

You Can, Too!

Parent Guide, page 1 of 2

Read the “Directions” sheets for step-by-step instructions.

SUMMARY

During this activity, you and your child will identify and participate in a volunteer opportunity within your community.

WHY

Through examining modern and historical problems, children will improve their creative problem-solving skills. Then, children will get a taste of civic responsibility and empowerment by trying to fill a need or address a problem in their communities.

TIME

- 10 minutes to talk about the events in Greensboro
- 20 minutes to identify problem and solutions in modern communities
- Travel varies by service project.
- Time varies by service project.

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP

This activity will work best with children in kindergarten through fourth grade.

CHALLENGE WORDS

- **boycott:** to refuse to conduct business with a person, store, or organization, usually to express disapproval or to peacefully force changes
- **nonviolent:** a philosophy or strategy for change that opposes using violence
- **picket:** to walk or stand in front of like a fence-post, often in protest
- **protest:** public demonstration of disapproval
- **segregation:** the practice of keeping people in separate groups based on their race or culture
- **sit-in:** an act of sitting in the seats or on the floor of an establishment as a means of organized protest (see the images of boys sitting at lunch counter)



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GET READY

- Read *Freedom on the Menu* together. *Freedom on the Menu* is a story about the civil rights movement, as told through the eyes of a young girl. For tips on reading this book together, check out the [Guided Reading Activity](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter_reading.pdf) (http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter_reading.pdf).

YOU NEED

- Directions sheets (*attached*)
- Background sheets (*attached*)
- Computer with Internet connection
- (*possibly*) Transportation
- (*optional*) Camera
- (*optional*) *Freedom on the Menu* book

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/freedom/>.



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
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For more information, visit the National Museum of American History Web site <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/freedom/>.

Racial **segregation** was not illegal in the United States on February 1, 1960, when four African American college students sat down at a “whites-only” **lunch counter** at an F. W. Woolworth store in Greensboro, North Carolina. Politely asking for service, their request was refused. When asked to leave, they remained in their seats.

In Greensboro, hundreds of students, civil rights organizations, churches, and members of the community joined in a six-month-long **nonviolent protest** that spread to other places in the South. Many people continued to show their unhappiness through **sit-ins**. Others held **picket** signs on the streets outside the store with messages for people to see, while other people decided to **boycott**. All of these **protest** strategies caused Woolworth, and other businesses that practiced **segregation**, to lose customers and drew national attention.

The **protests** put college students and young people into an important position in the ongoing movement to challenge racial inequality across the United States. Some of the people involved in the **protests** were sent to jail. Their commitment led to the end of **segregation** at the **lunch counter** on July 25, 1960; but, it took four more years before **segregation** finally ended across the country with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



The students who started the sit-ins were only seventeen or eighteen years old.

From Freedom on the Menu

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The National Museum of American History added a portion of the Greensboro lunch counter to its collection after the Woolworth store shut down. Today, it is on display as one of the landmark objects in the Museum. For more information, visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/news/factsheet.cfm?key=30&newskey=53>.



A piece of the lunchcounter from Greensboro, North Carolina

At the National Museum of American History

By protesting segregation, students and members of the Greensboro community took action against a problem they saw in their area.

What can you do to help solve a problem or serve a need in your community?

Find other people who are helping out in your area and pitch in!

Facts and Fiction

Freedom on the Menu is a work of historical fiction for kids. To tell the main story clearly, the author wrote about a fictional family and pulled together details from slightly different times in history and locations in the South.

Check out *The Jim Crow Laws and Racism in American History* by David K. Fremon, a nonfiction resource, to get just the facts.

Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Jerome LaGarrigue. Text (c) 2005 by Carole Boston Weatherford. Illustrations (c) 2005 by Jerome LaGarrigue. Used by permission of Dial Books for Young Readers, A Division of Penguin Young Readers Group, A Member of Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 345 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014. All rights reserved.



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For adults and kids to follow together.

1. Turn back to the part of *Freedom on the Menu* where Connie helps her brother and sister make signs. Connie was too small to picket or join the **sit-ins**, but she was still able to take action against a problem in her community. You can, too!
2. Talk about these questions together:
 - What was the problem the protesters wanted to solve?
 - Why do you think the problem existed in the first place?
 - What did they do to solve the problem?
 - Other than holding **protests** like **sit-ins**, **boycotts**, and **picketing**, what other things could they have done to solve the problem?
 - How did their community change because of what the boys did?

Tip To answer questions, use the words in the book, the pictures, and author’s notes for ideas.

3. Lead a discussion to name things that worry the children about their community, things that seem missing from their community, or problems the children see in their community. Why do those problems, needs, and worries exist? What is the biggest problem, need, or worry in the community? Some problems, needs, or worries you could work on are:
 - Pollution
 - People in the community who don’t have food
 - Children in the hospital who are scared or bored
 - Animals without loving families

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Tip If you are working with more than one child, you may want to take a vote among everyone who will be involved in the project so you can pick the most popular cause in your group.

4. What different things could you do to solve the problem? Don’t forget that you could take action without even going anywhere by writing letters to members of the local government or writing an editorial for the local newspaper.

5. Check out the groups in your area that are working on the problems and needs that they think are important. Here are some Web sites to help you find an organization in your area:

- <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>
- <http://www.mygooddeed.org/Deeds-You-Can-Do/>
- <http://www.serve.gov/>

Tip If you don’t find anyone else working on your problem, you could either pick an organization based on their location or how easy it is for you to volunteer or you could start developing your own project.

6. Go out into your community and do something big or small.

Tip Some problems are big and one trip might not solve them. When talking with children, stress that you are “working on” the problem and that big solutions are often made up of many little steps.

Tip If you have a camera, take a picture of yourself working on your project and share it with others.

7. How is your community different because of what you did? Tell others about what you did! Mention it with every new person you talk to for the next two days, e-mail the pictures to your family and friends, or write to your local newspaper to encourage others to help in the future.

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Teacher Guide, page 1 of 4

Read the Directions sheets for step-by-step instructions.

SUMMARY

Students will consider the rationale behind and impact of the Greensboro sit-ins and the problem-solving skills used by the protesters. They will then take action to fill a need in their communities or take steps to solve a community problem.

RATIONALE

Through examining modern and historical problems, children will improve their critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative skills. Then, children will get a taste of civic responsibility and empowerment by trying to fill a need or address a problem in their communities.

OBJECTIVES

The students will be better able to:

- recall specific motivations for and actions taken during the Greensboro sit-ins.
- identify and engage with problems in their communities.

TIME

- 10 minutes to talk about the events in Greensboro
- 20 minutes to identify problem and solutions in modern communities
- Travel varies by service project.
- Time varies by service project.

AGE GROUP: K-4

TARGET VOCABULARY:

- **boycott:** to refuse to conduct business with a person, store, or organization, usually to express disapproval or to peacefully force changes
- **nonviolent:** a philosophy or strategy for change that opposes using violence
- **picket:** to walk or stand in front of like a fence-post, often in protest
- **protest:** public demonstration of disapproval

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/freedom/>.



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- **segregation:** the practice of keeping people in separate groups based on their race or culture
- **sit-in:** an act of sitting in the seats or on the floor of an establishment as a means of organized protest (see the images of boys sitting at lunch counter)

MATERIALS

- Directions sheets (*attached*)
- Background sheets (*attached*)
- Computer with Internet connection
- (*possibly*) Transportation
- (*optional*) Camera
- (*optional*) *Freedom on the Menu* book

PREPARATION

- Read *Freedom on the Menu* together. *Freedom on the Menu* is a story about the civil rights movement, as told through the eyes of a young girl. For tips on reading this book together, check out the *Guided Reading Activity* (http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter_reading.pdf).

STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Analyze the motivations for and actions taken during the Greensboro sit-ins.
- Identify problems in the community.
- Select action to target problem in the community.
- Assess the effectiveness of actions taken.

STANDARDS

NCHS History Standards

K-4 Historical Thinking Standards

- 2D: Read historical narratives imaginatively.
- 2E: Appreciate historical perspectives.
- 3C: Analyze historical fiction.
- 5A: Identify problems and dilemmas.
- 5B: Analyze the interests, values, and points of view.



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5C: Identify the causes of the problem or dilemma.

5D: Propose alternative ways of resolving the problem or dilemma.

5E: Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.

5F: Identify the solution.

5G: Evaluate the consequences of the actions taken.

K-4 Historical Content Standards

1B. The student understands the different ways people of diverse racial, religious, and ethnic groups, and of various national origins have transmitted their beliefs and values.

4A. Demonstrate understanding of how the United States government was formed and of the nation’s basic democratic principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

4B. Demonstrate understanding of ordinary people who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.

4C. Describe how historical figures in the United States and other parts of the world have advanced the rights of individuals and promoted the common good and identify character traits such as persistence, problem solving, moral responsibility, and respect for others that made them successful.

IRA/NCTE Language Arts Standards

2. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.



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21st-Century Skills

Learning and Innovation Skills

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration

Information, Media, and Technology Skills

- Media Literacy

Life and Career Skills

- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Leadership and Responsibility

ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (NETS.S)

Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

- A. Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- B. Plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

