

The Civil Rights Movement: Selma
“Bridge to Freedom” from *Eyes on the Prize* (55 minutes)
Viewing and Discussion Guide

Selma

Activists- Note the actions of each of the following activists as you view this segment.

CT Vivian

Malcolm X

Dr. Martin Luther King

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

John Lewis

James Forman

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

Frederick D. Reese

James Bevel

Hosea Williams

Rev. Ralph Abernathy

Stokely Carmichael

1. Describe the rivalry that developed between the SNCC and the SCLC during the voter registration campaign in Alabama.
2. How did government officials in Selma, Alabama respond to the coordinated campaign to register African American voters?
3. In Dallas County, Alabama, half the citizens were black, yet less than 1% were registered to vote by 1965. How were African American citizens prevented from registering to vote?
4. How did the Selma Teachers Association respond to the arrest of Amelia Boynton? What impact did their response have in the black community?
5. Watch the “clear engagement” between C.T. Vivian and Sheriff Jim Clark. What results from this encounter?

6. What nonviolent strategy did activist leaders propose so the community could express their grief and anger after the murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson at the hands of an Alabama state trooper? How did they justify such a strategy?

7. Describe what happened to the SCLC march of 600 activists led by Hosea Williams and John Lewis on March 7, 1965.

8. Note the impact of the events of March 7th on:
SCLC

Public Opinion

Clergy

9. Why did Dr. Martin Luther King turn around the marchers on March 9, 1965? What effect did this move have on the marchers?

10. Why was the national response to the murder of Rev. James Reeb so controversial?

11. What did you learn from watching Jimmy Webb's encounter with the police officer?

12. What was the impact of President Johnson's televised speech to Congress on March 15, 1965?

13. Why is the third Selma to Montgomery march that started on March 21, 1965 considered the high point of the Civil Rights Movement?

Key Questions

Taken from the *Eyes on the Prize Study Guide* (page 88) written by Facing History and Ourselves.

Register for *free* access to the guide *and* its primary sources at

<https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/resources/eyes-prize-study-guide>

1. What different strategies did activists in Selma use to draw national attention to discrimination in voting rights?
2. How did nonviolent direct action force people in Selma and around the country to assess their accepted customs and their consciences? What role did the press play?
3. Why did activists demand federal intervention in Selma?
4. How effective were the nonviolent tactics in Selma? How did they help reshape American democracy?