

# Malcolm X: A revolutionary voice in the Civil Rights Movement

February 21st, marks the 60th anniversary of the assassination of one of the most influential figures in the fight for civil rights: Malcolm X. Malcolm Little was born in 1925 and his story became one of the defining narratives of the civil rights movement. His transformation into a controversial figure began during his time in prison, where he adopted the name "Malcolm X" to signify his lost African heritage. Malcolm X's message was revolutionary, challenging the non-violent civil rights approach led by Martin Luther King. He was outspoken in advocating for Black self-defense and empowerment, famously asserting, "by any means necessary."

Malcolm X's assassination in 1965 marked a turning point in the civil rights movement. His strong belief in Black self-determination inspired generations to challenge racism. For example the rise of the Black Power movement in the early 1970s was inspired by this idea. Leaders like Stokely Carmichael, who made the phrase "Black Power" popular, was also inspired by Malcolm's call for radical change.

February is therefore the perfect month to speak about the Civil Rights Movement in class.

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AROUND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

### THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT THROUGH MOVIES

Film is a part of popular culture and is relevant to students' everyday lives. Most students spend over 7 hours a day using media (over 50 hours a week). With the popularity and availability of film, it is natural to engage students with such a relevant medium. The purpose of this section is to provide teachers with a rationale and model for teaching civil rights movement with film.

#### STAGE 1: PREPARATION

This stage involves creating lesson plans that incorporate film, while meeting instructional goals and objectives. Since this article is about the Civil rights movement, here there are some lessons teachers can use in stage 1 in class.

<https://ed.icivics.org/curriculum/pushing-towards-civil-rights>

[https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/kits/A\\_Time\\_for\\_Justice\\_Teachers\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/kits/A_Time_for_Justice_Teachers_Guide.pdf)

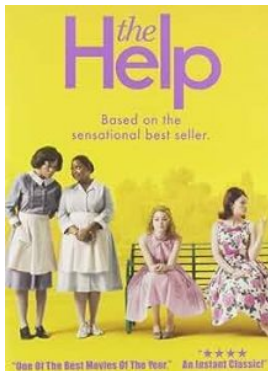
<https://hti.osu.edu/opper/lesson-plans/the-civil-rights-movement>

#### STAGE 2: PRE-VIEWING

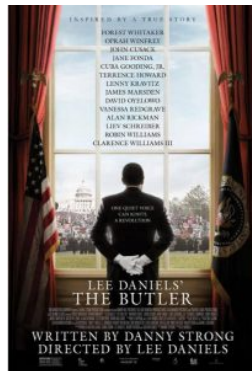
Present the movie and pre-teach some important words students will find.

#### STAGE 3: WATCHING THE FILM

When students are watching the film (in its entirety or selected clips), ensure that they are aware of what they should be paying particular attention to. Pause the film to pose a question, provide background, or make a connection with an earlier lesson. Interrupting a showing (at least once) subtly reminds students that the purpose of this classroom activity is not entertainment, but critical thinking.



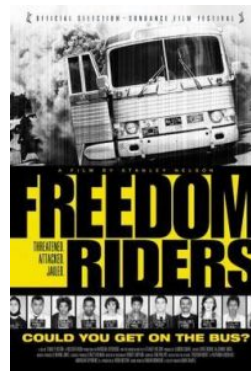
THE HELP



THE BUTLER



THE GREEN BOOK



THE FREEDOM RIDERS



HIDDEN FIGURES

#### STAGE 4: POST-VIEWING ACTIVITY

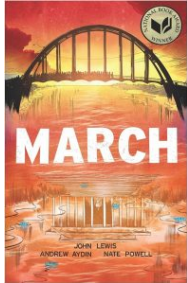
As a post viewing activity teachers could use a choiceboard (check the webinar to find out more about [choice boards](#)).

Some activities that could be included in the choice board are:

- Write a film review
- Record a FilmTok
- Create a poster with a visual summary of the film
- Choose a piece of music that best communicates your feelings while watching the movie. Write a paragraph to explain your choice.

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS THROUGH BOOKS

Novels can be incredibly useful in explaining history, as they offer a unique way of engaging with historical events and periods. Here teachers will find a list of various titles and various genres that bring human experience to the forefront, allowing students to connect emotionally and personally with the period and its protagonists.



*MARCH* - GRAPHIC NOVEL, John Lewis

LEVEL: B1

TEACHER'S GUIDE AND CLASS ACTIVITIES:

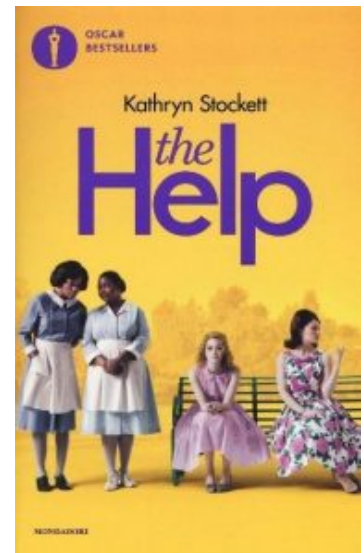
[https://popcultureclassroom.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MARCH\\_GUIDE.pdf?srltid=AfmBOopdyBUR2zCvYwEbF22\\_3f9FXJHtZ7ulWqVHNO\\_skrkaWINx6KcD](https://popcultureclassroom.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MARCH_GUIDE.pdf?srltid=AfmBOopdyBUR2zCvYwEbF22_3f9FXJHtZ7ulWqVHNO_skrkaWINx6KcD)

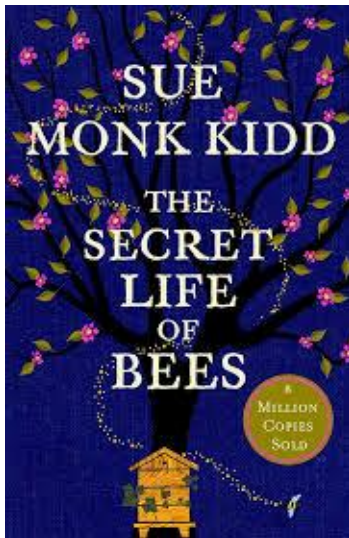
*THE HELP*, Kathryn Stockett

LEVEL: C1

TEACHER'S GUIDE AND CLASS ACTIVITIES:

[https://images.penguinrandomhouse.com/promo\\_image/9780425232200\\_5163.pdf](https://images.penguinrandomhouse.com/promo_image/9780425232200_5163.pdf)





*THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES*, Sue Monk Kidd

LEVEL: B2/C1 TEACHER'S GUIDE AND CLASS ACTIVITIES:

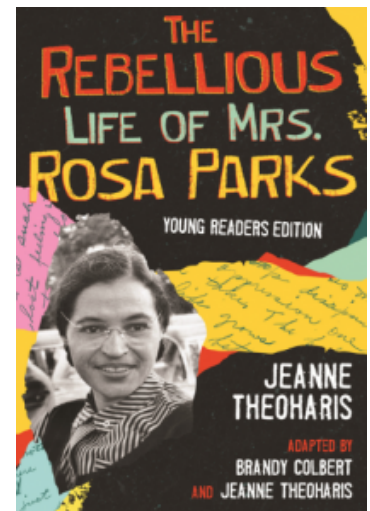
<https://suemonkkidd.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/SMK-SecretLifeofBees-TG.pdf>

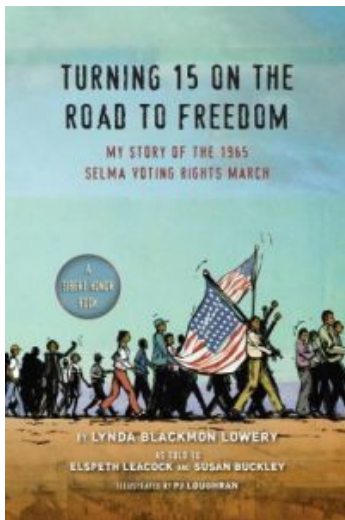
*THE REBELLIOUS LIFE OF MRS. ROSA PARKS*, Jeanne Theoharis

LEVEL: B1

CLASS ACTIVITIES:

<https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/the-rebellious-life-of-mrs-rosa-parks-teaching-guide/>





*TURNING 15 ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM*, Lynda B. Lowery

LEVEL: B1/B2

CLASS ACTIVITIES:

[https://www.njpac.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/TRG\\_Turning-15-\\_spreads\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.njpac.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/TRG_Turning-15-_spreads_FINAL.pdf)

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN THE NEW LIT HUB

The new edition of LIT HUB includes various activities on the topic. Don't miss the opportunity to get you **free copy**.

<sup>1</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation, Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Years Old (National Public Study, 2005).

<https://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia030905pkg.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> William Benedict Russell III, The Reel History of the World: Teaching World History with Major Motion Pictures.

[https://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/publications/articles/se\\_760122.pdf](https://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/publications/articles/se_760122.pdf)