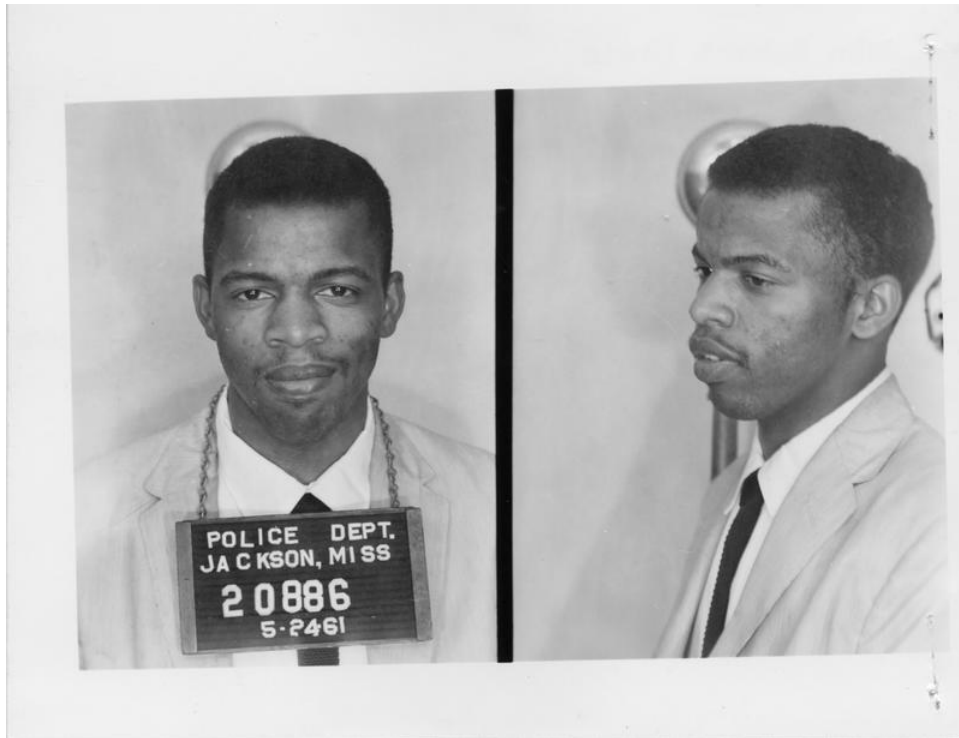


# *What is good trouble?*



Lewis, John [@repjohnlewis], "53 years ago today..." *Twitter*, 7 July 2014, <https://twitter.com/repjohnlewis/status/486142489527844865/photo/1>

## **Supporting Questions**

SQ 1: What were the moral disagreements between Civil Rights leaders?

SQ 2: How did some Civil Rights leaders break the rules?

11<sup>th</sup> Grade - Good Trouble

What is good trouble?	
<b>Standards and Content Angle</b>	<p><b>Utah Core Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● US II Standard 4.2</li> <li>● Standard 4.3</li> <li>● Standard 4.4</li> </ul>
<b>Staging the Compelling Question</b>	<p>Compare two letters: one written by the members of the <a href="#">Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)</a> to Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the <a href="#">other written as response by MLK Jr.</a> to discuss the differences in position with regards to the Civil Rights Movement.</p>

Supporting Question 1
<p>What were the moral disagreements between Civil Rights leaders?</p>
Formative Performance Task
<p>Evaluate select quotes from leaders representing organizations like SNCC, CORE, et al. for how they compare to the ideas of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.</p>
Featured Sources
<p><b>Source A:</b> Letter to Martin Luther King (April 12, 1963)  <b>Source B:</b> Letter From a Birmingham Jail (April 16, 1963)  <b>Source C:</b> <a href="#">An Oral History of March on Washington</a> (optional)  <b>Source D:</b> <a href="#">"John Lewis Talks about Getting into 'Good Trouble'"</a>, National Constitution Center (optional)  <b>Source E:</b> Civil Rights Leaders Quotes Set (optional)</p>

Supporting Question 2
<p>How did some Civil Rights leaders break the rules?</p>
Formative Performance Task
<p>Create an annotated list ranking Civil Rights leaders from most conservative to most radical.</p>
Featured Sources
<p><b>Source A:</b> Text from <i>Two Versions of John Lewis' Speech</i> / <a href="#">Bill Moyers.com</a>  <b>Source B:</b> <a href="#">"The Black Child's Pledge"</a> · SHEC: Resources for Teachers.  <b>Source C:</b> <a href="#">(1964) Malcolm X's Speech at the Founding Rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity</a>  <b>Source D:</b> <a href="#">A Letter from Bayard Rustin to MLK</a></p>

<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	<p><b>ARGUMENT:</b> <i>What is good trouble?</i> Develop an argument written in a letter to either Dr. Martin Luther or to the members of the clergy as a member of a Civil Rights group that was not part of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). This could include CORE, SNCC, NAACP, or the Black Panther Movement explaining what "good trouble" is and what it would accomplish.</p>
	<p><b>EXTENSION:</b> Students may evaluate the background of one of the resources for this portion of the inquiry as an extension.</p>
<b>Taking Informed Action</b>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND</b> Students will learn more about John Lewis' quote, "Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America," and what he meant by "good trouble".</p> <p><b>ASSESS</b> Write a letter to a Civil Rights leader or group explaining what "good trouble" is and what it would accomplish.</p> <p><b>ACT</b> Write an Op-Ed addressing a current Civil Rights matter citing evidence about why these rights are important and how the support of those rights will positively impact the community.</p>

Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of the Civil Rights movement and the methods used to challenge social injustices in the United States.

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This inquiry highlights the following additional standards:

- **Standard 4.2:** Students will use case studies involving African-American civil rights leaders and events to compare, contrast, and evaluate the effectiveness of various methods used to achieve reform, such as civil disobedience, legal strategies, and political organizing.
- **Standard 4.3:** Students will identify the civil rights objectives held by various groups, assess the strategies used, and evaluate the success of the various civil rights movements in reaching their objectives, paying specific attention to American Indian, women, and other racial and ethnic minorities.
- **Standard 4.4:** Students will identify significant counter-cultural movements of the 20th century as well as the reactions and counter-arguments to those movements, using examples such as the Beatniks, hippies, and the anti-Vietnam War movement.

It is important to note that this inquiry requires prerequisite knowledge of Social Darwinism, Slavery, Plessy v. Ferguson, “Jim Crow” laws, convict leasing, the Great Migration, Sharecropping, the Harlem Renaissance, and other key moments pertaining to African American History.

Note: This inquiry is expected to take two or three 50-minute class periods. The inquiry period could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experience (e.g., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, featured sources, writing). Teachers are encouraged to adapt to the inquiry to meet the needs and interests of their students. This inquiry lends itself to differentiation and modeling of historical thinking skills while assisting students in reading the variety of sources.

### Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question, we will review the ideas of

- Reconstruction Amendments
- Convict Leasing
- Social Darwinism
- Segregation
- The Great Migration
- Rise of the KKK during the 1920s

### Staging the Compelling Question

To stage the compelling question, students will compare two different letters. One written by the members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the other written in response by King. Background information regarding the Civil Rights movement will be beneficial to this Inquiry. The teacher can choose to provide instruction about the leaders and actions of this movement to lead up to this portion of the Inquiry.

- The organization of a series of protests by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights in Birmingham, AL, 1963.
- While imprisoned, MLK responded to a letter he received from eight clergymen who supported the Civil Rights movement, but encouraged King to use different tactics. The eight clergymen were considered to be moderate religious leaders.
- King’s letter was circulated locally and then published locally as a pamphlet by the American Friends Service Committee. It was also published in magazines such as *New York Post*, *Ebony*, and *Christian Century*. A portion of the letter was introduced into the Congressional Record by Representative William Fitts Ryan (D-NY). In 1964, King revised the letter and included it as a chapter in his book, “Why We Can’t Wait.”

## Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question—What were the moral disagreements between Civil Rights leaders?

The formative task asks students to independently find quotes from various Civil Rights leaders that speak to disagreements between leaders regarding civil rights. Each quote will exhibit contrasting ideologies that may not agree with Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) clergy in order to represent the different ideologies crusading for Civil Rights.



Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures: Create a “Quote Wall” similar to the illustration below that honors the diversity in voice of the leaders of the Civil Rights movement. Each student will find a quote from a Civil Rights Activist and create a placard on 6X9” (half sheet) of dark construction paper. The writing on the paper should include a decorative border, and the quote written with white or light-colored gel pens, or white colored pencils. Quotes will be arranged on the wall.

Quotes may be discussed and evaluated as a whole group activity.

Students may use the optional Smithsonian article to find differing voices, or may find quotes from a list provided by the teacher.

- Diane Nash
- John Lewis
- Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael)
- Bayard Rustin
- Joan Trumpauer Mulholland
- Ralph Abernathy
- James Farmer
- Genevieve Hughes Houghton
- James Peck
- James Bevel
- Jackie Robinson
- Yuri Kochiama
- Eleanor Holmes Norton
- Julian Bond
- Joyce Ladner
- Rachele Horowitz
- Elaine Brown
- Fred Hampton
- Eldridge Cleaver
- Kathleen Cleaver
- Malcolm X
- Angela Davis
- Cesar Chavez
- Dolores Huerta
- Daisy Bates
- Dennis Banks
- Clyde Bellecourt
- Russel Means
- Richard Oakes
- LaNada Means
- John Trudell
- Sacheen Littlefeather
- Marcus Garvey
- Booker T. Washington
- W.E.B. Du Bois

## SQ 1: Document A

Letter to Martin Luther King  
April 12, 1963

We clergymen are among those who, in January, issued “an Appeal for Law and Order and Common Sense,” in dealing with racial problems in Alabama. We expressed understanding that honest convictions in racial matters could properly be pursued in the courts, but urged that decisions of those courts should in the meantime be peacefully obeyed.

Since that time there has been some evidence of increased forbearance and a willingness to face facts.

Responsible citizens have undertaken to work on various problems which cause racial friction and unrest. In Birmingham, recent public events have given indication that we all have opportunity for a new constructive and realistic approach to racial problems.

However, we are now confronted by a series of demonstrations by some of our Negro citizens, directed and led in part by outsiders. We recognize the natural impatience of people who feel that their hopes are slow in being realized. But we are convinced that these demonstrations are unwise and untimely.

We agree rather with certain local Negro leadership which has called for honest and open negotiation of racial issues in our area. And we believe this kind of facing of issues can best be accomplished by citizens of our own metropolitan area, white and Negro, meeting with their knowledge and experiences of the local situation. All of us need to face that responsibility and find proper channels for its accomplishment.

Just as we formerly pointed out that “hatred and violence have no sanction in our religious and political traditions,” we also point out that such actions as incite to hatred and violence, however technically peaceful those actions may be, have not contributed to the resolution of our local problems. We do not believe that these days of new hope are days when extreme measures are justified in Birmingham.

We commend the community as a whole, and the local news media and law enforcement officials in particular, on the calm manner in which these demonstrations have been handled. We urge the public to continue to show restraint should the demonstrations continue, and the law enforcement officials to remain calm and continue to protect our city from violence.

We further strongly urge our own Negro community to withdraw support from these demonstrations, and to unite locally in working peacefully for a better Birmingham. When rights are consistently denied, a cause should be pressed in the courts and in negotiations among local leaders, and not in the streets.

We appeal to both our white and Negro citizenry to observe the principles of law and order and common sense.

Signed by:

C.C.J. CARPENTER, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Alabama.

JOSEPH A. DURICK, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop, Diocese of Mobile-Birmingham

Rabbi MILTON L. GRAFMAN, Temple Emanu-El, Birmingham, Alabama

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Bishop PAUL HARDIN, Bishop of the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the Methodist Church  
Bishop NOLAN B. HARMON, Bishop of the North Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church  
GEORGE M. MURRAY, D.D., LL.D., Bishop Coadjutor, Episcopal Diocese of Alabama  
EDWARD V. RAMAGE, Moderator, Synod of the Alabama Presbyterian Church in the United States  
EARL STALLINGS, Pastors, First Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama

### SQ 1: Document B

Excerpt from Martin Luther King's  
Letter from a Birmingham Jail

April 16, 1963

My Dear Fellow Clergymen:

While confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling my present activities "unwise and untimely." Seldom do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas .... But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and that your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I want to try to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.....

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.

I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and that when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress. I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that the present tension in the South is a necessary phase of the transition from an obnoxious negative peace, in which the Negro passively accepted his unjust plight, to a substantive and positive peace, in which all men will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open, where it can be seen and dealt with. Like a boil that can never be cured so long as it is covered up but must be opened with all its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.

In your statement you assert that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But is this a logical assertion? Isn't this like condemning a robbed man because his possession of money precipitated the evil act of robbery? Isn't this like condemning Socrates because his unswerving commitment to truth and his philosophical inquiries precipitated the act by the misguided populace in which they made him drink hemlock? Isn't this like condemning Jesus because his unique God consciousness and never ceasing devotion to God's will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion? We must come to see that, as the federal courts have consistently affirmed, it is

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wrong to urge an individual to cease his efforts to gain his basic constitutional rights because the quest may precipitate violence.

Society must protect the robbed and punish the robber. I had also hoped that the white moderate would reject the myth concerning time in relation to the struggle for freedom. I have just received a letter from a white brother in Texas. He writes: "All Christians know that the colored people will receive equal rights eventually, but it is possible that you are in too great a religious hurry. It has taken Christianity almost two thousand years to accomplish what it has. The teachings of Christ take time to come to earth."

Such an attitude stems from a tragic misconception of time, from the strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually, time itself is neutral; it can be used either destructively or constructively. More and more I feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.

**Source:** *Excerpts Clergymen & King Letters.pdf*.

<https://www.morningsidecenter.org/sites/default/files/files/Excerpts%20Clergymen%20%26%20King%20letters.pdf>

Accessed 24 May 2022.

## Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question... What were different ways that Civil Rights leaders broke the rules?

The formative task is... Ranking civil rights actions from conservative to radical and explaining their decisions.

Teachers may implement this task with the following procedures...

- Students may need background knowledge on the following topics:
  - March on Washington
  - Civil disobedience
  - Segregationist policies
  - Brown v Board
- Present sources to students in stations, full class, or small groups
- Students will fill in the “Does breaking the rules change the rules” graphic organizer

The scaffolds and other materials may be used to support students as they work with sources...

- “Does breaking the rules change the rules” graphic organizer

The following sources were selected to allow students an opportunity to analyze and understand the range of voices during the Civil Rights movement from peaceful to militant.

- **Source A:** Text from *Two Versions of John Lewis' Speech* | [BillMoyers.com](http://BillMoyers.com)
- **Source B:** "The Black Child's Pledge" · *SHEC: Resources for Teachers*.  
<https://shec.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1254>
- **Source C:** [\(1964\) Malcolm X's Speech at the Founding Rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity](#)
- **Source D:** [A Letter from Bayard Rustin to MLK](#)



## SQ2 Document A

# Two Versions of John Lewis' Speech

July 24, 2013

by [Lauren Feeney](#)

*In 2013, John Lewis gave an interview for Moyers & Company. "As the head of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, John Lewis drafted a fiery speech to present to the crowds gathered at the March on Washington. But the night before the storied march, the speech was mistakenly leaked to the press, and as word of its contents began to spread, Lewis was summoned to a meeting with the march's leaders and urged to tone down certain elements. Out of respect for leaders like A. Philip Randolph and Dr. Martin Luther King, Lewis edited his harsh criticism of the Kennedy administration's civil rights bill, which he'd originally called "too little and too late," and changed his call for a march "through the heart of Dixie, the way Sherman did" to a march "with the spirit of love and with the spirit of dignity that we have shown here today."*

## Original Draft of John Lewis' Speech

We march today for jobs and freedom, but we have nothing to be proud of, for hundreds and thousands of our brothers are not here. They have no money for their transportation, for they are receiving starvation wages, or no wages at all.

In good conscience, we cannot support wholeheartedly the administration's civil rights bill, for it is too little and too late. There's not one thing in the bill that will protect our people from police brutality.

This bill will not protect young children and old women from police dogs and fire hoses, for engaging in peaceful demonstrations: This bill will not protect the citizens in Danville, Virginia, who must live in constant fear in a police state. This bill will not protect the hundreds of people who have been arrested on trumped up charges. What about the three young men in Americus, Georgia, who face the death penalty for engaging in peaceful protest?

The voting section of this bill will not help thousands of black citizens who want to vote. It will not help the citizens of Mississippi, of Alabama and Georgia, who are qualified to vote but lack a sixth-grade education. "ONE MAN, ONE VOTE" is the African cry. It is ours, too. It must be ours.

People have been forced to leave their homes because they dared to exercise their right to register to vote. What

## John Lewis' Actual Speech

We march today for jobs and freedom, but we have nothing to be proud of, for hundreds and thousands of our brothers are not here, for they are receiving starvation wages or no wages at all. While we stand here, there are sharecroppers in the Delta of Mississippi who are out in the fields working for less than three dollars per day, 12 hours a day. While we stand here, there are students in jail on trumped-up charges. Our brother James Farmer, along with many others, is also in jail.

We come here today with a great sense of misgiving. It is true that we support the administration's Civil Rights Bill. We support it with great reservation, however. Unless title three is put in this bill, there's nothing to protect the young children and old women who must face police dogs and fire hoses in the South while they engage in peaceful demonstration.

In its present form this bill will not protect the citizens of Danville, Virginia, who must live in constant fear of a police state. It will not protect the hundreds and thousands of people that have been arrested on trumped up charges. What about the three young men, SNCC field secretaries in Americus, Georgia, who face the death penalty for engaging in peaceful protest?

As it stands now, the voting section of this bill will not help the thousands of people who want to vote. It will not help the citizens of Mississippi, of Alabama and Georgia

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is there in this bill to ensure the equality of a maid who earns \$5 a week in the home of a family whose income is \$100,000 a year?

For the first time in one hundred years this nation is being awakened to the fact that segregation is evil and that it must be destroyed in all forms. Your presence today proves that you have been aroused to the point of action.

We are now involved in a serious revolution. This nation is still a place of cheap political leaders who build their careers on immoral compromises and ally themselves with open forms of political, economic and social exploitation. What political leader here can stand up and say, "My party is the party of principles?" The party of Kennedy is also the party of Eastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. Where is our party?

In some parts of the South we work in the fields from sunup to sundown for \$12 a week. In Albany, Georgia, nine of our leaders have been indicted not by Dixiecrats but by the federal government for peaceful protest. But what did the federal government do when Albany's deputy sheriff beat attorney C. B. King and left him half dead? What did the federal government do when local police officials kicked and assaulted the pregnant wife of Slater King, and she lost her baby?

It seems to me that the Albany indictment is part of a conspiracy on the part of the federal government and local politicians in the interest of expediency.

I want to know, which side is the federal government on?

The revolution is at hand, and we must free ourselves of the chains of political and economic slavery. The nonviolent revolution is saying, "We will not wait for the courts to act, for we have been waiting for hundreds of years. We will not wait for the President, the Justice Department, nor Congress, but we will take matters into our own hands and create a source of power, outside of any national structure, that could and would assure us a victory."

To those who have said, "Be patient and wait," we must say that "patience" is a dirty and nasty word. We cannot be patient, we do not want to be free gradually. We want our freedom, and we want it now. We cannot depend on

who are unqualified to vote for lack of sixth grade education. One man, one vote is the African cry. It is ours too. It must be ours.

We must have legislation that will protect the Mississippi sharecroppers, who have been forced to leave their homes because they dared to exercise their right to register to vote. We need a bill that will provide for the homeless and starving people of this nation. We need a bill that will ensure the equality of a maid who earns five dollars a week in the home of a family whose total income is 100,000 dollars a year. We must have a good FEPC bill.

My friends let us not forget that we are involved in a serious social revolution. By and large, politicians who build their career on immoral compromise and allow themselves an open forum of political, economic and social exploitation dominate American politics.

There are exceptions, of course. We salute those. But what political leader can stand up and say, "My party is a party of principles"? For the party of Kennedy is also the party of Eastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. Where is our party? Where is the political party that will make it unnecessary to march on Washington? Where is the political party that will make it unnecessary to march in the streets of Birmingham? Where is the political party that will protect the citizens of Albany, Georgia?

Do you know that in Albany, Georgia nine of our leaders have been indicted, not by the Dixiecrats but by the federal government for peaceful protest? But what did the federal government do when Albany deputy sheriff beat Attorney C.B. King and left him half-dead? What did the federal government do when local police officials kicked and assaulted the pregnant wife of Slater King and she lost her baby?

To those who have said, "Be patient and wait," we must say that we cannot be patient. We do not want our freedom gradually but we want to be free now.

We are tired. We are tired of being beat by policemen. We are tired of seeing our people locked up in jail over and over again, and then you holler "Be patient." How

any political party, for both the Democrats and the Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence.

We all recognize the fact that if any radical social, political and economic changes are to take place in our society, the people, the masses, must bring them about. In the struggle, we must seek more than civil rights; we must work for the community of love, peace and true brotherhood. Our minds, souls and hearts cannot rest until freedom and justice exist for all people.

The revolution is a serious one. Mr. Kennedy is trying to take the revolution out of the streets and put it into the courts. Listen, Mr. Kennedy. Listen, Mr. Congressman. Listen, fellow citizens. The black masses are on the march for jobs and freedom, and we must say to the politicians that there won't be a "cooling-off" period.

All of us must get in the revolution. Get in and stay in the streets of every city, every village and every hamlet of this nation until true freedom comes, until the revolution is complete. In the Delta of Mississippi, in southwest Georgia, in Alabama, Harlem, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and all over this nation, the black masses are on the march!

We won't stop now. All of the forces of Eastland, Barnett, Wallace and Thurmond won't stop this revolution. The time will come when we will not confine our marching to Washington. We will march through the South, through the heart of Dixie, the way Sherman did. We shall pursue our own scorched earth policy and burn Jim Crow to the ground — nonviolently. We shall fragment the South into a thousand pieces and put them back together in the image of democracy. We will make the action of the past few months look petty. And I say to you, WAKE UP AMERICA!

long can we be patient? We want our freedom and we want it now.

We do not want to go to jail, but we will go to jail if this is the price we must pay for love, brotherhood and true peace. I appeal to all of you to get into this great revolution that is sweeping this nation. Get in and stay in the streets of every city, every village and hamlet of this nation until true freedom comes, until a revolution is complete. We must get in this revolution and complete the revolution. In the Delta of Mississippi, in Southwest Georgia, in the Black Belt of Alabama, in Harlem, in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and all over this nation the black masses are on a march for jobs and freedom.

They're talking about slow down and stop. We will not stop. All of the forces of Eastland, Barnett, Wallace, and Thurmond will not stop this revolution. If we do not get meaningful legislation out of this Congress, the time will come when we will not confine our march into Washington. We will march through the South, through the streets of Jackson, through the streets of Danville, through the streets of Cambridge, through the streets of Birmingham. But we will march with the spirit of love and with the spirit of dignity that we have shown here today.

By the forces of our demands, our determination and our numbers, we shall send a desegregated South into a thousand pieces, put them together in the image of God and Democracy. We must say wake up America, wake up! For we cannot stop, and we will not and cannot be patient.

SQ2 Document B

### "The Black Child's Pledge"

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*The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (as it was originally called) was founded in Oakland by Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton. The group's focus on "armed defense" often overshadowed their community activities, which included a free-breakfast program for children. This "Black Child's Pledge," composed by Shirley Williams and published in The Black Panther newsletter in 1968, highlights the Panthers' militancy and black-nationalist outlook, but also emphasizes the importance of education, physical fitness, abstinence from drugs, and the values of cooperation and community solidarity for black children.*

---

I pledge allegiance to my Black people.

I pledge to develop my mind and body to the greatest extent possible.

I will learn all that I can in order to give my best to my people in their struggle for liberation.

I will keep myself physically fit, building a strong body free from drugs and other substances that weaken me and make me less capable of protecting myself, my family, and my Black brothers and sisters.

I will unselfishly share my knowledge and understanding with them in order to bring about change more quickly.

I will discipline myself to direct my energies thoughtfully and constructively rather than wasting them in idle hatred.

I will train myself never to hurt or allow others to harm my Black brothers and sisters for I recognize that we need every Black man, woman, and child to be physically, mentally and psychologically strong.

These principles I pledge to practice daily and to teach them to others in order to unite my people.

**SOURCE:** Shirley Williams, "'The Black Child's Pledge,'" *SHEC: Resources for Teachers*, accessed May 27, 2022, <https://shec.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1254>.

## SQ2 Document C

## MALCOLM X'S SPEECH AT THE FOUNDING RALLY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRO-AMERICAN UNITY, 1964 (Abridged)

*Malcolm X's life changed dramatically in the first six months of 1964. On March 8, he left the Nation of Islam. In May he toured West Africa and made a pilgrimage to Mecca, returning as El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. While in Ghana in May, he decided to form the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU). Malcolm returned to New York the following month to create the OAAU and on June 28 gave his first public address on behalf of the new organization at the Audubon Ballroom in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan. That address appears below.*

Salaam Alaikum, Mr. Moderator, our distinguished guests, brothers and sisters, our friends and our enemies, everybody who's here.

As many of you know, last March when it was announced that I was no longer in the Black Muslim movement, it was pointed out that it was my intention to work among the 22 million non-Muslim Afro-Americans and to try and form some type of organization, or create a situation where the young people – our young people, the students and others – could study the problems of our people for a period of time and then come up with a new analysis and give us some new ideas and some new suggestions as to how to approach a problem that too many other people have been playing around with for too long. And that we would have some kind of meeting and determine at a later date whether to form a black nationalist party or a black nationalist army....

One of the first things that the independent African nations did was to form an organization called the Organization of African Unity. This organization consists of all independent African states who have reached the agreement to submerge all differences and combine their efforts toward eliminating from the continent of Africa colonialism and all vestiges of oppression and exploitation being suffered by African people. Those who formed the organization of African states have differences. They represent probably every segment, every type of thinking. You have some leaders that are considered Uncle Toms, some leaders who are considered very militant. But even the militant African leaders were able to sit down at the same table with African leaders whom they considered to be Toms, or Tshombes, or that type of character. They forgot their differences for the sole purpose of bringing benefits to the whole....

Everyone was there and despite their differences, they were able to sit down and form what was known as the Organization of African Unity, which has formed a coalition and is working in conjunction with each other to fight a common enemy. Once we saw what they were able to do, we determined to try and do the same thing here in America among Afro Americans who have been divided by our enemies. So we have formed an organization known as the Organization of Afro American Unity which has the same aim and objective – to fight whoever gets in our way, to bring about the complete independence of people of African descent here in the Western Hemisphere, and first here in the United States, and bring about the freedom of these people by any means necessary.

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That's our motto. We want freedom by any means necessary. We want justice by any means necessary. We want equality by any means necessary. We don't feel that in 1964, living in a country that is supposedly based upon freedom, and supposedly the leader of the free world, we don't think that we should have to sit around and wait for some segregationist congressmen and senators and a President from Texas in Washington, D. C., to make up their minds that our people are due now some degree of civil rights. No, we want it now or we don't think anybody should have it.

The purpose of our organization is to start right here in Harlem, which has the largest concentration of people of African descent that exists anywhere on this earth. There are more Africans in Harlem than exist in any city on the African continent. Because that's what you and I are Africans. You catch any white man off guard in here right now, you catch him off guard and ask him what he is, he doesn't say he's an American. He either tells you he's Irish, or he's Italian, or he's German, if you catch him off guard and he doesn't know what you're up to. And even though he was born here, he'll tell you he's Italian. Well, if he's Italian, you and I are African even though we were born here....

So the purpose of the Organization of Afro American Unity is to unite everyone in the Western Hemisphere of African descent into one united force. And then, once we are united among ourselves in the Western Hemisphere, we will unite with our brothers on the motherland, on the continent of Africa. So to get right with it, I would like to read you the "Basic Aims and Objectives of the Organization of Afro American Unity;" started here in New York, June, 1964.

"The Organization of Afro American Unity, organized and structured by a cross section of the Afro American people living in the United States of America, has been patterned after the letter and spirit of the Organization of African Unity which was established at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May of 1963.

"We, the members of the Organization of Afro American Unity, gathered together in Harlem, New York:

"Convinced that it is the inalienable right of all our people to control our own destiny;

"Conscious of the fact that freedom, equality, justice and dignity are central objectives for the achievement of the legitimate aspirations of the people of African descent here in the Western Hemisphere, we will endeavor to build a bridge of understanding and create the basis for Afro American unity;

"Conscious of our responsibility to harness the natural and human resources of our people for their total advancement in all spheres of human endeavor;

"Inspired by our common determination to promote understanding among our people and cooperation in all matters pertaining to their survival and advancement, we will support the aspirations of our people for brotherhood and solidarity in a larger unity transcending all organizational differences;

"Convinced that, in order to translate this determination into a dynamic force in the cause of human progress conditions of peace and security must be established and maintained;" – And by "conditions of peace and security," [we mean] we have to eliminate the barking of the police dogs, we have to eliminate the police clubs, we have to eliminate the water hoses, we have to eliminate all of these things that have become so characteristic of the American so called dream. These have to be eliminated. Then we will be living in a condition of peace and security. We can never have peace and security as long as one black man in this country is being bitten by a police dog. No one in the country has peace and security. "Dedicated to the unification of all people of African descent in this hemisphere and to the utilization of that unity to bring into being the organizational structure that will project the black people's contributions to the world;

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“Persuaded that the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights are the principles in which we believe and that these documents if put into practice represent the essence of mankind’s hopes and good intentions;

“Desirous that all Afro American people and organizations should henceforth unite so that the welfare and well being of our people will be assured;

“We are resolved to reinforce the common bond of purpose between our people by submerging all of our differences and establishing a nonsectarian, constructive program for human rights;

“We hereby present this charter....

“This cultural revolution will be the journey to our rediscovery of ourselves. History is a people’s memory, and without a memory man is demoted to the level of the lower animals.” When you have no knowledge of your history, you’re just another animal; in fact, you’re a Negro; something that’s nothing. The only black man on earth who is called a Negro is one who has no knowl-edge of his history. The only black man on earth who is called a Negro is one who doesn’t know where he came from. That’s the one in America....

I don’t know if I’m right in saying this, but for a period of time, let’s you and me not be too hard on other Afro-American leaders. Because you would be surprised how many of them. have expressed sympathy and support in our efforts to bring this situation confronting our people before the United Nations. You’d be surprised how many of them, some of the last ones you would expect, they’re coming around. So let’s give them a little time to straighten up. If they straighten up, good. They’re our brothers and we’re responsible for our brothers. But if they don’t straighten up, then that’s another point.

And one thing that we are going to do, we’re going to dispatch a wire, a telegram that is, in the name of the Organization of Afro-American Unity to Martin Luther King in St. Augustine, Florida, and to Jim Forman in Mississippi, worded in essence to tell them that if the federal government doesn’t come to their aid, call on us. And we will take the responsibility of slipping some brothers into that area who know what to do by any means necessary.

I can tell you right now that my purpose is not to become involved in a fight with Black Muslims, who are my brothers still. I do everything I can to avoid that because there’s no benefit in it. It actually makes our enemy happy. But I do believe that the time has come for you and me to take the responsibility of forming whatever nucleus or defense group is necessary in places like Mississippi....

Johnson knew that when he sent [Allen] Dulles down there. Johnson has found this out. You don’t disappear. How are you going to disappear? Why, this man can find a missing person in China. They send the CIA all the way to China and find somebody. They send the FBI anywhere and find somebody. But they can’t find them whenever the criminal is white and the victim is black, then they can’t find them.

Let’s don’t wait on any more FBI to look for criminals who are shooting and brutalizing our people. Let’s you and me find them. And I say that it’s easy to do it. One of the best organized groups of black people in America was the Black Muslims. They’ve got all the machinery, don’t think they haven’t; and the experience where they know how to ease out in broad daylight or in dark and do whatever is necessary by any means necessary. They know how to do that. Well, I don’t blame anybody for being taught how to do that. You’re living in a society where you’re the constant victim of brutality. You must know how to strike back.

So instead of them and us wasting our shots, I should say our time and energy, on each other, what we need to do is band together and go to Mississippi. That’s my closing message to Elijah Muhammad: If he is the leader of the Muslims and the leader of our people, then lead us against our enemies, don’t lead us against each other.

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I thank you for your patience here tonight, and we want each and every one of you to put your name on the roll of the Organization of Afro- American Unity. The reason we have to rely upon you to let the public know where we are is because the press doesn't help us; they never announce in advance that we're going to have a meeting. So you have to spread the word over the grapevine.

Thank you. Salaam Alaikum.

**Source:** (1964) *Malcolm X's Speech at the Founding Rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity.*

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/speeches-african-american-history/1964-malcolm-x-s-speech-founding-rally-organization-afro-american-unity/>. Accessed 24 May 2022.

### SQ2 Document D

Letter from Bayard Rustin to Martin Luther King, Jr.

Rev. M.L. King, Jr.  
309 S. Jackson Street  
Montgomery, Alabama

Dear Martin:

I hope to see you and have a short time to discuss some important matters with you in Washington. I shall be there a day or so in advance. I understand that you will be getting in the night before.<sup>1</sup> I shall call you at the Statler to make arrangements for getting together. As Stanley [*Levison*] told you, we discussed the content of the paper he gave you in New York—entitled “A Wind is Rising”.<sup>2</sup> I think the content of this is—as far as it goes—sound. However, I feel it is limited in these respects:

- (a) There is not sufficient spiritual content.
- (b) There is not a clear statement on non-violence.

In this connection, I hope you will consider using this occasion to call upon Negroes north and south to adhere to non-violence in work, thought and deed.

Needless to say, this occasion is indeed an important one and to reach its possibilities. I believe you will need to say something to touch the following areas of life:

- (a) Something new by way of analysis of the racial struggle
- (b) Something in relation to voting and labor cooperation, the two major areas where action is demanded and where action is possible in the wide struggle of community organization.
- (c) Something striking on the question of non-violence

While you will, of course, speak in your own way, I enclose a short outline of points that I believe meet the three areas referred to above.

If possible, we should have a copy of your talk soon after you get to Washington, if not before, since we shall need to have it mimeographed for the press. This is important. If you could get up to Washington on the morning of the 16th (Thursday) you might work on the talk in the hotel. I could, in this event, get a girl to help you and I could plan to be there if needed.

These ideas are not particularly logical but have a significance which I feel is worthy of consideration.

- (1) On the non-violent emphasis, the form in creative action is always Yes—No—Yes. That is to say a positive action such as the idea of brotherhood, followed by a rejection—a No. Rejection of segregation, discrimination,

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<sup>1</sup> King arrived in Washington on the morning of 16 May.

<sup>2</sup> In “A Wind is Rising” (April 1957). Stanley Levison emphasized the connection between the labor movement’s struggle for economic justice and the civil rights movement’s struggle for voting rights.



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injustice; this must be followed by a positive action. The positive action is brotherhood, followed by the negative rejection of non-brotherhood, followed by a common action.

(2) The need to expand the struggle on all fronts: Up to now we have thought of the color question as something which could be solved in and of itself. We know now that while [it is necessary] to say No to racial injustice, this must be followed by a positive program of action. The struggle for the right to vote, for economic uplift of the people. A part of this is the realization that men are truly brothers, that the Negro cannot be free so long as there are poor and underprivileged white people.

(3) This leads to the realization that economic and social change for the uplift of all poor people is part of the struggle of Negroes for justice.

(4) In the United States one of the most important groups for action on the economic uplift of underprivileged peoples is the American labor movement. Equality for Negroes is related to the greater problem of economic uplift for Negroes and poor white men. They share a common problem and have a common interest in working together for economic and social uplift. They can and must work together. Negro leaders and Negro people should defend the right for men to organize and to eradicate economic and social injustice. Organized labor must work for the right of all men, black and white, to vote. They must eliminate segregation, or free labor unions cannot exist. This action is a part of the continuing program which is the "Action Yes," but this can happen only when we have said No to segregation and discrimination.

Note: In this connection I want to talk seriously with you about the next step in action for the Southern Leaders' Conference. It is this: A proposal that in September you call together Negro and white labor leaders of the south, and perhaps some from the north as advisors and counselors to meet with the Southern Leaders' Conference to discuss the role of organized labor in the struggle for freedom, and a proposal that labor implement the struggle for Negroes to vote freely.

Actually, Martin, the question of where you move next is more important than any other question Negroes face today. This seems to me a creative direction. On this I shall have more to say when I see you. My reason now for bringing up this point is to discuss with you whether or not you can see your way clear to announce that you have called such a conference and announce it in your speech. This will give a sense of direction and meaning and the Prayer Pilgrimage impact will not be left in mid-air.

The decision, as I understand it, is that the three co-chairman will each have 10 minutes only to speak. This requires careful attention to each word if you decide to incorporate the three ideas suggested.

I wish the arrangements could have been simpler but apparently the decision has been made.

At any rate—as soon as I feel you have got this letter, I shall call you.

Sincerely,

[signed] Bayard

**Source:** MLKP, MBU, Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers, 1954-1968, Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University, Boston, Mass.

"From Bayard Rustin." *The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute*, [kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/bayard-rustin](http://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/bayard-rustin). Accessed 27 May 2022.

## Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined:

- A Letter to Martin Luther King from the clergy (April 12, 1963)
- A Letter from Birmingham Jail (April 16, 1963)
- An Oral History of March on Washington (optional)
- Text from *Two Versions of John Lewis' Speech*
- Black Panther Newsletter (1970)
- Malcolm X's Speech at the Founding Rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (1964)
- The Places of Bayard Rustin

Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understanding and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students will cite evidence to support a claim that answers both supporting questions and the

Students' arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- Quotes from Civil Rights leaders and how the methods they supported brought about "good trouble"
- Group charts that rank four Civil Rights leaders from the most conservative to the most radical citing evidence from provided sources.

To support students in their writing the following skills will be emphasized:

- **Sourcing**—asks students to consider who wrote a document as well as the circumstances of its creation.
  - Who wrote this?
  - What is the author's perspective?
  - Why was it written?
  - When was it written?
  - Where was it written?
  - Is this source reliable? Why? Why not?
- **Close Reading**—helps students evaluate sources and analyze rhetoric by asking them:
  - What claims does the author make?
  - What evidence does the author use?
  - What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document's audience?
  - How does the document's language indicate the author's perspective?
- **Contextualization**—asks students to locate a document in time and place and to understand how these factors shape its content.
  - When and where was the document created?
  - What was different then?
  - What was the same?
  - How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?
- **Corroboration**—asks students to consider details across multiple sources to determine points of agreement and

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disagreement.

- What do other documents say?
- Do the documents agree? If not, why?
- What are other possible documents?
- What documents are most reliable?

To extend their arguments, students will evaluate the background of one of the resources for this portion of the inquiry. Because of the content of their letter, the eight clergymen are perceived as opponents to Rev. Martin Luther King's approach to the Civil Rights movement. Recent interpretations argue they were moderate and liberal supporters of the movement. Students can read this source from the Associated Press and discuss the challenge of determining perspective in history. <https://apnews.com/article/f41b8e83515f48a4aab6ecf66ce8f84a>

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by...