Who Is Rosa Parks?

Rosa Parks, now referred to as "the mother of the freedom movement," was an African American who worked as a seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama.

Rosa and her husband Ray worked for the local civil rights group to fight against the unfair laws and treatment of black people. At that time, in the 1950's, black people were not allowed to sit or even stand in the front section of any public bus.

On December 1, 1955, as Rosa was coming home from work, the bus driver asked her to give up her seat to a white man. She politely refused. The police were called and she was arrested. With this small act, Rosa Parks changed history.

The black people of Montgomery were very angry at Rosa's arrest. They decided to boycott the Montgomery bus system. For more than one year, Montgomery's black citizens walked, carpooled or cycled. They refused to ride the buses. The boycott lasted 381 days.

This boycott led to the 1956 Supreme Court ruling declaring that everyone, no matter what the color of their skin, had equal rights on public buses. It was a major victory.

Rosa Parks moved to Michigan in 1957 and continued to fight for equal rights for African Americans. She returned to Montgomery several times to support Martin Luther King Jr. in his efforts for civil rights.

Rosa Parks received many awards and honors. In 1996, the Medal of Freedom Award was presented to her by President Clinton who called her "the first lady of civil rights".

She died in 2005 at the age of 92.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Questions for "Who is Rosa Parks?"

1. What job did Rosa Parks have?

   bus driver seamstress police officer

2. What do you think "boycott" means?

   stop using take over ride

3. How long was the Montgomery bus boycott?

   30 weeks 1 year 381 days

4. When did Rosa Parks die?

   1957 1992 2005

5. Where did Rosa Parks live in the 1950's

   Detroit, Michigan Mobile, Alabama Montgomery, Alabama

6. Where did Rosa Parks move to in 1957?

   Michigan

   Washington, D.C.

   Alabama

7. Which President called Rosa Parks "the first lady of civil rights"?

   President Kennedy

   President Clinton

   President Obama

8. What resulted from the Montgomery bus boycott?

   The court passed a law to make public buses fair for all people.

   Rosa Parks went to jail.

   The buses were taken off the road.

9. What did Rosa Parks do that got her arrested in 1955?

   She hit a man on the bus.

   She refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white man.

   She didn't pay the bus fare.

LIVEWORKSHEETS