

Thesis Development Worksheet

Topic: _____

Who: Who was involved? Who was affected? _____

What: What happened? What was the main event? _____

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

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

Why: Why did it happen? What caused it? _____

Why: Why is it important? What were outcomes? _____

Connection to Theme:

How does your topic fit into the key words of the theme? _____

What was the impact or historical significance of your topic? _____

Put it all together into a thesis statement: _____

Can you prove it? _____

How? Explain. _____

Thesis Development Worksheet Example Answers

Topic: Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

Who: Who was involved? Who was affected? Rosa Parks; citizens in Montgomery, Alabama; civil rights leaders, Montgomery's city government officials

What: What happened? What was the main event? Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus, which violated a city law requiring segregation. She was arrested and went to jail. Civil rights leaders organized a boycott of city buses to challenge the law as unconstitutional. The economic impact of the boycott forced city leaders and the bus company to enter into negotiation with civil rights leaders.

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

When: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it? Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955; the boycott started on December 5 and lasted for 382 days.

Why: Why did it happen? What caused it? Civil rights leaders wanted to overturn segregation laws

Why: Why is it important? What were outcomes? The boycott forced debate over the issue and succeeded in overturning the law requiring segregation. This success inspired similar protests helping end segregation and secure greater equality.

Connection to Theme: Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History

How does your topic fit into the key words of the theme? Rosa Parks and other Montgomery community members desired reform of the segregated bus system. As a reaction to her arrest, advocates for civil rights challenged segregation as unconstitutional while city leaders and citizen groups stood behind the Montgomery law that preserved segregation on public transportation.

What was the impact or historical significance of your topic? The economic impact of the boycott succeeded in forcing the bus company and city leaders to reform the established laws and end segregations in the Montgomery Bus System. Consequently, civil rights advocated around the country were inspired to take similar non-violent action.

Put it all together into a thesis statement: Wanting reform to the segregated Montgomery Bus System, Rosa Parks was arrested for violating Jim Crow Laws. Black residents of Montgomery and the NAACP reacted by boycotting the buses for 382 days leading to financial problems for the bus company and the eventual end of bus segregation. This boycott inspired similar protests helping end segregation, sparking the modern Civil Rights Movement and securing greater equality for African Americans across the United States.

Can you prove it? Yes

How? Explain. City officials and the bus company refused to come to a compromise over segregation on buses until the boycott made a significant financial impact. Other civil rights leaders sent letters and requests to boycott participants seeking advice to start similar protests. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used what he learned in Montgomery and applied it in other cities. These are documented in meeting minutes, testimonials, newspaper articles, letters, speeches, and a timeline of events.