

WORKSHEET: THESIS STATEMENTS

SAMPLE TOPIC: Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

WHO: Who was involved? Who was affected? Rosa Parks, Citizens in Montgomery, Civil Rights Movement leaders, Montgomery's government officials

WHAT: What happened? Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger, which violated a law enforcing segregation on Montgomery city buses. She was arrested and went to jail. Civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., organized a boycott of buses and challenged the law as unconstitutional.

WHERE: Where was/were the place(s) it took place? Montgomery, Alabama

WHEN: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it? Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955. The boycott started on December 5 and lasted for 381 days.

WHY: Why did it happen? What caused it? Civil Rights Movement leaders wanted to overturn segregation laws. Rosa Parks attended training for non-violent protest at the Highlander Folk School.

WHY: Why is it important? What were the outcomes? The boycott forced change in Montgomery and succeeded in overturning the law requiring segregation on public transportation. This success inspired other Civil Rights Movement protests and helped Martin Luther King, Jr. develop nonviolent strategies to fight segregation.

THEME CONNECTION: Debate and Diplomacy

Remember: Try to connect to the ideas of debate and diplomacy in your thesis statement!

- **What was the debate?** Parks' arrest called attention to unfair segregation laws in transportation services that hindered Black Montgomery citizens from social and economic growth.
- **How did things change?** The boycott and Supreme Court victory showed the power of collective action and nonviolent protest strategies.

Put it all together into a thesis statement.

After Rosa Parks' 1955 arrest for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger, Montgomery residents organized a boycott of city buses. Using mutual aid and nonviolence as diplomatic strategies, they shifted the debate over segregation and established nonviolent resistance as a successful strategy for Civil Rights activists.

TOPIC:

WHO: Who was involved? Who was affected?

WHAT: What happened? What was the main event?

WHERE: Where was/were the place(s) it took place?

WHEN: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it?

WHY: Why did it happen? What caused it?

WHY: Why is it important? What were outcomes?

THEME CONNECTION: Debate and Diplomacy

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- **What was the debate?**
- **How did things change?**

Put it all together into a thesis statement.