

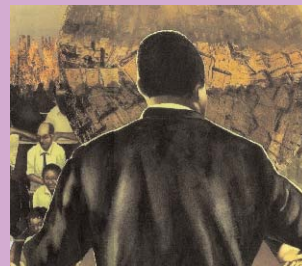
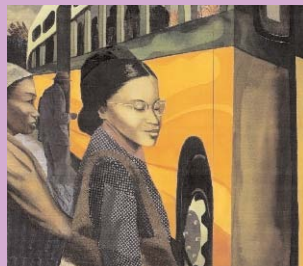
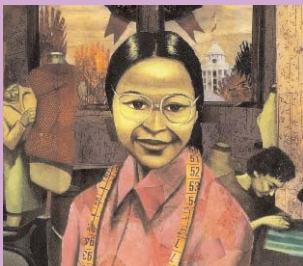
Rosa

by Nikki Giovanni
With illustrations by Bryan Collier



Discussion Questions

- In his illustrator's note, Bryan Collier says that he painted with a yellow hue in ROSA, to reflect the heat of Montgomery, AL and the "uneasy quiet before the storm" (page 2). Do you notice this throughout the book? Where do you see it, or feel it, the most? Are there other symbols in the art? What do you think they mean?
- On the end papers of the book, a bus rider is reading a newspaper article on Emmet Till. On page 4 Raymond Parks is reading a paper with an article that mentions King – perhaps this is Dr. Martin Luther King. Where else do you see reference to the men and women who were part of the struggle for Civil Rights in this country? How do these people relate to each other?
- In discussion of this book the author, Nikki Giovanni, has said that the bus driver, James Blake, was a man of time, while Rosa Parks was a woman outside of her time. What does this mean?
- Rosa Parks did not plan to stage a protest on the bus that day. "She had not sought this moment, but she was ready for it." (page 18) How do you think that Rosa Parks became ready for that moment?
- The struggle for civil and human rights continues in this country and around the world today. What examples can you think of? What are the issues involved? Are there any recent examples of a person, like Rosa Parks, whose "no becomes a YES for change"? (page 34)



Timeline of US Civil Rights Movement

May 17, 1954

US Supreme Court unanimously agrees that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education*

August, 1954

Emmett Till, accused of whistling at a white woman, is kidnapped, beaten, shot, and dumped at in the Tallahatchi River. His murderers, who boast about the killing in a later *Look* magazine interview, are acquitted by an all-white jury.

December 1, 1955



Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus to a white passenger. The Montgomery black community launches a bus boycott that lasts until busses are desegregated Dec. 21, 1956.

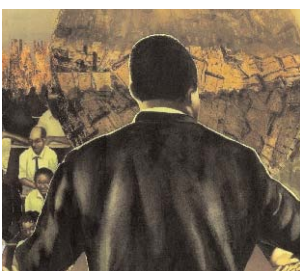
September, 1957

The “Little Rock Nine” are blocked from entering Central High School in Little Rock, AK on orders of Governor Orval Faubus. President Eisenhower sends the National Guard to intervene on behalf of the students.

October 1, 1961

James Meredith becomes the first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi. Riots ensue.

August 28, 1963



200,000 people participate in the March on Washington, where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers his “I Have a Dream” speech.

September 15, 1963

A bomb explodes at the Sixteenth St. Baptist Church, a popular meeting place for civil rights activists, killing four young black girls. Riots ensue.

January 23, 1964

The 24th Amendment to the US Constitution abolishes the poll tax.

July 2, 1964	President Lyndon Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion or national origin and giving the federal government powers to enforce desegregation.
February 21, 1965	Malcom X is shot.
March 7, 1965	Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama: blacks marching in support of voting rights are stopped by police, who use tear gas, whips, and clubs against them. Fifty marchers are hospitalized.
August 10, 1965	Congress passes the Voting Rights Act of 1965, making it easier for Southern blacks to register to vote.
August 11 – 17, 1965	Race riots erupt in Watts, California.
September 24, 1965	President Johnson issues Executive Order 11246, enforcing affirmative action for the first time.
June 12, 1967	The Supreme Court rules that prohibiting interracial marriage is unconstitutional in Loving v. Virginia.
April 4, 1967	Martin Luther King, Jr. is shot.
April 11, 1968	President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1968, prohibiting discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing.
October 24, 2005	Rosa Parks dies. Her death is mourned by millions around the country, include the more than 4,000 who attended her funeral.



The struggle for civil rights in the United States has been long and often violent—and it continues. In 1992, four white police officers videotaped the beating of African-American Rodney King in Los Angeles. When a jury acquitted them, race riots erupted. It was not until June 21, 2005 that Edgar Ray Killen, who murdered a few civil rights activists in 1964, was convicted of manslaughter. Many brave men and women, including Rosa Parks, committed much energy and time—sometimes even their lives—to this cause, and their work continues to influence our world deeply today.