

**MIGHTY TIMES**  
**THE CHILDREN'S MARCH**  
**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

Contains nine ready-made lesson plans for grades 6-12 Supports meaningful learning and critical literacy  
Meets content standards in U.S. history, civics, visual arts, music and language arts

**MIGHTY TIMES**  
**THE CHILDREN'S MARCH**  
**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

**GRADES 6-12**

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## **CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

*Mighty Times: The Children's March* addresses a range of curriculum standards. A comprehensive list of standards aligned with the film and classroom activities are included as a PDF on the CD with the kit.

*“Sooner or later being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so. In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressed, but rather restorers of the humanity of both.”*

**Paulo Freire, educator**

# Introduction



In 1963, Birmingham was Alabama's biggest city; many considered it the "baddest" as well.

From 1957 to 1963, there had been 18 bombings in Birmingham—but no arrests. In 1957, the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth was chain-whipped by a crowd because he attempted to enroll his children into an all-white school. His wife was stabbed. Again, there were no arrests. In 1961, a black man was dragged from the streets to a shack and then castrated. There were no arrests. Freedom riders were almost beaten to death in 1961 when they entered Birmingham. But there were no arrests.

The black children of Birmingham felt oppressed at every turn, and in the spring of 1963 they played a vital role in restoring humanity to themselves and to a race-divided America.

William Glasser, author and educator, believes that students are driven by six basic needs: survival, power, love, belonging, freedom and fun.

The word "power" has many negative connotations in our culture. Maria Harris, author of *Teaching and Religious Imagination*, re-envision a negative concept of power and instead writes about "the grace of power."

The grace of power is present when we discover our own power and then exercise it.

When we discover our power, we move toward a second kind of power, the power to rebel. Rebellion is the expression of feeling that comes when we name those injustices and sufferings that are not to be tolerated. Engaging in rebellion means claiming the right to say that injustice is wrong. In naming injustice, we keep alive the human feeling of protest.

When we name injustice, we are led to a third power, the power to resist. Resistance is active opposition toward injustice. Resistance is refusal to accept the way things are because things can be different.

The power to rebel and the power to resist must always be present with the power to love. If the end is not love, we revert back to a negative construct of power; we revert back to being oppressors.

The film and teacher's guide are about power. The



grace of power. The power to rebel. The power to resist. And the power to love.

On May 2, 1963, in Birmingham, Ala., about 1,000 students went to jail. By May 10th, 3,000 were in jail.

What spurred thousands of children to action?

What gave them the power to rebel and resist? How is it that children of all ages were the ones to garner the largest victory seen thus far in the civil rights movement? How did the power of love form their strategies and their actions? And how can educators today invite students to experience anew the legacy of the children of Birmingham?

#### **MATERIALS**

The kit for *Mighty Times: The Children's March* includes a 40-minute film, an accompanying teacher's guide and an evaluation form. Once you have used this curriculum in your classroom, please complete and return the evaluation form. Your feedback will aid us in making improvements to future editions.

*"If we are to reach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children."*

**Mahatma Gandhi, peacemaker**

*"I consider that attitude of rebellion as one of the most promising aspects of our political life—not because I espoused it as a form of action, but because it represented a symptom of advancement, and introduction to a more complete humanity."*

**Paulo Freire, educator**

## ACTIVITY 1

# Viewing the Film

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand political movements involve children as well as adults.
- Students will understand children of all ages have the power to make a difference in the world.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- Two class sessions (one to watch the film and one to discuss the film)
- Copy of *The Children's March* film
- Film guide handouts for each student (Make your own based on the questions below or download the PDF of examples included on the CD with the kit.)

### FRAMEWORK

The following questions are in the same order as the film. Students can fill them out as they watch the film or use them as a discussion guide following the film. Or students can complete them individually as a homework assignment, or in small groups after viewing the film. Pull out selected questions for general whole-group discussion. Make as many connections as possible to students' local communities and lives. These questions are given as a guide. (Answers are included as a PDF on the CD with the kit.)

1. What was Birmingham's nickname and why?
2. Have you ever seen a white tank anywhere before? What might a white tank symbolize to white people? What might it symbolize to black people?
3. The film states, "Under Bull Connor, Birmingham was the closest thing in America to a police state." What is a police state?
4. Why couldn't the parents or adults protest? What would happen to them if they did protest?
5. What does it mean to "meet violence with nonviolence"? What would it look like?
6. Dr. King said in a strategy session that "the only way we're going to break Birmingham is to fill the jails." What do you think a strategy session is? Why is it important?
7. Why do you think that Dr. King said "no," at first, to kids going to jail?
8. Shelley "The Playboy" told the kids that "there's going to be a party in the park today." What did he mean?
9. What did the children's teacher, Mrs. Goree, do to help them go to the march?

## ACTIVITY 1



10. Kelly Ingram Park was the big green buffer between black Birmingham and the white downtown. Do buffers exist between groups in your community?
11. Gwen Webb says, “A lot of people thought the kids were going to get hurt, but the reality was that we were born black in Alabama and we were going to get hurt if we didn’t do something.” What did she mean by this?
12. The children left the church in “waves of 50.” How is that a strategy? What do you think it accomplished?
13. The police thought the kids would be frightened to be arrested. Instead, they were happy and singing. Why do you think the kids were full of joy to be arrested?
14. Why were the kids told to say that they were 15 years old when they were arrested? Did it work?
15. How many men did it take to hold the fire hoses steady?
16. There were 10 kids still standing after everyone else had been knocked down or dispersed by the fire hoses. What were they singing?
17. What did President Kennedy think of the photographs he saw of children being hosed on the second day of the march?
18. What were the conditions in the jails? Were they clean? What did the children get to eat? How long were they kept in jail?
19. What did the kids do in jail?
20. How old was the youngest child who got arrested and put in jail?
21. Dr. King told the parents, “Don’t worry about your children. They are going to be all right. Don’t hold them back if they want to go to jail for they are doing a job for all of America and for all mankind.” What job were they doing?
22. The white detective said that in the end there “was no way to hold a lid on this because the fear was gone.” What is significant about people losing fear?
23. On May 10th Dr. King said that “we have come today to the climax of the long struggle for justice and human dignity.” Had they?
24. On June 11th President Kennedy said “This is the end of segregation.” Was it?

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Find out more about prominent people who are mentioned in the film:

Gov. George Wallace, governor of Alabama  
Eugene “Bull” Connor, commissioner of public safety  
Rev. Andrew Young, movement leader  
Carolyn McKinstry  
Rev. Ralph Abernathy  
Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth  
Rev. James Bevel  
Shelley “the Playboy” Stewart  
Dick Gregory

## ACTIVITY 2

# Refuse to Stand Silently By

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify 10 crucial global issues.
- Students will understand that although we live in an information-rich society many people are slow to act for social justice.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- One class period
- One copy of the handout for each student

### FRAMEWORK

When people are asked about doing something for social justice, they often say: “I have to find out a little more about it before I take some action.” This lesson will create an awareness that actions are important in the struggle for justice.

**Step One** Put students into groups of four and give each student a copy of the handout on page 9. Have them brainstorm what they believe the most crucial issues are that we face as a world today. Give them a couple to get their juices flowing: hunger, AIDS.

**Step Two** After they finish their lists, tell them that in the first column marked 0-5 they must come up with a number of how important the issue is, with 5 being the highest. (Obviously, the numbers will be high or it wouldn't have made the list. Expect 4s and 5s.)

To help them get consensus, ask each student to do a show of fingers:

*One finger*, not important

*Five fingers*, very important

Add the fingers and divide by four, and they have consensus.

**Step Three** In the second 0-5 column, they are to write a number for how much they think they know about this topic. They live in an information-rich

| GLOBAL ISSUES  |     | Name: <u>Mayah Smith</u> |     |  |
|--|-----|--------------------------|-----|--|
| List the 10 most crucial global issues that concern you. |     |                          |     |  |
| ISSUES   | 0-5 | 0-5                      | 0-5 |  |
| 1. HUNGER  | 5   | 3                        | 0   |  |
| 2. AIDS  | 4   | 3                        | 0   |  |
| 3. POVERTY   | 4   | 2                        | 0   |  |
| 4. LITERACY  | 5   | 4                        | 5   |  |
| 5. CANCER  | 4   | 1                        | 0   |  |
| 6. RACISM  | 4   | 3                        | 0   |  |
| 7. WAR   | 5   | 2                        | 0   |  |
| 8. MEDICINE, LACK OF                                     | 4   | 1                        | 0   |  |
| 9. POLLUTION   | 4   | 3                        | 2   |  |
| 10. ANIMAL CRUELTY                                       | 3   | 2                        | 0   |  |

world where the TV news, radio and Internet offer them information constantly. Expect anywhere from 2s to 4s. After they are done, speak to the reality that they seem to know quite a bit about issues.

**Step Four** In the last column, they are to put a number for what they are doing about the issue. They will be mostly 0s and 1s. Some students will be active in a few causes.

Lead a conversation with students about what they can do. Offer examples, refer to the Resources on page 29 for ideas, of causes they can participate in immediately.



## ACTIVITY 2

*“What’s it going to take? That’s the question. We know we need some big changes, but how are we going to get them? I think it’s going to take the courage of people who refuse to stand silently by.”*

**Pete Seeger, songwriter and activist**

End this class with words of encouragement and hope. On page 10 are some quotes to give out and have different students read aloud to the rest of the class.

### **FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY**

Have students brainstorm in small groups 10 simple social justice actions that they can take this very week. What can they do to ease the world’s sufferings? Give them some starter ideas, like the following:

- Smile and be kind to classmates that they don’t usually interact with.
- Volunteer at a local community organization.
- Bake some cookies for the elderly couple down the street from where they live.

Have them report back, either orally or through a writing assignment, attesting to what they did and how it was received or made them feel. Ask them if they will continue to do the action.

*“Thou shalt not be a victim.  
Thou shalt not be an  
oppressor. But most of all,  
thou shalt not be a bystander.”*

**Yehuda Bauer, Jewish historian**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## GLOBAL ISSUES

List the 10 most crucial global issues that concern you.

| ISSUES | 0-5 | 0-5 | 0-5 |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|
| 1.     |     |     |     |
| 2.     |     |     |     |
| 3.     |     |     |     |
| 4.     |     |     |     |
| 5.     |     |     |     |
| 6.     |     |     |     |
| 7.     |     |     |     |
| 8.     |     |     |     |
| 9.     |     |     |     |
| 10.    |     |     |     |

## WORDS OF HOPE

*Adrienne Rich, the famous lesbian poet, stated: "In a world where language and naming are power, silence is oppression, is violence."*



*In the 1930s, Septima Clark was an African-American teacher in Columbia, S.C. The white teachers in her school district made considerably more for doing the exact same job. She single-handedly began a movement that in 1936 forced the state of South Carolina to put black teachers on the same pay scale as white teachers. She had this to say about her justice-doing: "I always say that there's a time in your life when you're moved to say 'no,' and this was the time."*

*In 1933, Zilla Hawes Daniel organized the first Amalgamated Clothing Workers local in the South. She had this to say about her tumultuous activism: "Personally, I've never liked the idea of being arrested. I've never been particularly afraid of it, if it was necessary, and I have been put in jail a number of times, but I've never courted that kind of thing. But I think you can't function if you are going to allow yourself to be fearful."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Somehow we must be able to stand up before our most bitter opponents and say, 'We shall match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will, and we will still love you.'"*

*Rosa Parks had this to say about refusing to stand silently by: "I think individuals can make up their own minds on what they can do to solve or help whatever problems are confronting them. I feel like each person should think and be aware of and learn as much as they can about what has occurred and realize that whatever is going on did not just begin with them. I think everybody should be involved if they want to see better opportunities. I don't think anybody should be eliminated from doing what they can to bring about whatever is necessary for full and complete freedom."*

*bell hooks, a contemporary feminist educator, has this to say about finding your voice: "Coming to voice is not just the act of telling one's experience. It is using that telling strategically—to come to voice so that you can identify freely with other people."*

*Gandhi stated: "I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary: the evil it does is permanent."*

*Author Maria Harris has this to say about the refusal to stand silently by: "Silence in the face of evil, allowing the false word to pass, is corrosive and deadly not only to the victim, but also to the bystander. Silence corrupts our spirituality."*

*Feel free to use these as writing prompts.*

## ACTIVITY 3

# The Birmingham Pledge

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn ways in which the city of Birmingham still works for equity and justice.
- Students will explore how their own city can join Birmingham in the struggle to eliminate racism wherever it exists.
- Students will sign The Birmingham Pledge.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- One class session to introduce and sign the pledge (may evolve into an ongoing project)
- One copy of The Birmingham Pledge for each student

### FRAMEWORK

Several years ago Birmingham resident Jim Rotch was driving home from a retreat when he scribbled some words on a pad as he drove. Those words became known as The Birmingham Pledge. What seemed a solitary, simple act has grown into a worldwide movement.

The Birmingham Pledge is one effort of the Birmingham community to recognize the dignity and worth of every individual and to share with the world one community's commitment to eliminate racial prejudice in the lives of all people.

#### Three Approaches

**Individual** On the following page you will find The Birmingham Pledge. Make a copy for each of your students to sign. Collect them and mail them in. Students may also sign the pledge online at <http://birminghampledge.org/Sign.html>.

**School or Community** Invite students to consider how they might make this into a schoolwide movement. Visit [birminghampledge.org](http://birminghampledge.org) to see how others have done this.

**Our Own City Pledge** As a class assignment, have students either individually or collaboratively design their own city pledges. Consider the following questions:

- What is the history of race relations in our city?
- Which groups of people are most affected?
- Besides race, what other marginalized groups or social issues might benefit from a pledge?
- Keep your pledge to eight statements. Share the pledges with others.

| THE BIRMINGHAM PLEDGE   |   |
|---|---|
| I believe that every person has worth as an individual. I believe that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color. I believe that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful; if it is my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as to others.  |   |
| Therefore, from this day forward I will strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions. I will discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity. I will treat all people with dignity and respect; and I will strive daily to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort. |   |
| Signature<br><i>Mayah Smith</i>   | Pledge form name<br><i>Mayah Smith</i>      |
| Street address (optional)<br><i>122 School Street</i>   | City/State<br><i>Anywhere, AB</i>           |
| ZIP Code (optional)<br><i>12345</i>   | Email (optional)<br><i>mayahm@gmail.com</i> |
| Organization (optional)<br><i>Pleasant Middle School</i>  | Date<br><i>June 26, 2005</i>                |
| <small>Please copy &amp; return this form to Birmingham Pledge Foundation, 2839 Second Avenue South, Suite 200-B, Birmingham, AL 35222<br/><a href="http://www.birminghampledge.org">www.birminghampledge.org</a></small>   |   |

## THE BIRMINGHAM PLEDGE

I believe that every person has worth as an individual. I believe that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color. I believe that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful; if it is my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as to others.

Therefore, from this day forward I will strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions. I will discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity. I will treat all people with dignity and respect; and I will strive daily to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.

---

Signature

---

Please print name

---

Street address *(optional)*

---

City/state

---

ZIP Code *(optional)*

---

Email *(optional)*

---

Organization *(optional)*

---

Date

Please copy & return this form to Birmingham Pledge Foundation, 2829 Second Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35233  
[birminghampledge.org](http://birminghampledge.org)

## THE BIRMINGHAM PLEDGE

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Therefore, from this day forward I will strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions. I will discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity. I will treat all people with dignity and respect; and I will strive daily to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.

---

Signature

---

Please print name

---

Street address *(optional)*

---

City/state

---

ZIP Code *(optional)*

---

Email *(optional)*

---

Organization *(optional)*

---

Date

Please copy & return this form to Birmingham Pledge Foundation, 2829 Second Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35233  
[birminghampledge.org](http://birminghampledge.org)

## ACTIVITY 4

# Music and the Movement



*“The variety of singing to be heard at mass meetings in Birmingham probably wasn’t matched in any other movement in the South. Starting off with an old-time prayer service in which the older people sang and lined out the old-time spirituals and ‘Dr. Watts’ hymns in a style which went back to slavery days, the meetings were then turned over to the songs of the movement’s sixty-voice gospel choir accompanied by the organ playing of its leader. After the church had rocked and spirits were jubilant, it was time to hear their leader, Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth.”*

Guy Carawan, civil rights activist and musician

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the role of protest songs in the Birmingham youth movement.
- Students will identify their own political agendas and write protest songs.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- Three class sessions (one to brainstorm ideas, one to write and one to present)
- Materials for writing

### FRAMEWORK

The civil rights movement was once described as the greatest singing movement in our nation’s history. Many of the songs grew out of the rich culture of the black churches in the South, with songs to fit any mood or situation. Songs for joy. Songs for sorrow. Songs for determination. Songs for irony. Songs for humor. Songs to get you past the fear. Songs to celebrate.

In the summer of 1963, it appeared that the movement had stalled in Birmingham. Adults had to pay

the bills, and involvement in the movement came with economic threats to their families.

The Rev. James Bevel, one of the founders of SNCC (the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), first suggested it: Let the children march. And, after receiving training in nonviolence, Birmingham’s young people did just that.



## ACTIVITY 4

The children of Birmingham sang a new song that summer. It went to the tune of *The Old Gray Mare*. The fusion of marching and song was strategic. The Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, speaking to the young people about nonviolence, had said, "It's to be a silent demonstration. No songs, no slogans, no replies to obscenities." Everyone nodded in agreement. "However," Shuttlesworth added, "when you're arrested, sing your hearts out."

That's exactly how it played out. So when a policeman shouted, "You're all under arrest!" hundreds of voices united in song:

Ain't a-scared of your jail, 'cause I want my  
freedom,  
I want my freedom,  
I want my freedom.  
Ain't a-scared of your jail, 'cause I want my  
freedom,  
I want my freedom now!

Ain't a-scared of your dogs, 'cause ...

Ain't a-scared of your hose, 'cause ...

Music always has been a part of political movements. In this lesson, students will identify political issues that are important to them, choose a song and then rewrite the words to fit the music's rhythm.

**Step One** Ask students to individually list at least five political issues that deeply concern them. Then encourage students to share with the whole group topics they might be interested in. List these on the board. Among them you may find eating disorders, sexual harassment, bullying, race relations or war.

**Step Two** Notice that the Birmingham youth chose a simple and familiar song. In this way, they didn't need to learn a new song. They didn't have to concentrate on the musical rhythm but could focus on the passion of the message. This remains a great strategy.

As a first step, select a simple song from childhood and wed it with important activist messages. Consider using the following songs:

- *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*
- *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*
- *Michael, Row the Boat Ashore*
- *You Are My Sunshine*
- *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider*

### Teacher Model

First model what you want students to do. Choose an issue dear to your own heart or choose one that you are sure will show up on the students' lists. The model below is based on *This Little Light of Mine* and tackles the inequality of boys' and girls' sports teams:

We want the same resources  
that the boys' team gets.  
We want the same resources  
that the boys' team gets.  
We want the same resources  
that the boys' team gets.  
Equity!  
Equity!  
Equity!

We want the prime time slot,  
Friday night at 8 ...  
8 o'clock!  
8 o'clock!  
8 o'clock!

How many women athletes  
can you name out loud? ...  
Name one!  
Name one!  
Name one!

**Step Three** Have students create their own political songs. The short format of the children's songs listed above is a good place to begin. Ultimately, though, allow students to use contemporary songs of their choosing. Include songs that reflect racial and ethnic diversity in the classroom. Use this lesson as a foundation and then let students get creative. Let them choose the artist and genre they like most and connect their political issues to that music.

**Action Step** Take this lesson beyond the classroom. Encourage students to write protest songs for things they really want to change. Practice the protest songs in your classroom and then take them into the hallways and out into your community.

## ACTIVITY 5

# Primary Documents

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will analyze written documents for position of writer and content.
- Students will synthesize an historical position based upon document analysis.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- Three class periods (one to analyze and synthesize documents, one to write, and one to present)
- Copies of documents for each student
- One copy of the handout for each student

### FRAMEWORK

Many of the major events that defined the civil rights movement took place in Alabama. And it was from Alabama that two of the leading figures in the struggle emerged. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to prominence in Montgomery as a spokesperson for black people seeking equality. Along with Bull Connor, Gov. George C. Wallace became a symbol for white resistance to racial integration. On June 11, 1963, Alabama's governor received national attention when he kept a campaign pledge to stand in the schoolhouse door to block the integration of Alabama public schools. The conflict between these two sides would focus national attention on the state of Alabama.

The media allowed the nation to see the powerful water hoses and police dogs used against the Birmingham demonstrators in May 1963. The world watched as terror and violence gripped Birmingham.

**Step One** In this lesson you will find six documents that show differing opinions about the conflict in Birmingham. After reading the documents, ask each student to choose one document and answer the questions on the handout on the following page.

**Step Two** Have them report their findings to the class.

Name Mayah Smith

Document B

**ANALYZING A WRITTEN DOCUMENT**

1. Describe the document. Is this a letter, a will, a bill of sale or some other kind of document?  
*It's a telegram forwarded to Governor Wallace.*
2. What is the date of the document? Is there more than one date? Why?  
*It was sent on May 13, 1963. This is the only date.*
3. Who is the author of the document? Is this person of historical significance? Do you believe that the author of this document is credible? Is this document written as a requirement of the author's occupation, or is this a personal document?  
*The author is George Andrews. He is a person of historical significance. He isn't credible because he thinks the president should make M.L.K. leave Alabama. I think he sent this because of personal interests.*
4. For what audience was this document written?  
*The audience is Governor George Wallace.*
5. List or underline three (3) points that the author made that you believe are important.  
*Andrews told Kennedy to 1. remove troops; 2. remove M.L.K.; and 3. troops will not be needed if M.L.K. is removed.*
6. Why do you think that the author wrote this document? Use quotes from the document to support your position.  
*Andrews wrote the document because he thought he had an answer to the problems in Birmingham. To support his idea he says, "Please remove troops."*
7. List two (2) things from the document that describe life in the United States or in Alabama in the 1960s.  
*1. Problems in Alabama were so bad, they reached the White House. 2. People were at odds about the issue of civil rights.*
8. Write one (1) question to the author that is unanswered by the document.  
*You suggest that removing M.L.K. from Alabama will calm unrest. Even if this were to solve the immediate conflicts, what do you suggest should be done about the lack of rights for Blacks in the South?*

**Step Three** Upon completion, give each student the following performance task:

You are the press secretary for the governor of Alabama in 1963. You are to write a press release that will be sent to every newspaper, radio station and television station in Alabama regarding what is going on in Birmingham. Consider all of the documents available to you. What will you advise the governor to tell the state?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **ANALYZING A WRITTEN DOCUMENT**

Document \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe the document. Is this a letter, a will, a bill of sale or some other kind of document?
2. What is the date of the document? Is there more than one date? Why?
3. Who is the author of the document? Is this person of historical significance? Do you believe that the author of this document is credible? Is this document written as a requirement of the author's occupation, or is this a personal document?
4. For what audience was this document written?
5. List or underline three points that the author made that you believe are important.
6. Why do you think that the author wrote this document? Use quotes from the document to support your position.
7. List two things from the document that describe life in the United States or in Alabama in the 1960s.
8. Write one question to the author that is unanswered by the document.

**DOCUMENT A**

<sup>1</sup>Telegram from L.H. Foster, 05/13/63,<sup>2</sup> Alabama Governor Wallace Administrative files, SG12655, folder 3, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

**DOCUMENT B**

<sup>1</sup>Telegram from George Andrews, 05/13/63,<sup>2</sup> Alabama Governor Wallace Administrative files, SG12655, folder 3, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

**DOCUMENT C**

"Telegram from NBC News, 05/16/63," Alabama Governor Wallace Administrative files, SG12655, folder 6, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

**DOCUMENT D**

"Telegram from Mayor Boutwell, 05/28/63," Alabama Governor Wallace Administrative files, SG12655, folder 5, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.



**DOCUMENT E**

"Telegram from Wallace to The President, 05/13/63," Alabama Governor Wallace Administrative files, SG12655, folder 3, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

**DOCUMENT F**

"Documents on Human Rights in Alabama," Alabama Governor Wallace Administrative files, SG12655, folder 6, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

## ACTIVITY 6

# Strong Women and Gentle Men

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will see the role that different genders played in the movement.
- Students will understand how popular culture influences them.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- Three class sessions (one to do found poem, one to write response and one to present)
- Teachers may supply magazines but encourage students to use their own favorite magazines
- Posterboard, scissors and glue

### FRAMEWORK

The civil rights movement in Birmingham was a good mixture of boys and girls. As you watch the film, think about the following questions:

1. What roles did you see boys and girls taking?
2. Were their roles different or similar? How so?
3. Who is leading whom at what time? Why?
4. How is each gender represented?
5. How do these gender roles in the film compare to who leads at your own school?
6. Who in your school or community are the leaders? Are they males or females?
7. What do you think is meant by “strong women” and “gentle men”?

(Answers are included as a PDF on the CD with the kit.)

Now, as then, we are shaped by the images around us. Imagine if your community had a “Whites Only” sign up for water fountains or restrooms. How would that shape (or misshape) your identity? The power to resist and to rebel rests in being able to see things differently than the way things are presented to you.

Nonviolence requires strong women and gentle men to accomplish its goals. In this lesson, students will take popular magazines and look at how the media portray girls and boys differently.

*“I got involved in the movement because I was talking to a li'l pretty girl.”*

**Cliff Clark, from  
The Children's March**

### Found Poem

A Found Poem is made up of words or phrases from something you read. It uses someone else's words, but in a new way. Students can, of course, find words anywhere: newspapers, magazines, pieces of literature, documents, oral histories and narratives. They also can be spoken words that students hear in the hallways or at lunch.

Guide students in creating Found Poems that address the gender roles and expectations affecting their lives:

**Step One** Flip through a magazine or piece of literature and cut out words that catch your eye.

**Step Two** Choose 10 main key words or phrases that describe how you see each gender represented or addressed.

**Step Three** Arrange these words or phrases in a pleasing and meaningful way to make a poem. Write, type or use the pieces you've ripped out of magazines. Glue them to posterboard. Illustrate it with drawings or pictures.

After you do one for both genders, what do you notice when you compare and contrast font size and color? Why do you think magazine people chose these for each gender?

## ACTIVITY 6

**Step Four** Write or find a response to how you see genders represented differently in the media and explain your poem to the class.

**Step Five** Where can you strategically put this poem for others to see it? Who is your audience? Why is it important that they see it?

### FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

- Do these ads represent gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students? Why or why not?
- Can gender be fluid?
- Can all genders have all attributes?

### FOUND POEMS MODEL

Encourage students to arrange their posterboards as shown.



THE CHILDREN'S MARCH

#### Every Girl Every Boy By Crimethinc

For every girl who is tired of acting weak when she is strong, there is a boy tired of appearing strong when he feels vulnerable. For every boy who is burdened with the constant expectation of knowing everything, there is a girl tired of people not trusting her intelligence. For every girl who is tired of being called oversensitive, there is a boy who fears to be gentle, to weep. For every boy for whom competition is the only way to prove his masculinity, there is a girl who is called unfeminine when she competes. For every girl who throws out her E-Z-Bake oven, there is a boy who wishes to find one. For every boy struggling not to let advertising dictate his desires, there is a girl facing the ad industry's attacks on her self-esteem. For every girl who takes a step toward her liberation, there is a boy who finds the way to freedom a little easier.

## ACTIVITY 7

# Contemporary Movements

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will review and summarize questions about the struggle for equality and apply them to other civil rights struggles.
- Students will devise a timeline regarding other civil rights struggles.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- An ongoing project that can span a week
- Content material on various civil rights movements
- Copy of the timeline for each student

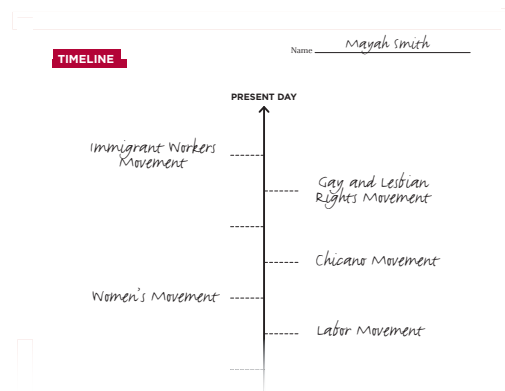
### FRAMEWORK

The modern day civil rights movement has been the catalyst for many contemporary civil rights movements. This lesson invites students to see that they are part of a continuum in the long struggle for equal rights for all people.

**Step One** Have students research and place contemporary civil rights movements (e.g., the Chicano movement, labor movement, environmental movement, women's movement, LGBT civil rights movement, immigrant workers rights) on the timeline. The timeline helps students make connections and understand the complexity of interrelationships between the movements. It's also a good send-home assignment because students can ask their guardians what they remember about the various movements.

**Step Two** Have students answer the following focus questions for each of the movements:

- What do they all have in common?
- Who struggled for equality and rights?
- Who had power over them?
- How did those in power exert that power?
- Who were the allies of those in this struggle?
- How did the participants of this movement liberate both themselves and their oppressors?



**Step Three** Have students research individually or in groups:

- What other movements are there?
- What other movement do you think there should be?
- If you were to start a movement today, what would your cause be?
- Who would you hope would aid you in your cause?
- Who do you feel has the power over you?
- How will you liberate yourself and your oppressors?
- What local movements, similar in nature to these national movements, exist in your own school or community?
- How might you create one or participate in a local movement?

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

Students can also do research projects on various organizations and outcomes that have arisen from various movements. Among them are:

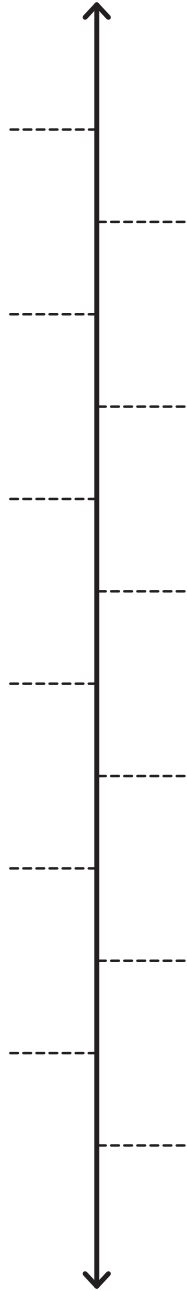
- National Farm Workers Association (NFWA)
- United Farm Workers (UFW)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Council
- National Organization for Women (NOW)
- Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)
- Violence Against Women Act
- Title IX
- Stonewall
- Sierra Club



# TIMELINE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT DAY



## ACTIVITY 8

# Mix It Up

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify the social boundaries of their own school and community.
- Students will act to cross boundaries and borders.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- An ongoing schoolwide project kicking off or culminating in the fall
- All Mix It Up materials— activities, posters, clip art— are available free as downloads at [mixitup.org](http://mixitup.org)

### FRAMEWORK

The labels, such as jocks and nerds, are as old and familiar as schooling itself. New labels appear with each new school year. And, unfortunately, crossing boundaries between groups is a difficult task to accomplish for many students. It's just "safer" to stay with one's own kind.

**Step One** Have students list the different kinds of groupings that exist in school. Explain that you'd like them to do this without giving commentary about each group or judging them. In other words, "Be kind."

**Step Two** Ask students the following questions:

- What group do they fit in?
- Do they fit in more than one group?
- Do groups get along? Why or why not?
- Do groups have soft boundaries (meaning you can move from group to group) or do they have hard boundaries (meaning you can't move from group to group)?
- Can some people move from group to group and others can't? Why do you think this is so? What do they have that allows them to move?
- Where do you most often see groups pool together, e.g., cafeteria, after-school events, etc.?
- Why do people pool together?

**Step Three** Explore boundary-crossing with students:



- What benefit is there in crossing boundaries from one group to another?
- What opportunities are there to cross boundaries at your school?
- Do you want to cross boundaries? Why or why not?
- Why might it be important to learn the skill of crossing boundaries now? How might it help you in the future?
- Who do you know personally that crosses boundaries well? How do they do it? What can you learn from them?

**Step Four** Introduce Mix It Up, a nationwide program that believes in the power of youth to create and sustain real change. It provides ideas and tools to help break the walls of division in your school and community. *National Mix It Up at Lunch Day*, held in the fall, encourages people to swap seats in their cafeteria for a single day and meet new people.

Explore these action possibilities with students and support their efforts to implement the program.

## ACTIVITY 8

### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

This follow-up activity aids students in having complete ownership of the project. Focusing on the interaction between students and adults, ask students the following question: What do adults do that impede or help you?

Either have students discuss this in small groups and then come together to share it with the whole group or have them do a quick-write first and then share. The following is a list that may guide you in getting the conversation started:

- Sometimes adults see us as weak when we are strong and reliable.
- We want adults to share openly with us about power and how it operates.
- Respect us.
- Don't do things FOR us, do them WITH us.
- Admit it when you make a mistake, be open.
- Trust us to be powerful.
- Listen to us, don't just lecture to us.
- Don't co-opt our ideas.
- Be flexible.

After students have generated a list of ways adults can help them, why not take a marker and sign it in front of them, making it a binding contract?

Invite your students to write about how adults help—or impede—their activism.

*“Kelly Ingram Park was the big green buffer between black Birmingham and the white downtown. Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was on one corner and, by noon, Birmingham’s finest were on the other. It was all laid out ... like a battlefield.”*

*from The Children’s March*

THE CHILDREN’S MARCH

*“Unlike earlier generations, which viewed young people as active, productive, and needed members of the household and community, adults today tend to treat them as objects, as problems, or as the recipients (not deliverers) of services. ... We need to see youths as citizens: as resources and producers who are valued, needed, respected and acknowledged.”*

John Kielsmeier, National Youth Leadership Council

## ACTIVITY 9

# Sustainability

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand the concept of sustainability.
- Students will develop interview skills.

### TIME AND MATERIALS

- An ongoing project that can span a week
- A notebook

### FRAMEWORK

“Sustainability” means to hold up; to bear; to support; to provide for; to maintain; to keep going; to support the life of. What keeps people going even when the struggle seems all uphill? What keeps people from being discouraged? So discouraged they decide not to act at all? How do activists face disappointment and keep moving forward?

This lesson allows students to interview local community activists. An effective way to show students how to interview is for the teacher to model it and do an actual interview in front of the students. Invite a person who is an activist as a guest to your class, and interview him in front of the class. Next, use the following steps to help students conduct their own interviews.

#### Step One *Planning and Setting Up the Interview*

First, decide who you want to interview. Who do you know that is doing social justice work in your family or community? Who is involved in something that you are interested in doing? If you are interested in environmentalism, for instance, then interview an environmentalist or someone actively involved in the issue.

#### Step Two *Arranging the Interview*

People are delighted to be asked about their selves. And since you're a student, many people feel it's a kind of public service to talk with you. So don't be nervous about calling or asking a busy person for some of her time. When you introduce yourself to arrange the interview, give a short description of your project. Keep in mind that the person you are interviewing is donating his time to you. Be sure to call

ahead and arrange a specific time for the interview. Be on time. Bring all your materials and express thanks when the interview is over.

#### Step Three *Preparing Questions in Advance*

Take care in composing your questions because they are the key to a successful interview. Open-ended questions give the respondents range and flexibility and usually generate anecdotes, personal revelations and expressions of attitudes. Examples:

- I wonder if you would take a few minutes to tell me something about your early days in the movement of (social justice issue)? I'd be interested to hear about how you got started in the movement, what your aspirations were and what problems you have faced and how you deal with them.
- Tell me about a time you were (name an emotion).
- What did you do when (name an event) happened?

The best questions allow the subject to talk freely. Once in a while you may want to pose a question to clarify the conversation. An example: “Let me see if I have this right,” or “Am I correct in saying that you felt ...?”

#### Step Four *Taking Notes During the Interview*

Your goal is to gather information and record a few good quotations and anecdotes. It's better to listen more than take notes. Jot down a few quotations, key words and phrases to jog your memory later. How someone says something may be as important as what they say. Notice the textures of gesture, physical appearance, verbal inflection, facial expression, dress,



## ACTIVITY 9

hairstyle, body language and anything else that makes the person an individual.

### Step Five *Reflecting on the Interview*

After the interview, find a quiet place to reflect on it and review your notes. There is so much happening during the interview that this reflection time is important. Spend at least a half hour adding to your notes.

Consider:

- What did you learn?
- What surprised you most?
- How did the interview change your attitude or understanding about the person or place?
- How would you summarize your main impressions of the person?
- How did this interview influence your plans to interview others or to reinterview this person?
- What do you want to learn from these next interviews?

### Step Six *Class Presentations*

Present what you learned from your interview with the class.

*“I have learned to accept the fact that we risk disappointment, disillusionment, even despair, every time we act. Every time we decide to believe the world can be better. Every time we decide to trust others to be as noble as we think they are. And that there might be years during which our grief is equal to, or even greater than, our hope. The alternative, however, not to act, and therefore to miss experiencing other people at their best, reaching toward their fullness, has never appealed to me.”*

Alice Walker, author

# Resources

## YOUTH WEBSITES

### [globalyouthconnect.org](http://globalyouthconnect.org)

Global Youth Connect is a global youth movement that seeks to build and support a community of youth who are actively promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to educate and inspire the next generation to work for peaceful change.

### [dosomething.org](http://dosomething.org)

Do Something is a nationwide organization, providing the support to help young people make a difference in their communities. The Do Something website is a place where young people can learn more about the causes that matter to them and how to take action in the world.

### [mixitup.org](http://mixitup.org)

Mix It Up is a nationwide program that believes in the power of youth to create and sustain real change. It provides free tools and ideas to help youth break down the walls of division in their schools and communities.

### [takingitglobal.org](http://takingitglobal.org)

TakingITGlobal.org is a global online community, providing youth with inspiration to make a difference, a source of information on issues, opportunities to take action, and a bridge to get involved locally, nationally and globally.

### [wordscanheal.org](http://wordscanheal.org)

Words Can Heal is a national campaign to eliminate verbal violence, curb gossip and promote the healing power of words to enhance relationships at every level.

### [oneworldeducation.org](http://oneworldeducation.org)

One World Education provides free online teaching resources designed to bring youth perspectives about culture and social issues into the classroom. One World invites students to share their written reflections about an issue or cause with which they feel a personal connection, and then creates lesson plans based on the topics students write about.



# Credits

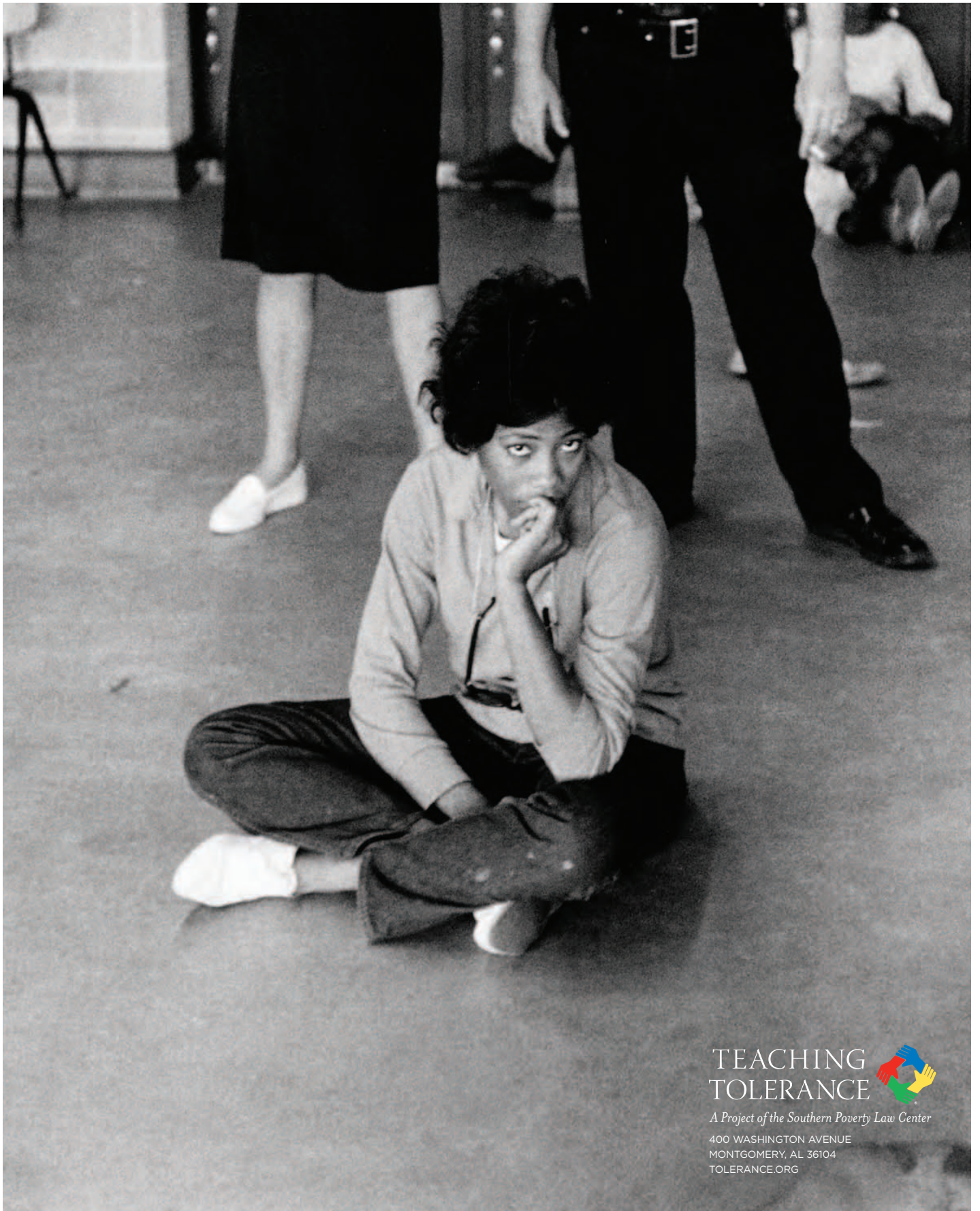
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*“When I despair, I remember that all through history the ways of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants, and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end they always fall. Think of it, always.”*

**Mahatma Gandhi**



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