Lesson Three: The Struggle for Equality Continues

SS8H11 The student will evaluate the role of Georgia in the modern civil rights movement.

a. Describe major developments in civil rights and Georgia’s role during the 1940s and 1950s; include the roles of Herman Talmadge, Benjamin Mays, the 1946 governor’s race and the end of the white primary, Brown v. Board of Education, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the 1956 state flag.

b. Analyze the role Georgia and prominent Georgians played in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s; include such events as the founding of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Sibley Commission, admission of Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter to the University of Georgia, Albany Movement, March on Washington, Civil Rights Act, the election of Maynard Jackson as mayor of Atlanta, and the role of Lester Maddox.

Essential Questions:

1. What role did the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee have in the Civil Rights Movement?
2. How did sit-ins contribute to the Civil Rights Movement?
3. What was the cause and effects of the Albany Movement?
In 1961, Albany, Georgia, became a center of civil rights activity. Mainly a farming community, Albany had a population that was about 40 percent African American. Six years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, Albany schools were still segregated. Only a small number of African Americans were allowed to register to vote.
In 1955, the Interstate Commerce Commission prohibited segregation in interstate bus and train stations.

On November 1, 1961, workers with the NAACP and **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee** (SNCC) decided to test the ruling by sitting in the “whites only” waiting room at the city’s bus station. They were quickly arrested.

This prompted the African American community to unite and form the Albany Movement, which was led by Dr. William Anderson. In December, black and white “freedom riders” arrived in Albany to support the Albany Movement. They were arrested.
The next day, SNCC organizer James Forman led a march of African American high school students to the same train station. The students were arrested and jailed while members of the national press watched. At one point during the months of protest in Albany, five hundred people were either in jail or out on bond. Civil rights leaders arrested included Dr. King, who had traveled to Albany to ask city officials for a meeting to resolve the dispute. The protests were considered a failure.
Albany Movement

- Attack on every aspect of segregation within the city of Albany, Georgia.
- Bus stations, libraries, and lunch counters reserved for White Americans were occupied by African Americans.
- Boycotts were launched, and hundreds of protesters marched on City Hall.
- The Albany movement was considered a failure.

However, Albany was important because of King's involvement and because of the lessons he learned that he would soon apply in Birmingham, Alabama. Out of Albany's failure, came Birmingham's success. In Albany, King witnessed the power of song to inspire and empower the crowds attending the mass meetings.

Out of Albany emerged the SNCC.
In April 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., began a campaign in Birmingham, Alabama, to end discrimination in all areas of that city’s public life. For several nights, television news showed police attempts to control demonstrators with attack dogs and high-pressure fire hoses. Over three thousand persons, including Dr. King, were arrested.

On September 15, 1963, during Sunday School at Birmingham’s Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, a bomb killed four black children and injured fourteen others. Even though a riot followed the tragedy, many African Americans and whites joined together to stop further violence.
The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC: pronounced Snick)

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was a committee designed by young college students to organize sit-ins and protest unequal treatment through non-violence.
The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC: pronounced Snick)
During the early 1960s, King held lunch counter sit-ins to protest the segregated lunch counters of department and chain stores in the South.

A sit-in is a type of demonstration where people enter a public building and refuse to leave until they are served or their demands are met.

In 1960, Rich’s Department Store had been the site of the first Georgia sit-in.

Their efforts continued in spite of anti-trespass laws making sit-ins illegal.

The college students of SNCC led many sit-ins.
Sit-ins

- February 1, 1960, four students from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical College, an all black college, sat down at a segregated lunch counter in the Greensboro, North Carolina, Woolworth's store to protest their policy of segregation.
- These protesters were encouraged to dress professionally, to sit quietly, and to occupy every other stool so that potential white sympathizers could join in.
This sit-in soon inspired other sit-ins in Richmond, Virginia; Nashville, Tennessee; and Atlanta, Georgia.

As students across the south began to "sit-in" at the lunch counters of a few of their local stores.

Many of these sit-ins provoked local authority figures to use brutal force in physically escorting the demonstrators from the lunch facilities.
Students were ready to take your place if you had a class to attend.
Sit-in Tactics

- Dress in your Sunday best
- Be respectful to employees and police
- Do not resist arrest!
- Do not fight back!
- Remember, journalists are everywhere!
Not only were there sit-ins...

- Swim-ins (beaches, pools)
- Kneel-ins (churches)
- Drive-ins (at motels)
- Study-ins (universities)