YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE
to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2021 Volume I: U. S. Social Movements through Biography

Rosa Parks: A Civil Rights Hero

Curriculum Unit 21.01.01, published September 2021
by Carol Boynton

Introduction

After nearly seventy years of activism, Rosa Louise Parks died on October 14, 2005, in her home in Detroit at the age of ninety-two. Within days, Representative John Conyers, Jr., who had employed Parks for twenty years, introduced a resolution to have her body lie in honor in the Capitol rotunda. Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle rushed to pay tribute to the "mother of the civil rights movement," making Parks the first woman and second African American to be granted this honor.

Various dignitaries attended the viewing, including Condoleezza Rice, who said "without Mrs. Parks, I probably would not be standing here today as Secretary of State." Forty thousand Americans came to the Capitol to bear witness to her passing.[1] Her body was moved from the Capitol to the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church for a public memorial and then back to Detroit, where thousands waited in the rain to pay their respects to one of Detroit's finest, with tributes from Bill Clinton to Aretha Franklin and presidential hopefuls Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Rationale

In his TED Talk titled *The Real Story of Rosa Parks - and Why We Need to Confront Myths about Black History*, David Ikard, Professor of African American and Diaspora studies at Vanderbilt University, shares the story of his own son coming home from his fourth-grade class having learned the story of Rosa Parks. It was narrow, incomplete, and sometimes incorrect information. As a Black parent and a cultural studies professor, Ikard wanted his son to know the complete story and gave him Parks' autobiography to read. This made me realize, as a primary level teacher, I need the whole story to accurately teach my students about the life and legacy of Rosa Parks and her place in the civil rights movement.[2]

Rosa Parks refusal to surrender her seat to a white male passenger on a Montgomery, Alabama bus, December 1, 1955, triggered a wave of protest that reverberated throughout the United States. This quiet courageous act changed America, its view of African American people, and redirected the course of history.

In the many children's picture books about Parks, she is portrayed as a tired old seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, who decided to resist segregation law by refusing to move to the back of the bus. This moment of defiance is presented as a spontaneous act of courage that sparked the bus boycott and placed Rosa Parks in the forefront of civil rights. There is a deeper story in her history that is missing from this civil rights story.

Rosa Parks was a veteran activist, and this was not an isolated incident, but a lifelong crusade. Parks was part of an ongoing movement of leaders waiting for the right moment to begin the strategies and tactics of the boycott, a grassroots year-long challenge to the established law. Her bold act that day in Montgomery has become legendary, and in the shadow of that legend, there is an unfortunate tendency to ignore the full story of her life as a civil rights activist, which began long before the day she just said no on that Cleveland Avenue bus.[3]

School Demographics

As a teacher in a self-contained classroom at Edgewood Magnet School in New Haven. I find the neighborhood/magnet setting a rewarding environment, with students coming to school each day from a variety of home circumstances and with differences in academic levels. As a result of these variables, the children have differing levels of background knowledge and life experiences. The classroom is a mixture of varied ethnicities, economic strata and social and emotional strengths and weaknesses. The use of collaboration allows all students at all levels to learn in an inherently differentiated environment, learning new concepts and experiences through hands-on practices.

Throughout the school year, the kindergarten curriculum centers heavily on social development, which is certainly appropriate for five- and six-year-old children. Our school mission and vision statements focus on equity and inclusion, acknowledging and including everyone in our learning environment. This unit will be in direct alignment with my responsibility to design curricula that helps our students learn social and community responsibility.

Overview

This curriculum unit will consider the life of Rosa Parks in as full a manner as possible, with an opportunity to look at the life she led before the Montgomery Bus Boycott as well as her life after. In Parks autobiography *My Story*, written for the young adult audience, she shares her memories of growing up in the piney woods of rural Alabama; working with various NAACP youth groups; struggling to help save the Scottsboro Boys (eight young Black men/boys sentenced to death in 1931 after their convictions, on concocted evidence, for the rapes of two white women on a freight train in Alabama); serving as secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP and the organization's Alabama State Conferences through the 1940s and 1950s; forging a friendship with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; and putting in twenty-three years as a legislative aide to Democratic congressman John Conyers of Michigan.[4]

Early Years of Rosa McCauley Parks

Rosa Louise McCauley spent the first years of her life on a small farm with her mother, grandparents and brother in Pine Level, Alabama. She was born in Tuskegee on February 4, 1913, and named after her two grandmothers, Rose and Louisa. Her mother, Leona Edwards, was a teacher who married James McCauley, a self-taught carpenter and mason. James spent much of his time away from home on building sites around the state. As a young mother, Leona moved back with her own parents in Pine Level, where she could get some help with Rosa, a frail and small baby. Two years later, Rosa's brother Sylvester was born.

Living with her grandparents, Rosa learned about her mother's family history. Early on Rosa learned that she was not a full African American but of mixed race. A number of her family members were often mistaken for white. Her grandmother's parents were slaves on the Wight plantation in Pine Level, where they remained after Emancipation and were somehow able to purchase 12 acres for themselves. It was important to Rosa's grandparents that their children have an education and not be destined to do domestic work for whites. Rosa's mother did just that - she was able to earn a teacher's certificate from Payne University in Selma. Her first teaching job was in Pine Level, but had to accept a position farther away, too far to travel daily, requiring her to stay with a family during the week.

Rosa witnessed night rides by the Ku Klux Klan and listened in fear as lynchings occurred near her home.[5] They never broke into the family's house, but her grandfather would often sit on the porch with his gun right beside him, just in case.[6]

Formative incidents during young years that Parks recounts in her autobiography show her strength even as a young girl. Although she recalls that white children and Black children generally kept to themselves, she did encounter some run-ins and felt she must protect herself and her younger brother. When she was about ten, she met a white boy on the road. He was about her size and threatened her with his balled-up fist. Rosa picked up a brick and dared him to hit her. He thought better of the idea and went away. When she mentioned it to her grandmother, she received a severe scolding about her safety and that she can't "act like that around white folks." Rosa recalled the time a boy on roller skates tried to slam her off a sidewalk as she walked through this all-white neighborhood. She turned around and pushed him and noticed a white woman standing not too far from them. She turned out to be his mother and told Rosa she could put her "so far in jail that I would never come out again" for pushing her child. Rosa told her he had pushed her and "I didn't want to be pushed, seeing that I wasn't bothering him at all." The outwardly demure Parks had a defiant streak from the start.[7]

Rosa started school around six in a one-teacher Black school with 50-60 students from first grade up to fifth. Students were organized into rows by age. Because she had been taught at home by her mother, Rosa arrived able to read. School was a good place for Rosa, but she was quite aware of the white school, a nice brick building that she walked by each day, with glass-paned windows, heat and school buses for the children. Theirs had only wooden shutters, heat supplied by the wood they carried in, and there were no buses for them.

Rosa's mother was adamant that Rosa receives a serious education. Because there was no schooling for Black children beyond sixth grade, she enrolled eleven-year-old Rosa at Miss White's Montgomery Industrial School for Girls in Montgomery, a progressive institution founded after the Civil War and sent her to live with an aunt.

After a semester at Miss White's, Rosa received a scholarship, relieving the financial hardship to her family.[8] Rosa would dust the desks, sweep the floor, empty the waste baskets, and clean the blackboards, if the lessons on them were not needed for the following day.[9] . Rosa liked being at Miss White's, a big school with 250-300 students and the usual classroom subjects, like English and science as well the domestic science (cooking, sewing, taking care of the sick) which are areas that Black girls would be able to find a job.

What Rosa felt she learned best at Miss White's school was that she was "a person with dignity and self-respect, and I should not set my sights lower than anybody else just because I was Black." They were taught to be ambitious and believe they could do what they wanted to in life. This was not something Rosa just learned at Miss White's but what she had learned from her grandparents and mother her whole life.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Blacks in twenty-seven Deep South cities boycotted segregated streetcars. Montgomery was one. With its new electric trolley system, Montgomery was facing a massive boycott in August 1900, when African American ministers urged their congregations to walk rather than ride, in a show of solidarity against the unfairness. Five successive weeks of Blacks' refusal to ride the streetcars had cost the trolley operators 25 percent of their business. Eventually the company ended streetcar segregation in the city, but the win was short-lived. By the 1920s, Jim Crow brought segregation back to the trolley system. This episode in civil rights history was an important precursor to the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott.[10]

Rosa's mother wanted her daughter to teach, but Rosa felt schools were just too segregated and oppressive. The humiliation and intimidation from the board of education and the officials did not appeal to Rosa at all. She wanted to be a nurse or a social worker and help people who are suffering.[11] Despite her ambitions, Rosa had to drop out in the eleventh grade to care for her sick grandmother and subsequently her ailing mother, who suffered from debilitating migraines.

In the spring of 1931, a friend introduced Rosa to politically active Raymond Parks. He was more light skinned than Rosa and could almost pass for white except he "didn't have white people's hair."[12] . He was born in Wedowee, a small town in Alabama, and did not attend school - his mother taught him at home. He lived in an area with a great deal of white hostility and there were no schools for Black children. His childhood was difficult, losing his grandparents and mother by the age of ten. He moved in with a cousin and finally, at the age of twenty-one, went to school, at Tuskegee, where he learned the barber trade.

Raymond was an avid reader of the Black press, particularly Langston Hughes and James Weldon Johnson. He kept abreast of the issues of the day and had wide-ranging political discussions with those in his barber chair. Issues of influential Black publications including, *The Crisis, Pittsburgh Courier, Amsterdam News,* and *Chicago Defender,* were on hand in his barber shop, providing a tremendous resource to his customers.

As a charter member of the NAACP, Raymond talked about political issues with Rosa, including the Scottsboro case. His appreciation for race pride and activism that Rosa had learned at home strengthened their relationship. They married on December 18, 1932, in her mother's house, with a small gathering of friends and family.

Although Raymond had previously discouraged her out of fear for her safety, in December 1943, Rosa also joined the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP and became chapter secretary. She worked closely with chapter president Edgar Daniel (E.D.) Nixon.[13] The first meeting between Rosa and E. D. Nixon - a partnership that would change the course of American history - took place at the Parks' apartment.

One of the most active African Americans in Montgomery, Nixon was a railroad porter and president of the local branch of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters Union, a Black railroad workers' union founded by Mr. A. Philip Randolph. Nixon founded the Montgomery branch in the 1920s. When Rosa first met him in 1943, he was the president of the Montgomery branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He was getting Black people registered to vote. Only thirty-one Black people were registered to vote in Montgomery out of thousands of Black residents.

The application for voter registration required potential voters to identify their employers, their business, educational background, any alcohol or drug use. This was too much for potential Black voters, who often feared retribution by employers. In addition, if you did not own property, there was a test with questions determined by the registrar and different for whites and Blacks. Difficult and obscure questions kept many Blacks from attempting to register. A white person would have to vouch for a Black registrant.

Unfair poll taxes had to be paid, at the rate of $1.50 for each year they had been eligible to register but had not done so. This, of course, was quite a bit of money for a working family. White voters were not required to pay for past years' taxes, even if they were owed. They could simply pay the $1.50 tax for the current year and then vote. Not so for Black voters. When Rosa was finally able to register in 1945, she was 32 years old and had to pay the poll tax for the eleven years she was eligible to register, at total of $16.50.

The civil rights heroism of Raymond Parks has been obscured, but there is no doubt that Rosa's husband helped to radicalize her. He worried about her becoming the symbol of the Montgomery bus boycott and a target for white violence. He discussed with her the newest strategies that the NAACP was using the help Black win the right to vote and gain entry to local hospitals. In Alabama at that time, Blacks were excluded from juries, hired only for menial jobs, prohibited from enrolling in universities and denied access to public libraries and parks.[14]

In 1941, Rosa got a job at Maxwell Field, a flight school established by the Wright Brothers themselves. The base facilities were, in principle, fully integrated. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had forbidden racial segregation in public places and on U.S. military bases. "I could ride an integrated trolley on the base, but when I left the base, I had to ride on a segregated bus." This disparity annoyed her to no end.[15] Maxwell Field was as integrated as north of the Mason-Dixon line but once outside the gates, Rosa was dropped down to second class status. She was humiliated riding home on the segregated city bus, something she felt determined to end. Her experience with integration on the base was a catalyst for her to join the NAACP and fight for the right to vote. "You might just say Maxell opened my eyes up. It was an alternative reality to the ugly racial policies of Jim Crow."[16]

Rosa Parks Bus Stand

Black people had special rules to follow on the Montgomery buses. Some drivers made the Black passengers step in the front door, pay their fare, but then go around to the back door and get on. Often, the bus would take off before the passenger even got around to the back door.

The buses were designed with thirty-six seats. The first ten were reserved for whites, even if no white passengers were on the bus. Although there was no law about the last ten seats, it was understood that they were for Black people. Blacks were required to sit in the back even if there were empty seats in the front and once those ten seats were filled, all other Black passengers had to stand. If the bus filled up in the front section, some drivers made Black passengers give up seats in the back section. The middle sixteen seats were designated by the bus driver. The drivers carried guns and had what they called police power to rearrange the seating and enforce segregation. "Some bus drivers were meaner than others. Not all of them were hateful, but segregation itself is vicious and to my mind there was no way you could make segregation decent or nice or acceptable."[17]

"God provided me the strength I needed at the precise time when conditions were ripe for change." This boycott was not some lucky happenstance. Rosa Parks and her colleagues had worked for years seeding the ground for a movement in Montgomery. By 1949 Parks was advisor to the local NAACP Youth Council. Under her guidance, youth members challenged the Jim Crow system by checking books out of whites-only libraries.

The summer before Parks' arrest, Virginia Durr arranged for Parks to travel to Tennessee's Highlander Folk School to attend a workshop entitled "Racial Desegregation: Implementing the Supreme Court Decision." It was there that Parks received encouragement from fellow participant Septima Clark, who later joined Highlander's staff in mid-1956. At the 10-day workshop at Highlander, Rosa experienced people of different races and backgrounds meeting together to problem-solve and living together in peace and harmony. She felt she could express herself without repercussions or negative attitudes from others. She left Tennessee to return to her job as assistant tailor at the Montgomery Fair department store, where she knew she must be smiling and polite no matter how rude she was treated. And back to traveling on segregated buses.

When she inspired the bus boycott, Parks had been the secretary of the local NAACP for twelve years (1943-1956). In December of 1943, Rosa was at the meeting, and they were having their annual election of officers. Rosa was one of two women in the organization, the other, Johnnie Carr, a classmate from Miss White's. Johnnie was not at this particular meeting, so Rosa was elected by about a dozen or so members who were in attendance. She was too timid to say no and "just started taking minutes."[18]

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks finished work at Montgomery Fair. That Thursday had been a busy day. During her coffee break, she had talked with Alabama State College President H. Councill Trenholm to finalize plans for her NAACP workshops on campus in the coming weekend and spent the afternoon hemming and pressing pants. She left work and decided to wait for a less crowded bus, which arrived around 5:30. She boarded the yellow and olive bus and paid her ten cents before she realized that the driver, James Fred Blake, had given her trouble before.

This same driver, in 1943, had insisted that Parks exit and reboard through the back door. Finding this practice a humiliating one, Parks did not move. Blake grabbed her sleeve, attempting to push her off the bus but Rosa purposely dropped her purse and sat down in a seat in the whites-only section. Blake seemed ready

to hit her. “I will get off…..You better not hit me.” She had managed to avoid his bus for the next twelve years.[19]

This December day, Rosa put her parcels down and sat in the middle section of the bus, next to a Black man. The bus was not crowded, with many seats still open in the front. Two Black women were sitting across the aisle from her. They were all seated in the middle section of the bus. At the third stop, the white section filled up. Fourteen whites in the front section; twenty-two Black people were sitting in the back seats. A white man proceeded to stand behind the driver, who called back, “Let me have those front seats,” meaning front row of the section where Rosa and the other three were sitting. Alabama segregation terms were that now all four of the Black passengers had to give up their seats for the one white man to sit down. When the driver ordered them to get up, no one moved. “You all better make it light on yourselves and let me have those seats,” the driver said.[20]

Her seatmate and the two other women got up, but she refused. She moved her legs so the man sitting by the window could get out and then she slid over into the seat next to the window. The bus was crowded, and the tension was heightened as Blake walked back to her. Refusing to be deferential, Parks looked him right in the eye. “Are you going to stand up?” to which she told him she was not going to move “because I got on first and paid the same fare, and I didn’t think it was right for me to have to stand so someone else who got on later could sit down.”[21]

> *“People always say that I didn’t give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn’t true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in.”*

Eventually, two policemen arrived. They got on the bus, one of them telling Rosa to stand. She asked him, “Why do you all push us around?” Rosa, in her autobiography, could recall his exact words: “I don’t know, but the law is the law and you’re under arrest.” (Parks 117) Rosa was taken in the police car to the station, where she was fingerprinted and photographed. After a considerable wait and several refusals to make a phone call, Rosa was finally able to reach her husband to ask, “Parks, will you come get me out of jail?” Mr. Nixon and Mr. Clifford Durr, husband of Rosa’s friend Virginia Durr, found out about the arrest and set out to get her released. By 10:00, Rosa was out and back home. The next morning, handbills were printed and distributed to Black families, encouraging them to not take the bus - not to work, not to school, not anywhere starting Monday, December 5, the day of Rosa’s trial.

That evening after the success of the one-day boycott, a group of about 20 gathered at the Mt. Zion AME Zion Church to discuss boycott strategies. Parks was introduced but not asked to speak, despite a standing ovation. The group agreed that a new organization was needed to lead the boycott effort if it were to continue. Rev. Ralph Abernathy suggested the name "Montgomery Improvement Association" (MIA). and the members elected as their president Martin Luther King Jr., a newcomer to Montgomery, who was a young and mostly unknown minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. That Monday night, fifty leaders of the African American community gathered to discuss actions to respond to Parks' arrest. Edgar Nixon, the president of the NAACP, said, "My God, look what segregation has put in my hands!"[22]

Parks was considered the ideal for a test case against city and state segregation laws, as she was known as a responsible, mature woman with a good reputation. She was securely married and employed, with a quiet and dignified demeanor, and was politically savvy.

In the end, black residents of Montgomery continued the boycott for 381 days. Dozens of public buses stood idle for months, severely damaging the bus transit company's finances, until the city repealed its law requiring segregation on public buses following the US Supreme Court ruling in *Browder v. Gayle* that it was unconstitutional.

Parks played an important part in raising international awareness of the plight of African Americans and the civil rights struggle. Dr. King noted in *Stride before Freedom* that Rosa was not planted there by the NAACP, or any other organization. She was there because of her own dignity and self-respect. “She was anchored to that seat by the accumulated indignities of days gone and the boundless aspirations of generations yet unborn.”[23]

After Montgomery

In 1957, Raymond and Rosa Parks left Montgomery for Hampton, Virginia because she was unable to find work and was constantly receiving death threats In Virginia, she and her husband found work, but later that year, at the urging of her brother and sister-in-law in Detroit, Rosa and Raymond Parks, and her mother moved north to join them.

Parks worked in the first campaign for Congress by John Conyers. She persuaded Martin Luther King to appear with Conyers, boosting the candidate's profile. When Conyers was elected, he hired Rosa as a secretary and receptionist for his congressional office in Detroit, a position she held She held until she retired in 1988.

Teaching Strategies

This unit provides a cross-curricular approach in Social Studies and Literacy, including a focus on visual literacy strategies. Students will learn that biographies are life stories that inform us about others, often those who have made a mark in our society and the world in ways that are inspiring and interesting. We will explore the idea that reading across many texts can provide a clear understanding of a person’s life and their accomplishments.

The core idea of project-based learning is that real-world concerns capture students' interest and provoke serious thinking as the students acquire and apply new knowledge in a problem-solving context. The teacher plays the role of facilitator, working with students to frame worthwhile questions, structuring meaningful tasks, coaching both knowledge development and social skills, and carefully assessing what students have learned from the experience. Project-based learning helps prepare students for the thinking and collaboration skills.

Organized around an open-ended questioning, project-based learning helps focus the students' work and deepen their learning by centering on significant issues or problems. Projects begin by presenting students with knowledge and concepts and then, once learned, give them the opportunity to apply them. It requires inquiry to learn and/or create something new - an idea, an interpretation, or a new way of displaying what they have learned.

Most importantly, it requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication. Students need to do much more than remember information—they need to use higher-order thinking skills. They also must learn to work as a team and contribute to a group effort. They must listen to others and make their own ideas clear when speaking, be able to read a variety of material, write or otherwise express themselves in various modes, and make effective presentations. The format of this approach allows for student voice and choice. Students learn to work independently and take responsibility when they are asked to make choices. The opportunity to make choices, and to express their learning in their own voice, also helps to increase students' educational engagement.

Within the activities in this unit, literacy strategies and approaches include reading comprehension designed to help students understand what they read (and hear). They will identify how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning; draw inferences such as characters' feelings, thoughts, and motives from their actions; and justify inferences with evidence. Writing strategies will focus on students planning their writing by identifying the audience for (those interested in biography) and purpose of the writing (teaching others about their research and understanding), selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own. There will be uses of drama and art for students to express their learning through performances and interviews, role-playing and drawing and painting to share their ideas, experiences, and imagination.

Essential questions and enduring understandings:

1. How do we tell the life stories of people that have made a difference?
2. How is the past different from today?
3. Recognize that where you begin and end a story tells the story

Classroom Activities

The Bus That Changed History: The Story of Rosa Parks by Pamela Duncan

Back of the Bus by Aaron Reynolds

If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks by Faith Ringgold

Rosa's Bus: The Ride to Civil Rights by Jo Kittenger

A Picture Book of Rosa Parks by David Adler and Robert Casilla

Activity One - Montgomery Bus Collage

The bus has become a symbol of Rosa Park's courageousness and the act helped spark a revolution that helped end segregation. For this activity, each student will need the following: a glue stick, one 8"x12" rectangle of construction paper (provide various colors), two black circles for wheels, 4-8 white squares for windows, multicultural skin color crayons or colored pencils

Students will design their bus, add the wheels, and draw people in the windows to attach across the top of their design. As the students assemble their buses, discuss how Rosa Parks' actions that day have made it

possible for everyone to sit where they choose when they ride the bus.

Activity Two - Multicultural Puppets

Materials to provide students include large craft sticks, craft paint, markers, yarn

Purchase skin toned craft paints or make various skin tones. Have the students help mix the tones they would like to include. The students can paint the craft sticks halfway or so. Once the paint is dry, add hair, eyes, and clothes with markers and offer scraps of fabric, felt, yarn, and paper if you like. These stick puppets can be used to tell Rosa Park's story as well as other stories during the year.

Activity Three – Videos and Vocabulary Cards

Locate and preview the following videos.

Rosa Parks – Civil Rights Activist Mini Bio on the Biography Channel on YouTube for a 4:40 minute video – This video is comprised of photos and images of real events and locations, including her husband's barber shop, the NAACP office, pictures of Rosa Parks throughout her lifetime, and of course, the images from the bus. These mostly black-and-white pictures will give the students a sense of a different time and provide a rich visual foundation.

The Life of Rosa Parks on Now You Know About on YouTube. Unlike the first video, Rosa Parks' story here is presented through illustrations instead of photographs. This five-minute narration of her story is thorough and appropriate for young learners and shows how Rosa Parks is an inspiration to all of us with her courage and dignity and determination.

Prepare index cards with vocabulary that reflect the learning and provide students with the language to use when telling the story of Rosa Parks. For younger students, have the words printed on the cards; older students can write the words themselves. Students will draw an image on the back of the card that connects to the particular word. It could be from Rosa Parks' story or from something in their own lives. Here is a beginning list; students can supply additional words they find important.

Respect, Unfair, Civil Rights, Movement, Courage, Equal

Activity Four – Writing Prompt Ideas

Students will use their journals to respond to the following over a number of days. The prompts can be used throughout the unit as a form of informal written assessment.

What I would do if I saw injustice at school…

One day I sat down on the bus and…

Rosa Parks was…

One time that I chose to do the right thing even when it was hard…

What really matters about a person is…

Notes

[1] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, vii

[2] David Ikard, *The Real Story of Rosa Parks -- And Why We Need to Confront Myths about Black History*. Filmed March 2018 in Nashville. TED video, 18:05, https://www.ted.com/talks/david_ikard_the_real_story_of_rosa_parks_and_why_we_need_to_confront_myths_about_black_history.

[3] Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, 9

[4] Ibid.

[5] National Park Service. https://www.nps.gov/people/rosa-parks.htm

[6] Rosa Parks and Jim Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story*, 32.

[7] Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, 28.

[8] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 8.

[9] Rosa Parks and Jim Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story*

[10] Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, 32.

[11] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 10.

[12] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 12.

[13] womenshistory.org

[14] Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, 41.

[15] Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, 42.

[16] Douglas Brinkley, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, 43.

[17] Rosa Parks and Jim Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story,* 77.

[18] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 78.

[19] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 61.

[20] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*. 62.

[21] Jean Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 63.

[22] Rosa Parks and Jim Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story,* 125

[23] Rosa Parks and Jim Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story,* 81.

Resources

Brinkley, Douglas. *Rosa Parks: A Life*. Penguin Books, 2005. A beautiful, thoughtful biography.

Chanko, Pamela. *Rosa Parks: Bus Ride to Freedom*. New York: Scholastic, 2007.

Colwell Miller, Connie. *Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2007. A graphic novel presentation of Rosa Parks' life. Appropriate for 2-3 graders or as a read-aloud.

Davis Pinkney, Andrea. *Boycott Blues: How Rosa Parks Inspired a Nation*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.

Dreier, Peter. "Rosa Parks: Angry, Not Tired," *Dissent*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Volume 53, Number 1, Winter (whole No. 222) pp. 88-92, 2006.

Dubois, Muriel. *Rosa Parks*. Mankato, MN: Bridgestone Books, 2003.

Freedman, Russell. *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott*. New York: Holiday House. 2006.

Friese, Kai. *Rosa Parks: The Movement Organizes*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Silver Burdett Press, 1990.

Groce, Eric, M. Elizabeth Bellows, Greg McClure, Elizabeth Daigle, Tina Heafner, and Brandon Fox. "Is Rosa Still Tired? Revisiting Kohl's Myths in Contemporary Picture Books." *American Educational History Journal* 41, no. 1-2, 2014.

Ikard, David. *The Real Story of Rosa Parks -- And Why We Need to Confront Myths about Black History*. Filmed March 2018 in Nashville. TED video, 18:05, https://www.ted.com/talks/david_ikard_the_real_story_of_rosa_parks_and_why_we_need_to_confront_myths_about_black_history.

Kohl, Herbert. "The Myth of 'Rosa Parks the Tired.' Teaching about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott," *Multicultural Education*, v1 n2 p 6-10 Fall, 1993. A look at the "standard" story of the Rosa Parks and explains the myths about her reasons for not giving up her seat.

Parks, Rosa and Jim Haskins. *Rosa Parks: My Story*. New York: Puffin Books, 1992. Rosa Parks' autobiography – helpful to "hear her voice" and understand her view.

Phibbs, Cheryl. *The Montgomery Bus Boycott: A History and Reference Guide*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2009.

Pingry, Patricia A. *Meet Rosa Parks*. Nashville, TN: Ideals Children's Books, 2008.

Theoharis, Jean. *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2013. Examines the six decades of Rosa Parks' activism and challenges the perception of Rosa as accidental actor in the civil rights movement.

Student Texts

The Bus That Changed History: The Story of Rosa Parks by Pamela Duncan

Back of the Bus by Aaron Reynolds

Story told from the perspective of a young boy riding in the back of the bus and witnessing Rosa Parks refusal to give up her seat

If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks by Faith Ringgold

Rosa's Bus: The Ride to Civil Rights by Jo Kittenger

Story is told from the viewpoint of the bus, Bus #2857

A Picture Book of Rosa Parks by David Adler and Robert Casilla

Part of David Adler's Picture Book Biography Series, includes Rosa's childhood story, appropriate for older primary students, 1st -2nd grades

Rosa by Nikki Giovanni

Caldecott Honor Book, Winner of Coretta Scott King Award

The Bus Ride That Changed History by Pamela Duncan Edwards

Appendix on Implementing District Standards

Connecticut Social Studies Framework: Kindergarten – Me and My Community

In Kindergarten, students engage in the study of themselves, their families, and their communities and learn how to participate and use effective citizenship skills. They explore their classrooms, schools, neighborhoods, and home communities through an interdisciplinary approach including history, civics, economics, and geography. The study of themselves, their families, and their communities requires that students generate and research questions such as:

What is my role in my community?

What is "history" and how is the past different from the present?

How are we connected to the past?

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST K.1 Compare life in the past to life today.

HIST K.2 Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.

Compelling Question:

- How do our communities and the people who live in them change over time?

Supporting Questions:

- How does the time in which we live affect us?
- How is the past different from today?
- How has my family changed (where they live, what they do)?

Kindergarten Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.4

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.10

Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

Kindergarten Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: Writing

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.2 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.