



### MALCOLM X

Malcolm Little was born in Omaha, Nebraska, on 19th May 1925. His father died when he was only 6 and soon after his mother became mentally ill and was put in an institution. As a consequence, Malcolm and his siblings were raised in various reform schools and foster homes\*.

When he was 21, Malcolm was arrested for burglary\* and sentenced to 10 years in prison. While in jail, he converted to Islam and joined the Nation of Islam, a black supremacist religious organization.

After prison he moved to Chicago, became a minister for the Nation of Islam and changed his name to Malcolm X because he refused the name Little given to his ancestors by white masters. He became a leading spokesman of the Nation of Islam, his ideology was quite the opposite of Martin Luther King's and in the beginning Malcolm X was critical of King and his non-violent activism and cooperation with whites. He thought that non-violent resistance was not efficient\* and wanted to obtain change by "all means necessary".

In 1964 after a pilgrimage to Mecca\* and conflicts within the Nation of Islam, he left the organization and formed his own group, the Organization of African American Unity, which was ready to support any action, including violence, to get significant results.

Malcolm X was assassinated on 21st February 1965. In spite of \*his opposition to King's method, he fought all his life for racial advancement and is remembered as an important civil rights activist.

a foster home = *une famille d'accueil* burglary =  *cambriolage* efficient = *efficace*  
a pilgrimage to Mecca = *un pèlerinage à la Mecque* in spite of = *malgré*

### 1. Read the text, watch the video and answer the questions.

- a. His birth name was      Malcolm Little      Malcolm X      Malcolm Nebraska.
- b. What happened when he was 6? .....
- c. When he was 21, he was sent to prison for      10 weeks      10 months      10 years because      he sat at the same table as a white friend in a restaurant      he was a delinquent      he killed a white policeman.
- d. In prison, he became a Muslim and joined an organization called the .....
- e. He changed his name because      he refused a name given to his slave ancestors by a white master      he didn't want a name linked to delinquency      he married Betty X.
- f. The X in his name symbolized      his lost African name      the time spent in prison      the first letter of his wife's name.
- g. He      agreed with      disagreed with      rejected      Martin Luther King's methods.
- h. To defend Civil Rights for blacks, Malcolm X believed in      non-violence      the use of all means necessary including violence      cooperation with whites.
- i. He became less radical after      a meeting with Martin Luther King      a pilgrimage to Mecca      his stay in prison.

### 2. Try to remember what you know about Martin Luther King and Malcolm X and choose the civil rights leader (or both) / *Souvenez-vous de ce que vous savez à propos de Martin Luther King et Malcolm X puis choisissez de quel(s) militant(s) des droits civiques il s'agit.*

**Martin Luther King      Malcolm X**

- 1. He had a difficult childhood.
- 2. He changed his name.
- 3. He was a minister.
- 4. He won the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 5. He believed in non-violence.
- 6. He supported black supremacy.
- 7. He was sent to prison because of his ideas.
- 8. He was assassinated.
- 9. He fought all his life for a fairer life for black people.
- 10. He was a civil rights activist.