



# Civil Rights Leadership

By: Lori McDonald  
Elementary school teacher; Ed.D. in School Leadership/Administration

History  
Grades 6-8



## Introduction

This is an exciting and interactive lesson for 7th-grade history with timely reflection on the Civil Rights Movement and leadership.

## Learning Objectives

- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1](#)) Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.A](#)) Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

## Materials Needed

- Googled images of sit-in events during the Civil Rights Movement

## Procedure

1. Watch this video about [the Civil Rights Movement](#). Discuss the actions that were taken, both violent and non-violent.
2. Show sit-in and other protest images found online. Discuss how different groups responded differently — some violently, some non-violently.
3. Discuss the leadership styles of activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks.
4. Put students in small groups to discuss the pros and cons of both violent and non-violent protests.
5. Then, students should be given independent time to write an opinion piece on leadership using the following prompt:

**If you were a leader during the Civil Rights Movement, would you have promoted violent or non-violent actions to bring about change? Why or why not? Give specific examples of how you would lead and how you would advise those whom you are leading.**

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## Evaluation

After completing their writing, students can either complete a self-evaluation or exchange papers for a peer-evaluation. Revisions should be made based on this evaluation and then submitted to the teacher for grading.

Categories	4	3	2	1
<b>Sentences</b>	8 or more complete sentences included.	6 or 7 complete sentences included.	4 or 5 complete sentences included.	3 or less complete sentences included.
<b>Punctuation</b>	All sentences end with correct punctuation.	Most sentences end with correct punctuation.	Some sentences end with correct punctuation.	Little or no sentences end with correct punctuation.
<b>Capitalization</b>	All sentences begin with a capital letter.	Most sentences begin with a capital letter.	Some sentences begin with a capital letter.	Little or no sentences begin with a capital letter.
<b>Neatness</b>	All words are neat and clearly written.	Most words are clearly written.	Some words are clearly written.	Illegible
<b>Topic</b>	All sentences are on-topic.	Most sentences are on-topic.	Some sentences are on-topic.	Little or no sentences are on-topic.