

About the Author Background Information

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

1. Newbery Medal



The John Newbery Medal is a literary award given by the Association for Library Service to Children of the American Library Association (ALA) to the author of the outstanding American book for children. The award has been given since 1922. Together with the Caldecott Medal, it is considered the most prestigious award for children's literature in the United States. It is named for John Newbery, an 18th century publisher of juvenile books. The Newbery Medal was designed by Rene Paul Chambellan in 1921.

2. The **Newbery Honor** is a citation given by the Association for Library Service to Children of the American Library Association (ALA) to select American children's books. The Newbery Honor is given to worthy runners-up for the Newbery Medal, a higher honor. Though the Newbery Honor was initiated in 1971, specially cited runners-up for the Newbery Medal from previous years were retroactively named Newbery Honor books.
3. **The Coretta Scott King Award** is an annual award presented by the American Library Association. Named for Coretta Scott King, wife of Martin Luther King, Jr., this award recognizes outstanding African American authors and illustrators. The book must be about the African American experience, and be written for a youth audience (high school or below).

Chapter 1 Background Information

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia) This book takes place during the Civil Rights Movement. Historically, the civil rights movement was a concentrated period of time around the world of approximately one generation (1954-1980) wherein there was much worldwide civil unrest and popular rebellion. The process of moving toward equality under the law was long and tenuous in many countries, and most of these movements did not achieve or fully achieve their objectives (wikipedia.com). For more information on the Civil Rights Movement, go to www.teachingtolerance.org. In 1963 the Civil Rights Movement was well under way. Martin Luther King Junior wrote his famous letter from jail, there were several marches in Alabama, and President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Super-duper-cold- (p.1)- Very cold, almost unbearably cold

Jack Frost- (p.1)-nickname for snow/winter

Flint- (p.2)- a town in Michigan (The general climate in Flint, Michigan is very cold and snowy. The average yearly snowfall is 45 inches. It snows almost every month there. Flint is the fourth largest city in Michigan, and it is the county seat of Genesee which is located in the south-eastern section of the state.)

“Giant icebox”- (p.2)-describes the state of Michigan due to the intense winter weather

“cutting up”- (p.3)-telling jokes, having fun

“cracked up”- (p.4)-laughing really hard

“pack of lies”- (p.4)- a lot of lies; continuously lying

icebox- (p.5)-refrigerator

Nanook of the North- (p.5)-a 1922 film that documents one year in the life of Nanook, an Eskimo (Inuit) and his family.

Birmingham- (p.5)-town in Alabama

“Coloreds Only”- (p.5)-facilities that were to be used by African Americans only

“Great Brown One”- (p. 6)-the nickname that dad gave the car

Empire State Building- (p.9)-for more information go to <http://www.esbnyc.com/index2.cfm>

Narcissus was a character in Greek mythology that died admiring his own reflection in a lake. He fell in love with himself.

Chapter 2 Background Information

Bullying Facts:

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading bad rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a "group"
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to "gang up" on others

Bullying also can happen on-line or electronically. Cyber-bullying is when children or teens bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include:

- Sending mean text, e-mail, or instant messages;
- Posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites;
- Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies about someone.

Effects of bullying include:

- It happens a lot more than some people think - Studies show that between 15-25% of U.S. students are bullied with some frequency, while 15-20% report they bully others with some frequency (Melton et al, 1988; Nansel et al, 2001).
 - It can mess up a kid's future. Young people who bully are more likely than those who don't bully to skip school and drop out of school. They are also more likely to smoke, drink alcohol and get into fights (Nansel et al, 2003; Olweus, 1993).
 - It scares some people so much that they skip school. As many as 160,000 students may stay home on any given day because they're afraid of being bullied (Pollack, 1998).
 - It can lead to huge problems later in life. Children who bully are more likely to get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school. And 60% of boys who were bullies in middle school had at least one criminal conviction by the age of 24 (Olweus, 1993). (www.stopbullyingnow.org.)
- **Langston Hughes** –(February 1, 1902 – May 22, 1967) was an American poet, novelist, playwright, short story writer, and newspaper columnist. Hughes is best known for his work during the Harlem Renaissance. His writing focused on the African American struggle. Many excellent websites are available with links to some of his poems and short stories including:

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/hughes.htm>

<http://www.redhotjazz.com/hughes.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langston_Hughes

- **Civil Rights Movement** – the Civil Rights Movement was a period of time around the world of approximately one generation (1954-1980) when there was much worldwide civil unrest and popular rebellion. The process of moving toward equality under the law was long and tenuous in many countries, and most of these movements did not achieve or fully achieve their objectives. The Civil Rights Movement in the United States refers in part to a set of noted events and reform movements in that country aimed at abolishing public and private acts of racial discrimination and racism against African Americans between 1954 to 1968, particularly in the southern United States. It is sometimes referred to as the Second Reconstruction era. Retrieved from: www.wikipedia.org.
- **“lazy eye”** is what a condition called Amblyopia is commonly called. It has many causes but most often results from a misalignment of the eyes like crossed eyes, or a difference in the quality of what is seen (one eye focuses better than the other). There is complete information available at:
www.preventblindness.org/children/amblyopiaFAQ.html

Chapter 3 Background Information

Nazi (p.37) a member of the National Socialist German Workers' party of Germany, which in 1933, under Adolf Hitler, seized political control of the country, suppressing all opposition and establishing a dictatorship over all cultural, economic, and political activities of the people, and promulgated belief in the supremacy of Hitler. The Nazis focused on aggressive anti-Semitism, the natural supremacy of the German people, and the establishment of Germany by superior force as a dominant world power. The party was officially abolished in 1945 at the conclusion of World War II.

Pliers (p.45) – A variously shaped hand tool having a pair of pivoted jaws, used for holding, bending, or cutting. An example can be found at:

<http://kayakfishingstuff.com/Merchant2/graphics/00000001/Shimano-Pliers.jpg>

.22 shotgun (p.35) a rifle or pistol using a cartridge .22 inch in diameter and of varying length. An example can be found at:

<http://gunaccessory.com/IOF/IMAGES/22RIFLE.JPG>

Chapter 4 Background Information

Montgomery Ward- Montgomery Ward was a well-known and trusted catalog retailer based in Chicago, Illinois. In 1872, Aaron Montgomery Ward established the first mail-order business with an innovative single-sheet catalog offering 163 items. He was the first retailer in the United States to guarantee satisfaction to his customers. This superior service and an impressive assortment of quality goods at affordable prices led to rapid growth. By 1904, the catalogs weighed a hefty four pounds each and were mailed to three million customers.

<http://www.wards.com/wards/aboutus>

Maytag Washer-In 1893 [Frederick Louis Maytag](#), who came to Iowa as a farm boy in a covered wagon, joined his two brothers-in-laws and George W. Parsons each contributed \$600 for a total of \$2,400 to start a farm implement company. The company produced threshing machine, band-cutter and self-feeder attachments invented by one of the founders of the company. When [Fred L. Maytag](#) and his partners went into business in 1893, farmers often suffered injuries as a result of threshing machine accidents. One of the company's earliest successes was a threshing machine feeder, a device which fed straw more safely into the threshing cylinder.

<http://www.maytagclub.com/page-2.htm>

The Miracle Worker- Young Helen Keller, blind, deaf, and mute since infancy, is in danger of being sent to an institution. Her inability to communicate has left her frustrated and violent. In desperation, her parents seek help from the Perkins Institute, which sends them a "half-blind Yankee schoolgirl" named Annie Sullivan to tutor their daughter. Through persistence and love, and sheer stubbornness, Annie breaks through Helen's walls of silence and darkness and teaches her to communicate. Patty Duke and Anne Bancroft had been playing their respective roles as Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan, on Broadway for some time before director Arthur Penn (*The Left-Handed Gun*) built a mesmerizingly beautiful film around their layers-deep performances. Duke is astonishing as the deaf, blind, mute Keller, who awakens to an awareness of language under Sullivan's determined guidance. Bancroft is fascinating and focused. Penn wisely kept his adaptation unencumbered by cinematic indulgence. The black-and-white film is sparse and charged with the immediacy of the drama. The script is by William Gibson, who also wrote the original play

Carp- large freshwater cyprinid fish, *Cyprinus carpio*, native to Asia but widely introduced in tropical and temperate waters: an important food fish in many countries.

For some really interesting pictures of carp go to the following website:

<http://www.carpecarpio.com/bigcarppics1.html>

Chapter 5 Background Information

Smokey the Bear is the mascot for fire prevention and his history can be found at http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/wayne/facts/smokey_bear.html .

Nazi is usually referred to a member of the German National Socialist Party that came to power under the leadership of Adolf Hitler in 1933. Although today many people use this term rather loosely as a racist remark or as in a name to call a person who is very authoritative.

Eliot Ness was a famous federal agent who led an incorruptible group of law enforcement officers dubbed "The Untouchables," who brought down Chicago gangster Al Capone in the 1930s.

Vaseline is a well-known brand of **petroleum jelly**. Vaseline was primarily used as an ointment for scrapes, burns, and cuts. After becoming a medicine chest staple, consumers began to use Vaseline for a many ailments including chapped hands or lips, toenail fungus, nose bleeds, diaper rash, chest colds, nasal congestion, and even to remove stains from furniture.

Band-Aid is a brand name for the popular adhesive bandage that people use today to take care of wounds. Information on the history of the Band-Aid can be at: http://www.band-aid.com/brand_story.shtml.

Flint River is a river in southeast Michigan, 142 mi (229 km) long, that flows through the city of Flint.

juvenile home is a group home for troubled teens. There are counselors that the teens can talk to help them turn their lives around and stay out of trouble.

The Little Engine That Could is a moralistic children's story used to teach children the value of optimism.

Chapter 6 Background Information

Welfare – “Health and Human Services, United States Department of federal executive department charged with administering government health programs. Successor to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, which had been created in 1953, it was redesignated in 1979 with the creation of the Department of Education. The secretary advises the President on health and welfare matters. The department has several components. The Administration for Children and Families is responsible for Operation Head Start, the enforcement of child support laws, and programs concerning adoption, job training, and runaway youths. The Public Health Service is divided into 42 subdivisions; it carries out research on disease and health concerns through the National Institutes of Health , protects consumers from adulterated or untested foods and drugs through the Food and Drug Administration , and implements public health measures and monitors the spread of infectious diseases through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention . The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration develops and analyzes information relating to the prevention and treatment of addictive and mental disorders. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services administers Medicare and Medicaid . The Social Security Administration, formerly part of the department, became an independent agency in 1995 (see social security). The Administration on Aging develops policy and programs to promote the welfare of older Americans and administers grants to states to establish community programs for them” Retrieved from: (encyclopedia.com).

The Magnificent Seven – is a movie released in 1960 about seven gunslingers who are hired by a Mexican village to put a stop to a vicious bandit and his gang who have been terrorizing it for years.

Chapter 7 Background Information

Slang terms **conk**, **process**, **butter**, and a **do** all refer to a hair styling techniques.

The **conk** was a hairstyle popular among African American men from the 1920s to the 1960s. This hairstyle called for a man with naturally "kinky" hair to have it chemically straightened using a relaxer (sometimes pure lye), so that the now straight hair can be styled. Conks were usually large pompadours, sometimes made to resemble White hairstyles. Other black men chose to simply slick their straightened hair back, and allow it to lie flat on their heads. Regardless of the styling, conks took a lot of effort to maintain: a black man often had to wear a do-rag of some sort at home, to prevent sweat or other obstacles from causing his hair to revert to its natural state prematurely. Also, the style required repeated application of relaxers; as new hair grew in, it too had to be chemically straightened (retrieved from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Con>).

Bozo the Clown: was an early television clown (1940's) and is probably the most well-known clown in the United States. There are several great sites where you can get more information and images, including photographs of the original Bozo. Explore the following sites to get more information:

<http://kidshow.dcmemories.com/bozo.html>

www.gotbozo.com

For great BOZO products click here to visit:



Chapter 8 Background Information

The first drive around record player was in a Chrysler 1956 model.

<http://www.roadkillontheweb.com/arp.html>

Yakety Yack- song lyrics <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/yakety.htm> . At this site you can hear the tune of the song.

Walter Cronkite- highly trusted and respected television news reporter and anchorman for the CBS evening news. He was known for closing each newscast by saying, “And, that’s the way it is...(date). Walter Cronkite was born in 1916. He is currently doing documentaries for the Discovery and Learning Channels.



Image retrieved from: <http://www.npr.org/news/specials/cronkite/>

This site also includes some audio-clips.

Chapter 9 Background Information

The Lawrence Welk Show – A television show that began airing in 1955 and aired on network television for nearly 27 years. This show focused on family wholesomeness and importance. This variety show included singing, dancing with Mr. Welk conducting and directing the show. A favorite segment included what Mr. Welk referred to as champagne music. During this segment a bubble machine blew bubbles through the air and Mr. Welk often put down his conducting baton and danced with ladies in the audience. Reruns of the show are still shown on PBS. There are wonderful pictures and information about every aspect of the show at: <http://www.welkshow.com/>

Jive songs- Music that was derived from the Jitterbug swing which grew out of the dance halls of Harlem during the 1920s. There are audio and video clips examples of the dance steps and the music at: www.thedancestoreonline.com There is also excellent information about the history of jive.

Hillbilly music- is otherwise known as old country music. This genre of music normally included fiddles, guitars and sometimes washboards used as instruments. Students will probably be familiar with the television show or newer movie “The Beverly Hillbillies” and will relate to the theme song at the beginning of each show. You can find examples of songs and more info about this style of music from www.hillbilly-music.com

The Ozzie and Harriet show- a family television show that aired in the mid to late 60s. This show still airs on some daytime television channels and at the time it was popular portrayed the “ideal family”. This real couple and their two sons played fictionalized versions of themselves in this situation comedy about family life.



image retrieved from: www.museum.tv

Chapter 10 Background Information

Civil Rights Movement – “Movement for racial equality in the U.S. that, through nonviolent protest, broke the pattern of racial segregation in the South and achieved equal rights legislation for blacks. Following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), African American and white supporters attempted to end entrenched segregationist practices. When Rosa Parks was arrested in 1955 in Montgomery, Ala., an African American boycott of the bus system was led by Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ralph Abernathy. In the early 1960s the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee led boycotts and sit-ins to desegregate many public facilities. Using the nonviolent methods of Mohandas K. Gandhi, the movement spread, forcing the desegregation of department stores, supermarkets, libraries, and movie theatres. The Deep South remained adamant in its opposition to most desegregation measures, often violently; protesters were attacked and occasionally killed. Their efforts culminated in a march on Washington, D.C., in 1963 to support civil rights legislation. Following the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson persuaded Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a victory that was followed by the Voting Rights Act in 1965. After 1965, militant groups such as the Black Panther Party split off from the civil rights movement, and riots in black ghettos and King's assassination caused many supporters to withdraw. In the succeeding decades, leaders sought power through elective office and substantive economic and educational gains through affirmative action” (retrieved from: www.answers.com/topic/civil-rights-movement).

There is an excellent annotated timeline of events from the civil rights movement and beyond at <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html>

Chapter 11 Background Information

Houston Harris (July 10, 1924 in Little Rock, Arkansas — January 20, 1998), known professionally as **Bobo Brazil**, was an African-American professional wrestler who was known for breaking down barriers of racial segregation in professional wrestling. Bobo Brazil is considered one of the first successful African-American professional wrestlers, and is often referred to as "the Jackie Robinson of professional wrestling." (www.wikipedia.org)

Edward George Farhat (June 7, 1924 – January 18, 2003) was a professional wrestler best known as **The Sheik** (or **The Original Sheik** to distinguish him from the wrestler the Iron Sheik of the 1980s). He was the owner and operator of **Big Time Wrestling**, one of the most successful promotions during the 1960s. He is also one of the originators of what would eventually become the Hardcore wrestling style. (www.wikipedia.org)

Chapter 12 Background Information

Joe Lewis - A boxer who was born in Alabama in 1914. He grew up in Detroit. Joe Lewis was nicknamed the “Brown Bomber” and “the man behind the fist”.

Coon hunting – refers to the sport of hunting raccoons by chasing them up trees using a dog trained for this purpose

Coon dog – This is usually a hound dog trained to chase and “tree” raccoons during a hunt.

Wizard of Oz – This 1939 movie tells the story of a farm girl named Dorothy who has a dog (Toto). They are blown by a tornado through adventures that include talking scarecrow, tin-man, lion and wicked witch on a journey that might take Dorothy and Toto home again. Judy Garland starred as Dorothy in this film. Dorothy used ruby slippers and a yellow brick road to find her way home.

Chapter 14 Background Information:

Sonic boom sounds like thunder and is caused by an object moving faster than the speed of sound.

Bobby pin - used to clip and hold hair in place with some hairstyles. Since it is made out of metal, sticking it in an electrical outlet as Kenny refers to in Chapter 14 would cause a shock.



image retrieved
from:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby_pin

Chapter 15 Background Information

The bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on September 15, 1963 was a turning point for many people in the South at this time. This is the tragic, racially-driven hate crime that Kenny and his family experienced while visiting their grandmother in Birmingham. Four girls were killed and twenty were injured.

This chapter focuses on Kenny and the **grieving process** he goes through. In order to help students understand what he is experiencing, it is important to be familiar with these stages. Dr. Roberta Temes identified the three stages of grief as numbness (mechanical functioning and social insulation), disorganization (intensely painful feelings of loss), and reorganization (re-entry into a more 'normal' social life).

(<http://www.cancersurvivors.org/Coping/end%20term/stages.htm>)

Albert Einstein was a German physicist and mathematician noted for his intelligence. He developed the formula $e = mc^2$.

Smokey the Bear is the mascot for the Forest Service, and he serves as the “spokesperson” for preventing forest fires.

An **Adam’s apple** is a projection on the larynx at the front of the throat. Everyone's larynx grows during puberty, but a girl's larynx doesn't grow as much as a boy's does. That's why boys have Adam's apples. Most girls don't have Adam's apples, but some do. It's no big deal either way. It is called an “Adam's apple” because of the story of the Garden of Eden when Adam ate a piece of the forbidden fruit and it got stuck in his throat. (http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/grow/boy/adams_apple.html)

Epilogue Background Information

(retrieved from: wikipedia.com)

Declaration of Independence - The Declaration of Independence is a document that the American colonists wrote and signed to prove to the King of England that all 13 colonies agreed that they should have the right to be free. It consists of a preamble, or introduction, followed by three main parts.

Constitution - A constitution is a written document that explains the basic laws and principals of a government. The United States Constitution explains the laws of our government.

Civil War - A civil war is a war between people who live in the same nation. The U.S. Civil War was between the people who lived in the southern states and the northern states. The Civil War lasted from 1861 to 1865.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) - is one of the oldest and most influential civil rights organizations in the United States. The NAACP was founded by a diverse group on February 12, 1909 by WEB Dubois (African American), Ida Wells-Barnett (African American), Henry Moscowitz (Jewish), Mary White Ovington (White), Oswald Garrison Villard (German-born Caucasian), and William English Walling (White, and son of a former slave owning family, to work on behalf of the rights of colored people including Native Americans, African Americans, as well as Jews. Its name, retained in accord with tradition, is one of the last surviving uses of the term "colored people". This is now generally viewed as dated and derogatory. In the historical context of the NAACP, however, the term is not considered offensive.

Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) - is a U.S. civil rights organization that played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century. Membership in CORE is stated to be open to "anyone who believes that 'all people are created equal' and is willing to work towards the ultimate goal of true equality throughout the world." CORE was founded in Chicago in 1942 by James L. Farmer, Jr., George Houser and Bernice Fisher.

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) - formerly known as the Southern Negro Leaders Conference on Transportation and Nonviolent Integration is a civil rights organization founded in January 1957. It was proposed by Bayard Rustin, and co-founded by Joseph Lowery, Ella Baker, T. J. Jemison and others. It was later headed by one of its founders, Martin Luther King Jr. The organization expressed these individuals' belief that a wider organization could be built upon the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, hence the original name. The organization focused on non-violent civil disobedience and believed that it could use that to gain the civil rights that African Americans lacked at the time.

Thurgood Marshall - (July 2, 1908 – January 24, 1993) was an American jurist and the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. Marshall was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on July 2, 1908. His original name was Thoroughgood but

he shortened it to Thurgood in second grade. His father, William Marshall, instilled in him an appreciation for the Constitution of the United States and the rule of law. Additionally, as a child, he was punished for his school misbehavior by being forced to read the Constitution, which he later said piqued his interest in the document. Marshall was the grandson of a slave.

John Lewis - (born February 21, 1940) is an American politician and was an important leader in the American Civil Rights Movement. He was president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and led the struggle to end segregation. Lewis, a member of the Democratic Party, has represented the 5th District of Georgia (map) in the United States House of Representatives since 1987. The district encompasses almost all of Atlanta.

Ralph Abernathy - (March 11, 1926 – April 17, 1990) was an American civil rights leader. Abernathy was born in Linden, Alabama, on March 11, 1926. His involvement in political activism began in college while he was a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, when he led demonstrations protesting the lack of heat and hot water in his dormitory and the dreadful food served in the cafeteria. In became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. While living in Montgomery he formed a close and enduring partnership with Dr. Martin Luther King. In 1955, when Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus, Abernathy and King organized the bus boycott in Montgomery. After a year of the boycott, it finally ended when the United States Supreme Court affirmed the U.S. District Court's ruling that segregation on buses was unconstitutional. Abernathy was Martin Luther King's Number Two in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, holding the official title of Secretary-Treasurer. Abernathy was with Martin Luther King in Memphis when King was assassinated; in fact, they shared Room 307 at the Lorraine Motel the night before. Abernathy assumed the presidency of the SCLC after King's death.

Medgar Evers - (July 2, 1925 – June 12, 1963) was an African American civil rights activist from Mississippi. Evers applied to the then-segregated University of Mississippi Law School in February 1954. When his application was rejected, Evers became the focus of an NAACP campaign to desegregate the school, a case aided by the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* 347 US 483 that segregation was unconstitutional. In December of that year, Evers became the NAACP's first field officer in Mississippi. After moving to Jackson, he was involved in a boycott campaign against white merchants and was instrumental in eventually desegregating the University of Mississippi when that institution was finally forced to enroll James Meredith in 1962.

Fannie Lou Hamer - (born Fannie Lou Townsend on October 6, 1917 – March 14, 1977) was an American voting rights activist and civil rights leader. She was instrumental in organizing Mississippi's "Freedom Summer" for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and later became the Vice-Chair of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, attending the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in that capacity. Her plain-spoken manner and fervent belief in the Biblical

righteousness of her cause gained her a reputation as an electrifying speaker and constant champion of civil rights.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. - (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was the most famous leader of the American civil rights movement, a political activist, and a Southern Baptist minister. Considered a peacemaker throughout the world for his promotion of nonviolence and equal treatment for different races, he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Jimmy Carter in 1977, the Congressional Gold Medal in 2004, and in 1986, Martin Luther King Day was established in his honor. Considered by many as one of the greatest public speakers in U.S. history, Dr. King often called for personal responsibility in fostering world peace. King's most influential and well-known public address is the "I Have A Dream" speech, delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Freedom Riders - a group of men and women from many different background and ethnicities who boarded buses, trains and planes headed for the deep South to test the 1960 U.S. Supreme Court ruling outlawing racial segregation in all interstate public facilities.

Central High in Little Rock, Arkansas - the site of a major event during the American Civil Rights Movement. It was the focal point of the Little Rock Integration Crisis of 1957. Nine black students, known as the Little Rock Nine, were denied entrance to the school in defiance of the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling ordering integration of public schools. This provoked a showdown between the Governor Orval Faubus and President Dwight D. Eisenhower that gained international attention. On the morning of September 4, 1957, the nine black high school students faced an angry mob of over 1,000 whites protesting integration in front of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. As the students were escorted inside by the Little Rock police, violence escalated and they were removed from the school. The next day, President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered 1,200 members of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell to escort the nine students into the school. As Melba Pattillo Beals, one of the nine students, remembered, and quoted in her book, "After three full days inside Central [High School], I know that integration is a much bigger word than I thought." This event, watched by the nation and world, was the site of the first important test for the implementation of the U.S. Supreme Court's historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954.

Sixteenth Avenue Baptist Church, Birmingham on September 15, 1963 - is a large, predominantly African American Baptist church in Birmingham in the U.S. state of Alabama. It was the target of the racially-motivated 1963 16th Street Baptist Church bombing that killed four girls in the midst of the American Civil Rights Movement. The church is still in operation and is a central landmark in the Birmingham Civil Rights District. It was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 2006.

Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, Cynthia Wesley - were dressed in their "Youth Sunday" best, ready to lead the 11:00 adult service at the church, which since its construction in 1911 had served as the center of life for Birmingham's African American community. Only a few minutes before the explosion, they had been together in the basement women's room, excitedly talking about their first days at school. The bombing came without warning.

August 28, 1963 – “I have a dream” speech - "I Have a Dream" is the popular name given to the historic public speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., when he spoke of his desire for a future where blacks and whites would coexist harmoniously as equals. King's delivery of the speech on August 28, 1963 from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom was a defining moment of the American Civil Rights Movement. Delivered to over 200,000 civil rights supporters, the speech is often considered to be one of the greatest speeches in history and was ranked the top American speech of the 20th century by a 1999 poll of scholars of public address. According to U.S. Congressman John Lewis, who also spoke that day as the President of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, "Dr. King had the power, the ability and the capacity to transform those steps on the Lincoln Memorial into a modern day pulpit. By speaking the way he did, he educated, he inspired, he informed [not just] the people there, but people throughout America and unborn generations." Legend holds that King departed from his prepared text and began preaching extemporaneously, but he had delivered a similar speech incorporating some of the same sections in Detroit in June 1963, when he marched on Woodward Avenue with Walter Reuther and the Rev. C.L. Franklin, and had rehearsed other parts.

Civil Rights Bill on July 2, 1964 - was landmark legislation in the United States that outlawed, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Originally conceived to protect the rights of Black people, the bill was amended prior to passage to protect the civil rights of everyone, and explicitly included women for the first time. The Act transformed Southern society overnight, and had a long-term impact on the whole country. It prohibited discrimination in public facilities, in government, and in employment. The "Jim Crow" laws in the South were abolished, and it became illegal to compel segregation of the 'races' in schools, housing, or hiring. Enforcement powers were initially weak, but they grew over the years, and later programs (such as affirmative action) were made possible by the Act.

Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965 - outlawed the requirement that would-be voters in the United States take literacy tests or pay a poll tax to qualify to register to vote, and it provided for federal registration of voters — instead of state or local voter registration which had often been denied to minorities and poor voters — in areas that had less than 50% of eligible minority voters registered. The act also provided for Department of Justice oversight to registration, and the Department's approval for any change in voting law in districts whose populations were at least 5% Black. It was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson on August 6, 1965, and signed for a 25 year extension by President George W. Bush on July 27, 2006.

Fair Housing Act 1968 - Landmark federal law passed in 1965 and amended in 1988 that makes it illegal to deny rent or refuse to sell to anyone based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. The 1988 amendment expanded the protections to include family status and disability.

Rosa Parks - (February 4, 1913 – October 24, 2005) was an African American seamstress and civil rights activist whom the U.S. Congress dubbed the "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement". Parks is famous for her refusal on December 1, 1955 to obey bus driver James Blake's demand that she relinquish her seat to a white passenger. Her subsequent arrest and trial for this act of civil disobedience triggered the Montgomery Bus Boycott, one of the largest and most successful mass movements against racial segregation in history, and launched Martin Luther King, Jr., one of the organizers of the boycott, to the forefront of the civil rights movement. Her role in American history earned her an iconic status in American culture, and her actions have left an enduring legacy for civil rights movements around the world.