism was largely guided by the notion of “Lifting as We Climb” which represents a communal view of citizenship and the importance of working to empower others and not oneself. Teachers can use the [motto](#) of the NACW to introduce students to the notion of community uplift. First, display the primary source for all students to see and ask them to discuss with a shoulder partner the meaning of the motto “Lifting as We Climb” and why the NACW would select this as their motto.

The life and work of [Ella Josephine Baker](#) could be viewed as the embodiment of the notion of community uplift. By the time of her death in 1986, it was reported that Baker had participated in over thirty organizations and campaigns varying from the Negro cooperative movement during the Great Depression to the Free Angela Davis campaign of the 1970s (Ransby, 2003). She often said, “[I was never working for an organization. I always tried to work for a cause. And that cause was bigger than any organization.](#)”<sup>3</sup> Instead, Baker was committed to a broader “humanitarian struggle for a better world” (Ransby, 2003). While it was often noted that she never desired national attention or fame, she envisioned a movement that “embraced humility and a spirit of collectivism in an effort to empower others and not oneself” (Ransby, 2003, p. 54). Baker insisted the process must involve local communities finding individual and collective power needed to change their own lives.

In the 1950s, Baker believed that Black people had been told all their lives that the key to their own freedom was something, or someone, outside of themselves: namely, a male, charismatic leader. According to Baker, this resulted in a sense of helplessness. To that, Baker’s message was that “strong people don’t need strong leaders: She did not think that oppressed people need a ‘messiah’ to free them from their own oppression. Baker believed that all they needed was themselves, their community, and a strong will to persevere” (Ransby, 2003, p. 188).

Because Ella Baker insisted that change had to come from the work of a community coming together to free themselves, students can learn about Baker by examining and analyzing primary sources about the different organizations she worked in. For example, as [a staff member and later National Director of the NAACP in the 1940s and 1950s](#), she recognized early on the importance of building a movement in the fight for civil rights. She lobbied the organization to alter its structure and practices to make it more inclusive, fair, and to embody a greater sense of activism and urgency into its local grassroots campaigns (Ransby, 2003).

Later on, Ella Baker played a critical role in the creation of SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee). The organization, composed mostly of young activists, embraced

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<sup>3</sup> “Ella Baker’s Hattiesburg Speech,” Jan. 21, 1964, Hattiesburg, Miss.

Baker's vision of "humility and a spirit of collectivism." Some have described Baker's leadership style and worldview as a form of *radical humanism*: *radical* because she advocated for social transformation and *humanistic* because she saw transformation coming through a cooperative, democratic, and local grassroots movement that valued the participation and contribution of each individual (Ransby, 2003). There are a number of primary sources at the Library of Congress for teachers to choose from about the experiences of famous members of SNCC [registering Black Americans to vote in the South](#), establishing and teaching "[Freedom Schools](#)," and organizing [Freedom Rides](#). It is important to include primary sources depicting the danger and violence SNCC members faced, including a [photograph of the late Congressman John Lewis's infamous encounter on the Edmund Pettus Bridge](#) that became known as "Bloody Sunday." After examining primary sources related to Baker's role in the creation of this important civil rights organization, students can discuss the impact this organization had on the civil rights movement and the eventual passage of civil rights legislation.

Ella Baker (1960) often reminded people of the larger goal of the Black Freedom movement:

We no longer accept the inferior position of second-class citizenship. We are willing to go to jail, be ridiculed, spat upon, and even suffer physical violence to obtain First Class Citizenship. By and large, this feeling that they have a destined date with freedom, was not limited to a drive for personal freedom, or even freedom for the Negro in the South. Repeatedly, it was emphasized that the movement was concerned with the moral implications of racial discrimination for the "whole world" and the "Human Race." (n.p.)

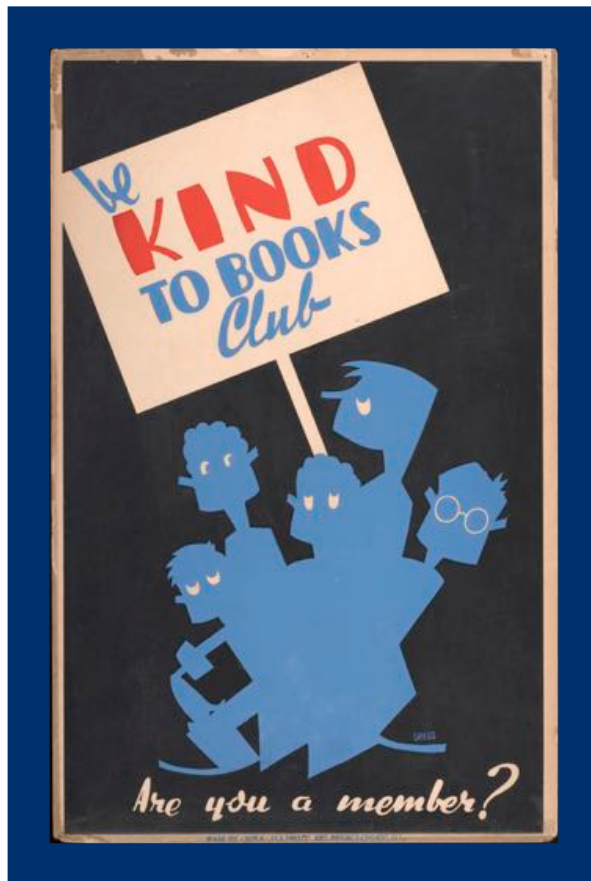
In the elementary grades, the civil rights movement is often reduced in texts to Black Americans seeking the right to sit and eat a hamburger at a lunch counter (see Rodriguez & Vickery, 2020). Instead, we must teach students that it was a movement to end racial discrimination across the world, thus focusing on uplifting the community as a whole. The movement was a collective effort where large numbers of people across all walks of life came together to demand recognition as citizens. It was not led by a single charismatic individual leader, but instead it was a collective effort to fight on behalf of the human race for equality, human rights, and dignity.

## Septima Clark

Septima Clark was a Black educator and civil rights activist who is often overlooked in history. She was a lifelong educator who dedicated her life to the education and empowerment of the Black community. Scholars often refer to Clark as the “Mother of the Civil Rights Movement” (Tyson & Park, 2008). Because of her membership with the NAACP and work combating segregation in her community, she was forced to end her forty-year career as a public educator. She was later offered full time employment as the Director of Workshops at the [Highlander Folk School where she later worked with Rosa Parks](#). Teachers can have students consider what Rosa Parks might have learned from Clark about non-violent protest and what they contributed to the overall Civil Rights Movement.

But Septima Clark was most known for establishing “Citizenship Schools” which not only taught students the knowledge needed to register to vote but also trained students how to become local leaders in the Civil Rights Movement. The citizenship school curriculum included how to register to vote as well as acquiring literacy skills. Teachers can have students examine and [analyze primary sources related to Citizenship Schools including photographs, reports, and interviews](#). Clark believed that citizenship training was crucial to empowering Black Americans. Clark designed the schools to use teachers from the community to teach the skills needed to survive and participate in the democratic process. She recognized that illiteracy was condemning many African Americans to a lifetime of sharecropping and poverty that stemmed from slavery. The citizenship schools attempted to disrupt the cycle of poverty by having caring people from the community teach literacy and leadership skills that would empower members to help uplift their communities. [Students can examine the different topics that were included and taught by local teachers in the Citizenship Schools](#). They can even compare and contrast the Citizenship School curriculum with what they learn in schools. They can discuss which curriculum better prepares them to be good citizens. Clark believed that gaining literacy skills and understanding what it meant to be a citizen would lead to liberation for the Black community (Rouse, 2001). Clark insisted that the former students and participants of the schools, in turn, serve as citizenship teachers in their own communities (Rouse, 2001).

Figure 5. *Be Kind to Books Club*



**Note.** Gregg, A. (1936–1940). *Be kind to books club. Are you a member?* [Poster]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011645392>

For supporting question two, students learned about different ways Black women served and uplifted their communities. Students were introduced to Black women like Ella Baker who worked with different communities and organizations to teach Black Americans and young people that they were valuable and had the intelligence, compassion, and drive to fight for their rights and the rights of others. And Septima Clark used her gifts as a teacher to teach people the knowledge and skills they needed to register to vote and created a system of schooling that employed local people to teach others in their communities. The formative performance task requires students to create a poster that demonstrates the different ways Black women worked to uplift and serve their communities. Using the [Workers Projects Administration \(WPA\) Poster Collection](#) as a *model*, students can illustrate the different ways Black women worked to uplift the Black community through community building and education.

# Dimension Four of the C3 Inquiry Arc

Together, the two supporting questions show young children that there are a lot of important ways for them to use their voices and talents to be good citizens and that citizenship looks and feels differently for communities because of their race, gender, immigration status, disability, sexuality, etc. That is why it is vital to teach a more nuanced definition of citizenship that takes into account the different ways that groups of people experience and enact citizenship. The summative performance task provides students with an opportunity to use the knowledge they have gained throughout the course of the inquiry to take a position on the compelling question. Students can write a paragraph answering the question using evidence from the different primary sources they have examined and analyzed, or they can work with a small group to create a body biography poster that lists the different characteristics of a good citizen. While listing and illustrating the different attributes students should cite specific primary sources and Black women who also possessed similar attributes. The Black citizen women featured in this chapter are examples of good citizens, and it is important that students not only learn about these women but also apply this knowledge to their own lives and current struggles. Dimension four of the C3 framework encourages students to communicate and critique conclusions and take informed action. Crowley and King (2018) contend that teachers must develop tasks that push students to combat the injustices explored in the inquiry.

## Taking Informed Action

The mark of a successful inquiry is that students are left with additional questions and try to connect the content to their own lives. Therefore, it is important to provide students with the opportunity to seek additional sources to answer their lingering questions. It is my hope that students will continue asking questions about how Black women in the present day continue the work of their ancestors to work in various social justice movements today. Teachers can also introduce students to young Black activists such as Marley Dias and her fight for Black girl representation in children's literature, Amariyanna "Mari" Copeny and her activism asking President Obama to do something about the water crisis in her hometown of Flint, Michigan, or climate activist and organizer Elsa Mengistu, or Isra Hirsi who has fought to make space in the climate movement for people of color while also combating Islamophobia and harassment directed at her as the daughter of a Somali-American refugee. Students can read current events articles about different Black women and girls fighting for Black personhood and civil rights in the present day. Students will research these women and work together to create a book or a series of posters about the activism of Black women to share with others.

Figure 6. “Freedom School” Mural, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



**Note.** Vergara, C. J. (2015). Mural “Freedom School” by Parris Stancell, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018646583/>

By positioning these young women as critical citizens and learning about who they are and how they are working and organizing to create meaningful change students can then explore opportunities to join the movement and create change in their own communities. For example, they could work to increase representation of Black women and girls in their school/community libraries or the curriculum, join the fight to combat climate change, or write to politicians about why Black health matters during the COVID-19 global pandemic and its impact on Black communities. It was Ella Baker who once said that “[We who believe in freedom cannot rest.](#)” Young people have a voice, and they must be encouraged to use it to continue the legacy of “lifting as we climb.”

# Recommended Children's Literature

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# Appendix

## Annotated Resources

Primary sources			
Source	Resource	Source Citation and Link	Description
A	2019 Library of Congress <i>In her own words</i> Rosa Parks exhibition	<i>Rosa Parks: In Her Own Words</i> . (2019–2022). [Exhibition]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/">https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/</a>	This exhibition features a number of wonderful primary sources that show a more complex narrative of Rosa Parks.
B	Rosa Parks' memory of a childhood encounter with a white boy	Parks, R. (1956–1958). Childhood Encounter [Manuscript]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/early-life-and-activism/childhood-encounter/">https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/early-life-and-activism/childhood-encounter/</a>	This primary source shows that Rosa Parks was always a fighter and stood up against injustice.
C	Photograph of Rosa Parks at an NAACP branch meeting	<i>Rosa &amp; Raymond Parks, seated at a banquet table, left side, third and fourth chair, likely at an NAACP branch meeting, Montgomery, Alabama</i> (ca. 1947). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/early-life-and-activism/rosa-joins-the-naacps-montgomery-branch/">https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/early-life-and-activism/rosa-joins-the-naacps-montgomery-branch/</a>	This primary source shows that Rosa Parks was an experienced activist before her infamous arrest.
D	Photograph of Rosa Parks and Septima Clark at Highland Folk School	<i>Mrs. Septima Clark and Rosa Parks at Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee</i> . (1955). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2015652115/">https://www.loc.gov/item/2015652115/</a>	This primary source shows that Rosa Parks was trained in nonviolent political protest.
E	Rosa Parks notes on her infamous arrest	Parks, R. (1956). <i>Rosa Parks Papers: Writings, Notes, and Statements, 1956 to 1998; Drafts of early writings; Accounts of her arrest and the subsequent boycott, as well as general reflections on race relations in the South, 1956-, undated; Folder 2</i> [Manuscript/Mixed Material]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/mss859430226/">https://www.loc.gov/item/mss859430226/</a>	This primary source allows Rosa Parks to speak her own truth and share her own thoughts about her infamous arrest. (See image 27.)

F	<p>“Rosa Parks and Family Leave Montgomery, Ala.,” <i>The Tribune</i> (Roanoke, VA), August 24, 1957, p. 1.</p>	<p>Rosa Parks and Family Leave Montgomery, Ala. (1957, August 24). <i>The Tribune</i>. <a href="https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn98068351/1957-08-24/ed-1/">https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn98068351/1957-08-24/ed-1/</a></p>	<p>This primary source can be used to show that after Rosa Parks’s protest in 1955 she and her family had to leave the South because both she and her husband lost their jobs due to her activism.</p>
G	<p>Photograph of Rosa Parks protesting with U.S. Congressman John Conyers, Jr.</p>	<p><i>Rosa Parks and U.S. Congressman John Conyers, Jr., picketing in front of General Motors corporate headquarters, Detroit, Michigan.</i> (1986). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/detroit-1957-and-beyond/parks-picketing-in-front-of-general-motors/">https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/detroit-1957-and-beyond/parks-picketing-in-front-of-general-motors/</a></p>	<p>This primary source can be used to show that after Rosa Parks’s and her family had to leave the South, she continued her activism in Detroit working for US Congressman John Conyers, Jr..</p>
H	<p>Photograph of Rosa Parks and Shirley Chisholm</p>	<p><i>Rosa Parks and Honorable Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm.</i> (ca. 1968). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2015645707/">https://www.loc.gov/item/2015645707/</a></p>	<p>Teachers can use this photograph to present a more complex narrative of Rosa Parks and her support for the first woman to run for President of the United States.</p>
I	<p>Photograph of Rosa Parks and Stokely Carmichael</p>	<p><i>Black activist Kwame Toure, formerly known as Stokely Carmichael, at the University of Michigan to discuss civil rights at a forum. Another civil rights leader, Rosa Parks, has a lighter moment with Toure after a panel discussion.</i> (1983, February 14). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/detroit-1957-and-beyond/supporting-the-black-power-movement/">https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/rosa-parks-in-her-own-words/about-this-exhibition/detroit-1957-and-beyond/supporting-the-black-power-movement/</a></p>	<p>Teachers can use this photograph to present a more complex narrative of Rosa Parks and her support of the Black power movement.</p>
J	<p>Photograph of Anna Julia Cooper</p>	<p>Bell, C. M. (1901). <i>Mrs. A. J. Cooper</i> [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2016702852/">https://www.loc.gov/item/2016702852/</a></p>	<p>This photograph can be used when teaching biographies of Black women activists.</p>

K	Primary sources about the Montgomery Bus Boycott	Villet, G. (1956). <i>Day of Pilgrimage begins as Montgomery Negroes walk to work in the rain</i> [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2015649689/">https://www.loc.gov/item/2015649689/</a>	Teachers can show students a number of primary sources showing countless Black Americans participating in the boycott by walking to work instead of taking the bus and attending meetings to support the boycott. These sources would be perfect to use with K-2 students to introduce them to the concept of a boycott. It is important for students to understand the definition of boycott and how it causes economic harm to businesses, which is why it is a useful tool for political protest.
L	Political cartoon about the Montgomery Bus Boycott	Block, H. (1956, March 25). "Tote dat barge! Lift dat boycott! Ride dat bus!" [Drawing]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00652205/">https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00652205/</a>	Teachers can use a political cartoon created by Herbert Block to understand how white Montgomery citizens felt about the Montgomery Bus Boycott
M	<i>Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story</i> (1957)	<i>Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story</i> . (1957). <a href="https://blogs.loc.gov/head-linesandheroes/2020/02/rosa-parks-in-newspapers-and-comic-books/">https://blogs.loc.gov/head-linesandheroes/2020/02/rosa-parks-in-newspapers-and-comic-books/</a>	This comic book perpetuates the myth that Rosa Parks was a "tired seamstress."
N	National Association of Colored Women's Clubs banner	National Association of Colored Women's Clubs. (ca. 1924). [Banner with motto of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs]. National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institute. <a href="https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2010.2.1abc">https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2010.2.1abc</a>	Teachers can introduce this primary source to students as an example of collective organizing and have students think about why members of the NACW sought to create an organization dedicated to uplifting the Black community.

O	Georgia Gilmore's obituary in the <i>New York Times</i>	Miller, K. (2019, July 31). Overlooked No More: Georgia Gilmore, Who Fed and Funded the Montgomery Bus Boycott. <i>New York Times</i> . <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/31/obituaries/georgia-gilmore-overlooked.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/31/obituaries/georgia-gilmore-overlooked.html</a>	Georgia Gilmore was featured in 2019 in the <i>New York Times</i> in a series titled "Overlooked No More" exploring significant people of Color whom the NYT has neglected to memorialize throughout the years. The obituary features a number of primary sources that teachers can use to introduce students to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the many different ways that Black women citizens contributed to the movement.
P	Flyer about one-day boycott	Women's Political Council. (1955). The Montgomery Bus Boycott. <i>History is a Weapon</i> . <a href="https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/wpcmontgomery.html">https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/wpcmontgomery.html</a>	Teachers can have students analyze this primary source to learn about the role the Women's Political Council played in the start of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
Q	"4000 Negroes Vote Bus Boycott," <i>The Tribune</i> (Roanoke, VA), December 10, 1955, p. 1.	4000 Negroes Vote Bus Boycott. (1955, December 10). <i>The Tribune</i> . <a href="https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn98068351/1955-12-10/ed-1/">https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn98068351/1955-12-10/ed-1/</a>	This primary source shows that Black Americans in Montgomery voted to extend the Bus Boycott indefinitely until the bus system was desegregated.
R	Jo Ann Robinson on the boycott leaflet campaign, 1955	Robinson, J. A. (1987). <i>The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It</i> . Historical Thinking Matters. <a href="https://historicalthinkingmatters.org/rosaparks/0/inquiry/main/resources/21/index.html">https://historicalthinkingmatters.org/rosaparks/0/inquiry/main/resources/21/index.html</a>	Here, Jo Ann Robinson explains how she and others produced and distributed the leaflet calling for a boycott in time for thousands of African Americans to stay off the buses on Monday morning, December 5, 1955. Just before she began this work, Robinson and E.D. Nixon had decided over the phone to call for a boycott.

S	Montgomery Bus Boycott photo	Kaul, A. (2007, November 24). Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–56). <i>Black Past</i> . <a href="https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/montgomery-bus-boycott-1955-56/">https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/montgomery-bus-boycott-1955-56/</a>	Photograph of the Montgomery Bus boycott
T	An African American Woman Describes Segregated Buses in Montgomery, Alabama	[Interview By Willie Lee]. (1956, January). Historical Thinking Matters. <a href="http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/rosaparks/0/inquiry/main/resources/26">http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/rosaparks/0/inquiry/main/resources/26</a>	Excerpt from an interview conducted by Willie Lee (researcher, Fisk University), January 1956; from George Mason University Center for History and New Media and Stanford University School of Education, <i>Historical Thinking Matters</i> .
U	Photograph of Ella Baker	<i>Ella Baker, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing slightly left.</i> (1942–1946). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/94504496/">https://www.loc.gov/item/94504496/</a>	This photograph can be used when teaching biographies of Black women activists.
V	Ella Baker photograph working for NAACP in 1940s	<i>Pictured at NAACP conference - Miss Ella J. Baker, National Director of Branches for the NAACP, New York City, is shown with some of the officers of the local branch who helped arrange the three-day program.</i> (1945). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/97518045/">https://www.loc.gov/item/97518045/</a>	Ella Baker used her work in the NAACP to work with communities.
W	SNCC members registering Black Americans to vote	Lyon, D. (1963). <i>Southwest Georgia. SNCC field secretary Charles Sherrod and Randy Battle visit a supporter in the countryside. Sherrod is currently a member of the Albany City Council</i> [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2018645346/">https://www.loc.gov/item/2018645346/</a>	After examining primary sources related to Baker’s role in the creation of this important civil rights organization students can discuss what impact the organization had on the civil rights movement and the eventual passage of civil rights legislation.



X	Photograph of the late Congressman John Lewis's infamous encounter on the Edmund Pettus Bridge that became known as "Bloody Sunday."	<i>SNCC leader John Lewis cringes as burly state trooper swings his club at Lewis' head during attempted Negro march on the state capitol at Montgomery. Lewis later was admitted to a local hospital with a possible skull fracture.</i> (1965, March 7). [Photograph]. Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2001696161/">https://www.loc.gov/item/2001696161/</a>	After examining primary sources related to Baker's role in the creation of this important civil rights organization students can discuss what impact the organization had on the Civil Rights Movement and the eventual passage of civil rights legislation.
Y	Workers Projects Administration poster collection	Workers Projects Administration poster Collection. (n.d.). Library of Congress. <a href="https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wpapos/">https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/wpapos/</a>	Using the Workers Projects Administration (WPA) Poster Collection as a model, students can illustrate the different ways Black women worked to uplift the Black community through community building and education.
Z	Citizenship school curriculum topics	Beech, R. (1964). Interest Checklist for Advanced Citizenship Students. Ministers' Project Records. [Manuscript/Mixed Materials]. Wisconsin Historical Society. <a href="https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/p15932coll2/id/12961">https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/p15932coll2/id/12961</a>	Students can examine the different topics that were included and taught by local teachers in the Citizenship Schools.