

Important Americans

February is Black History Month in the USA. It is a time to learn & think about the contributions African-Americans have made in our country. Here is some information about three of them.

1. Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks was a civil rights activist. That means she worked to try to get people their rights. She lived in Alabama, which is a state in the southeast part of the USA. In the 1950s, Black people had to sit in the back of all buses. They could not sit next to White people. In 1955, Ms. Parks did not move when a White person entered the bus and wanted to sit down.

This was dangerous-- she was arrested, and could lose her job! Instead, people all over the city boycotted the buses for a year. They had to find other ways to travel, maybe walking for hours every day. The city buses lost a lot of money too. Finally, the Supreme Court decided that separating people on the bus was unconstitutional. The law was ended!

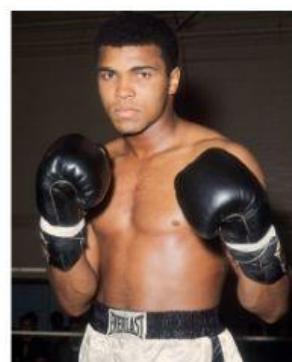
Ms. Parks did many things after this, but the bus boycott was the most famous. She also worked to help political prisoners who were sent to jail.

1. Where did Rosa Parks live? She lived in
2. Why was she arrested? She was arrested on a bus because
3. What is a boycott? A boycott is when
4. The law separating Black and White people on the bus was ended because



2. Muhammad Ali

Muhammad Ali was a famous boxer. (He was also from Louisville, Kentucky!!) Because he was a world champion, he was famous. He used his fame to talk about important issues in America.



When Mr. Ali was born, he was named Cassius Clay. Later in his life, he became a Muslim and changed his name. He talked about his religion, and many Americans could learn about it.

When Mr. Ali was boxing, the USA was fighting a war in Vietnam. Vietnam is in Asia. Many American men were drafted into the army: they had to be soldiers even if they did not want to do it. Some Americans thought the war was wrong, but they had no choice.

Muhammed Ali also was drafted. He said no. He said his religion was peaceful, and he did not want to kill people. He was arrested and went to jail. He was not allowed to fight for many years. Finally, the Supreme Court said he did not have to be a soldier. He was a great boxer, but also he was willing to go to jail and lose his ability to box to show the world his beliefs.

5. Where was Muhammad Ali from? He was from
6. What was his job? Mr. Ali was
7. Why didn't he want to be a soldier?
8. What happened when he said he would not go to war?

3. Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman lived in the 1800s. She was a slave. (Slavery was legal in the south parts of USA, even in Kentucky. After America's Civil War, it ended in 1865.)

Ms. Tubman escaped to the North part of the USA, where slavery was illegal. She wanted to be free. But she thought about people who were still slaves, so she went back to help other people escape too. This was very dangerous. If anyone caught her, she would be tortured or killed. She even worked as a spy for the Union army during the Civil War.



After the war, when slavery was abolished, she continued to help people. She started a home for the poor & old. She also worked to try to get women the right to vote. Soon, her face will be on the US \$20 bill!!!

9. Where was slavery in the USA? Slavery was in America's
10. Where did Ms. Tubman go to be free? She went to
11. Why did she return to the south? She went back because
12. What is another thing she did? Ms. Tubman also