



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist minister in Montgomery, Alabama. His religious beliefs and his desire for a non-violent solution led him to be a major part of the civil rights movement in America.

When Rosa Parks was arrested for not giving up her seat on a bus in 1955, King was one of the people to plan the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The boycott lasted for 382 days. African-Americans walked, shared rides, and took cabs to work. Although he was arrested during the boycott, King became known across the nation for his part in the civil rights movement.

In 1957, King and other ministers and civil rights activists founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to help organize the movement. Non-violent protests were a large part of the strategy to achieve full equality. The SCLC's motto was "Not one hair of one head of one person should be harmed." Actions such as boycotts, marches, and sit-ins protested segregation and other injustices. Sit-ins happened at store lunch counters when African-American students sat in areas reserved for white people. When the students were asked to move or leave, they simply sat there and did nothing. Sometimes they would get yelled at or injured. These sit-ins were successful. Lunch counter segregation ended in many southern cities.

In 1963, King and leaders of other civil rights groups organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The march was another non-violent demonstration and was attended by more than 200,000 people. It was where King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial. Soon, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed. Martin Luther King, Jr. was also awarded with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

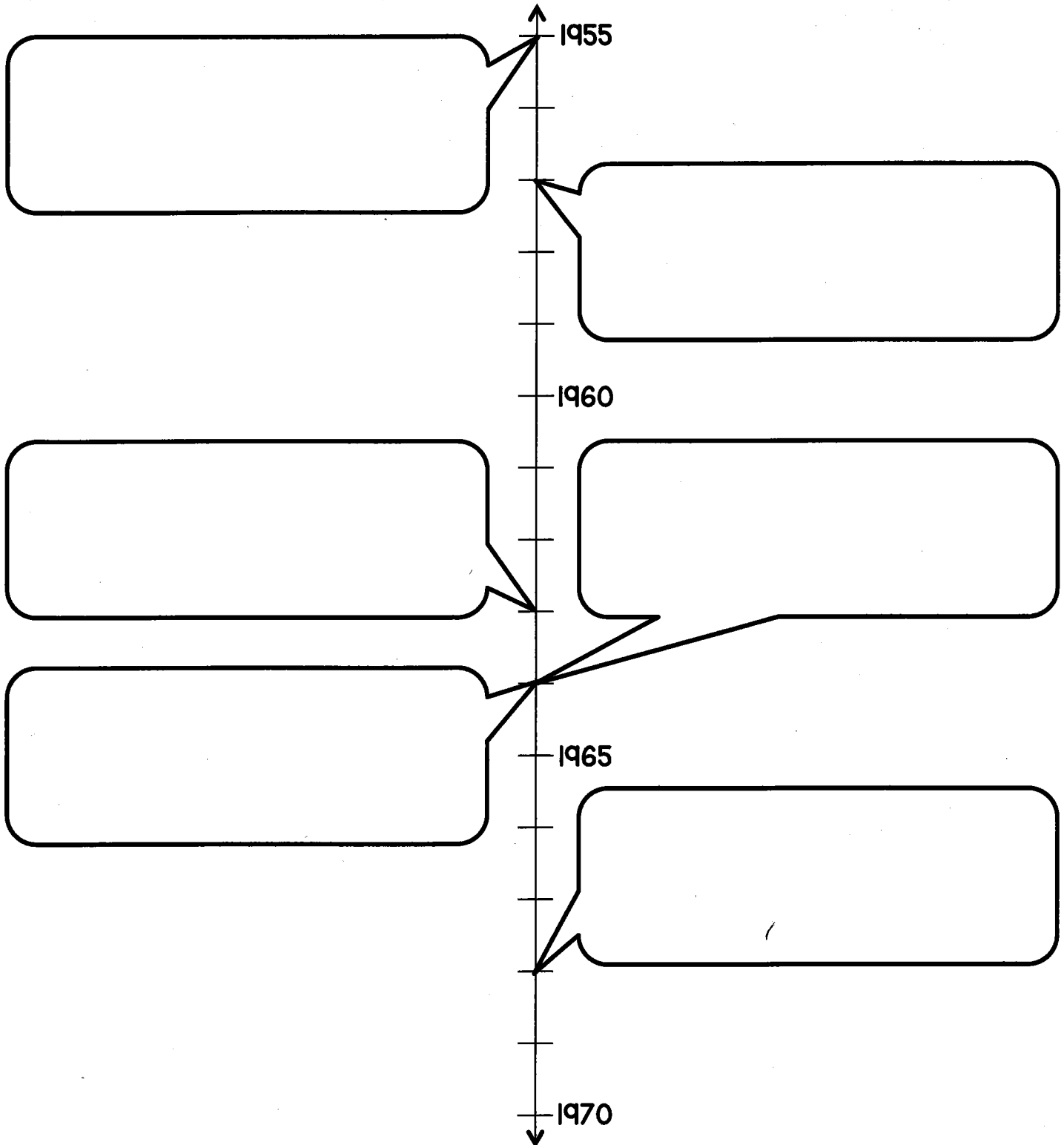
Many people did not agree with King and his work towards racial equality. Those people sent him death threats and bombed his home. He was arrested a total of twenty-nine times. On April 4, 1968, King was shot as he was standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

In 1983, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day became an American federal holiday to be observed on the third Monday of January. The day is near his birthday. It is a day when people celebrate King's life and his contributions to the struggle for racial equality. Also on that day, many people honor King by volunteering their time in service to their neighbors and communities.



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - SECOND READ *Name* _____

Go back through the text and highlight the major events of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life during the civil rights movement. Then add the events to the timeline.





MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. - THIRD READ

Name _____

Go back through the text to find causes and effects. Label the causes with a C and the effects with an E. Then add them to the t-chart.

Cause

Effect

because King wanted to find a peaceful solution

the Montgomery Bus Boycott was started

sit-ins were a peaceful protest

because people did not agree with King

because King's birthday is in January