

#### The promotion of human rights through civil rights movements

#### Introduction

Civil rights movements began to take place in America after World War II.

Through these civil rights movements, the African-Americans' human rights were finally recognised.

#### Conditions of the African-Americans before the civil rights movements

African-Americans were not really slaves by the time World War II ended, but they did not enjoy the same rights as the white Americans. There was plenty of discrimination and prejudice. For example, segregation laws prevented the African-Americans from voting and forced them to use separate facilities.

A racist organisation called the Ku Klux Klan used violent actions against the African-Americans. African-Americans did not enjoy the same opportunities as the white Americans. They were paid less and lived in the poorer areas of towns.



The Ku Klux Klan

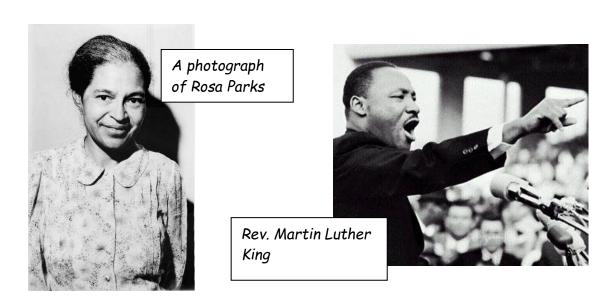
#### The emergence of civil rights movements

Civil rights movements began when the Supreme Court in America ruled that segregated schools were illegal. This meant that the African-American children could attend white American schools. Unfortunately, especially in the Southern American States, where most of the African-Americans lived, segregation in the schools continued. Eventually the



Washington government was forced to intervene and soldiers had to protect those children wanting to attend white schools.

The civil rights movements started when a lady called Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus for a white man. She was then arrested. The black community of Montgomery, where this incident took place, started to boycott the bus system. At that stage, Martin Luther King was the local minister. Between Martin Luther King and the Montgomery community, they managed to persuade the courts to rule that segregation of buses no longer existed.



#### Civil rights protests

Due to the civil rights campaign, the conditions and laws were eventually changed for the African-Americans. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was passed. Segregation and discrimination based on race were no longer allowed. Although this appeared to be a victory for the African-Americans, there were deeper-rooted attitudes that would take much longer to change.

#### The promotion of human rights through the anti-colonial struggle

Introduction

A great struggle for human rights took place in Africa. Africa was ruled by European powers,



known as colonial powers. Up until World War II, it was acceptable for these colonial powers to rule over the African countries. Much of this colonial rule denied the Africans many human rights. However, after World War II, attitudes towards colonialism began to change. Nationalist leaders began to demand independence and freedom from colonial rule. Independence was granted to most African states, but due to various reasons, the end of colonial rule did not mean the end of the abuse of human rights in Africa.



#### Colonial rule and human rights

After World War II, resistance towards colonialism had a huge impact on Africa. This was due to the new United Nations having committed itself to human rights and supporting independence. Also, many people all over the world were horrified by the crimes against



humanity that took place through the Holocaust. People realised that colonialism was linked to racism, and so also began to support independence. So, after the war, African political movements began to demand independence and an end to colonial rule.

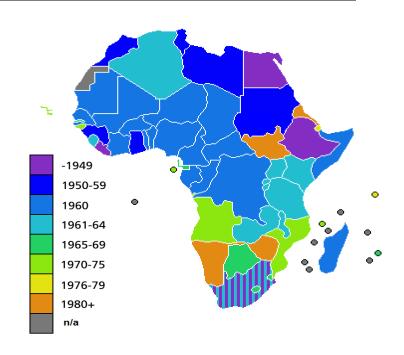
#### **Independence for African states**

By early 1960, most of the colonial powers had granted their African countries independence. However, there were some African states that struggled to gain their independence.

But by the 1970s most of the African states were independent.

These newly independent states adopted democratic governments. Through these democracies, abuse of human rights such as forced labour, the pass system and discriminating laws were eradicated. Unfortunately, these democratic countries were faced with other problems, and due to the lack of experienced leadership, these governments were unable to solve the many problems and the abuse of human rights that took place in a different way.







Define a civil rights movement.

#### 2. Research assignment

Do some research on Martin Luther King and consider the following points in your presentation:

- His experience as a teenager living in America
- How being an Africa-American affected his life
- The impact that Martin Luther King made to change the conditions of the African-Americans

[20]

3. There are numerous ways/methods protestors could use to fight for human rights or to bring about change. Can you list these various ways?

#### 4. Newspaper article

Write an article in which you express your views on the Civil Rights Act being passed. You may write this article as if you were an African-American or a white American. These views must show your feelings towards the basic human rights being recognised for the African-Americans. Also explain how people's lives were going to change in America.

- 5. Make a list of human rights that the colonial powers denied the people of Africa.
- 6. List the countries that gained independence after 1970.
- 7. List a few examples of abuses of power by leaders of newly independent African countries.

#### 8. Vocabulary building

Explain the meaning of the following words within the context of the work you have studied.

[11]

Civil rights

Movement

Segregation

Prejudice

African-American

Discrimination

**Boycotts** 



**Protests** 

Stay-away

Ku Klux Klan

Racism



#### **Suggested Solutions**

- 1. A movement dedicated to removing discriminatory practices that prevent people from participating in civil society.
- 2. Assess using the rubric in the Appendix of Assessment Tools.
- 3. Court challenges, writing to newspapers/blog sites/writing to or meeting with politicians/forming political parties/protest marches / public debates
- 4. Assess using rubric in Appendix of Assessment Tools.
- 5. Freedom of movement and association; voting rights (the franchise); freehold land rights; freedom to sell their skills to whomever they wished.
- Note that, while South Africa was independent of Great Britain from 1910, it practised racist policies until 1995.
  Angola, Guinea Bissau, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland (South Africa)
- 7. Idi Amin (Uganda); Emperor Bokassa (Central African Republic); Muamar Khaddafi (Libya); Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe)
- 8. *Civil rights* the rights that go with participation in normal society without hindrance on the basis of race, religion or gender

Movement – an organisation(s) dedicated to a particular cause

Segregation – separation on the basis of race or gender

*Prejudice* – pre (before), judice (judge), judging people by what they are, not who they are

African-American – an American of African descent

Discrimination – A practice that is prejudiced, such as segregation on buses



*Boycotts* – staying away from something for political gain, usually by applying economic pressure, E.g. boycotting the buses punished the bus-owners by limiting their profits

Stay-away – Similar to boycott, but usually refers to staying away from one's own workplace

*Ku Klux Klan* – a racist, white, quasi-religious organisation in the USA that fought against civil rights for black Americans

[11]



### **Rubric for assessing essay**

Level	Content	Layout and	Argument	Sources and	
		presentation		evidence	
	[8 marks]	[2 marks]	[8 marks]	[2 marks]	
4	All the necessary	The essay is neatly	The argument is	An excellent	
	information is	laid out; sources	well thought out,	variety of sources	
	provided to	are presented	presenting more	and forms of	
	support the	well (for example	than one point of	evidence is	
	arguments made.	in frames) and	view, supported	accessed and	
		logically related to	by a variety of	properly	
		the text.	sources.	acknowledged,	
			Discussion is	supporting the	
			developed and	argument fully.	
			conclusions are		
			clearly stated,		
			showing that the		
			learner has		
			his/her own		
			thoughts on the		
			topic.		
3	The content	The essay is neat,	The argument is	At least 3 sources	
	supports the	but layout is a bit	sound, supported	are referred to.	
	argument,	haphazard.	by sources,		
	although there		although lacking		
	may be some		in depth and		
	omissions.		originality.		
2	Little evidence	The essay is	The argument is	Only 1 or 2	
	that the learner	untidy and	not always logical	sources are	
	has developed	sources are not	in relation to the	referred to.	
	his/her own	well presented.	sources and has		
	thoughts based on		no originality.		
	the sources.				
1	Content is	Presentation is	The argument is	Sources do not	
	inadequate and	messy, errors are	not logical and not	support the	
	does not support	scribbled out,	supported by the	argument and	
	the arguments.	sources are not	sources.	have little	



	separated from	relevance.	
	the text in style in		
	any way.		



### Rubric for assessing newspaper article

Level	Descriptors	
4	Article is clear, concise and well structured. Pictures are effective and appropriate	
	to the message.	
3	Article is clear and concise. Pictures appropriate to the message.	
2	Article covers the topic, but is disjointed and lacks pictures or pictures are	
	inappropriate.	
1	Article does not cover the topic adequately and has no pictures or they are	
	inappropriate.	