

Social Studies

Grade 4 / Week 9

Your Week at a Glance

- Area of focus: American History – Lesson: Florida and Civil Rights
- Area of Focus: American History – Lesson: Florida and the Space Program
- STANDARDS:

SS.4.A.8.1 Identify Florida's role in the Civil Rights Movement.

SS.4.A.8.3 Describe the effect of the United States space program on Florida's economy and growth.

- STATUTES: 1003.42 f, h, l, p, q

Name

Teacher

Florida and Civil Rights **(adapted from Florida Studies Weekly Week 26)**

Civil rights are the rights of people to be treated fairly no matter who they are. The civil rights movement took place in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. The movement was full of people who wanted to change unfair laws. A lot of states had laws that segregated people. To segregate means to separate because of race. Laws said that businesses could choose which people they wanted to serve. Other laws told African Americans where they could and could not go, what jobs they could work and even where they could sit on the bus.

By the 1950s, a lot of people were ready for things to change. Leaders like Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and C.K. Steele looked for ways to show how unfair these laws were. They began forming groups to start using civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is when people peacefully refuse to follow laws they believe are unfair. They did this by organizing boycotts and sit-ins.

A boycott is when a group of people decides not to use a company or service until something changes. Two major boycotts were in Montgomery, Alabama, and Tallahassee, Florida. Bus companies in those cities had rules that seats at the front of their buses were only for white passengers, even though ticket prices were the same. African Americans stopped using city buses until those rules changed. They hoped the companies would lose so much money that they would decide to change their rules. The Montgomery boycott lasted over a year, and the Tallahassee boycott lasted about seven months. They were both successful. Rules in both cities changed, and people were allowed to sit anywhere they liked.

Sit-ins are another form of civil disobedience. A lot of restaurants had seats and bars where people could order food for lunch or dinner. Many of these places would not serve food to African American people. African Americans went to these diners anyway and sat down. They planned to stay until the people working there agreed to serve them food. That also meant nobody else could sit down. Most of the people who took part in sit-ins were college students. They knew that the only way it would work is if they were quiet and patient. Other customers often became very angry. They would throw food, drinks and trash at sitting students. The students knew they could be attacked or even arrested. It was very hard, but many sit-ins were successful. It took a long time, but many restaurant owners began to change their minds about who to serve.

Boycotts and sit-ins were just two ways that the civil rights movement tried to convince people that rules in our country were not fair. Leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and C.K. Steele also gave speeches and held big meetings to show our leaders that those laws needed to change.

The civil rights movement took place during the 1950s and 1960s in many different places in our country. Let's take a look at some of the people who brought the movement to Florida and some of the things that happened in our state.

Virgil Darnell Hawkins

Virgil Darnell Hawkins was one of the first people in Florida to fight for equal treatment. In 1949, he wanted to go to the University of Florida to become a lawyer. Even though his grades were good enough, the university would not let him become a student because he was African American. Hawkins did not think this was fair, so he decided to go to court.

For the next nine years, he tried to get courts to make the university take him as a student. The case was even heard by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court agreed with Hawkins, but people still found ways to stop him from going to college. Hawkins kept trying, and he finally became a lawyer in 1976. He began to work by helping people who were too poor to afford a lawyer. Hawkins died in 1988. He is remembered for being one of the first leaders in Florida's civil rights movement.

The Tallahassee Bus Boycott

On May 26, 1956, two African American college students named Wilhelmina Jakes and Carrie Patterson got onto a bus in Tallahassee. They sat down on seats that were normally only for white passengers. The bus driver told them to move, but they refused. The driver called the police, and the two women were arrested. The next day, students from their college agreed that they would stop using buses in Tallahassee.

For the next seven months, African Americans all over Tallahassee worked together to carpool to get wherever they needed to be. It was a hard time, as they faced insults and attacks. Police arrested carpool drivers for illegally transporting people. Some of these drivers were forced to pay fines. Things got better after the Supreme Court said that laws that segregated buses were unconstitutional.

The boycott made it hard for bus companies to make money. They realized that they had to change their rules to stay in business. By the summer of 1957, African Americans were free to sit anywhere they wanted on Tallahassee's buses. The boycott was also important because it proved that peaceful protests could work.

C.K. Steele and the ICC

People in Tallahassee realized they needed to organize the boycott. A group of leaders formed the Inter-Civic Council, or ICC. The ICC had members who were workers, pastors, businesspeople and teachers. They worked to organize carpools and help people get where they needed to be.

The council chose a man named C.K. Steele to be its leader. Steele was a preacher who had moved to Tallahassee in 1952. He became an important person in

the fight for civil rights. Steele knew that the boycott needed to stay nonviolent. He worked hard to make sure everyone knew to stay peaceful.

After the boycott ended, Steele worked to make things fair for African Americans in Tallahassee's schools, restaurants, theaters and many other public places. He kept working for equal rights until his death in 1980.

Voting Rights

The civil rights movement won many freedoms for African Americans in Florida and the rest of the United States. Laws were passed that said businesses were not allowed to tell people they could not come inside just because of their race. Even though the civil rights movement was a success, African Americans still faced a lot of challenges from people who did not want them to be treated fairly.

One of these challenges was voting in elections. Voting is one of the most important things we can do in our country. Some leaders decided to make it hard for African Americans to sign up to vote. They did this by making a rule that everyone had to pass a test in order to vote. The test was usually very confusing and difficult to pass. Even if they did pass the test, voting officials might tell African American voters the wrong day, time or place to go. In some places, it became so hard to vote that in 1965, President Johnson asked Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act. The new law made the tests illegal and allowed the government to send officials to make sure everyone was treated fairly.

The Little Rock Nine

In 1954, the Supreme Court made its decision in a case called Brown v. Board of Education. The case was about whether states should be allowed to segregate schools, or not. The Supreme Court said segregation was against the Constitution. One of the first places where people tried to end segregation was Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas.

Nine African American students were chosen to go to the school in 1957. A lot of people in Little Rock did not like the idea and tried to stop them from getting to their classes. The governor even sent the Arkansas National Guard to keep them from going inside the school. The group of students became known as the Little Rock Nine.

It wasn't until President Eisenhower got involved that the students were able to go to class. Even then, the students were bullied and threatened every day. It was hard, but all nine students knew how important it was for them to keep going and to do their best work. At the end of the year, Ernest Green became the first African American to graduate from Little Rock Central High School.

It still took people a long time to change their minds about segregation, but the Little Rock Nine are remembered for being brave people. They were willing to work hard for what they thought was right.

Think and Review

1. What does the term civil disobedience mean? Give an example.

2. How did the Tallahassee bus boycott begin? How did it end?

3. What were some of the challenges African Americans faced when trying to vote?

4. What happens during a sit-in?

5. What happened in Little Rock Central High School in 1957? Why was it so important?

Florida and The Space Program **(adapted from Florida Studies Weekly Week 30)**

We've come a long way since humans first launched things into space. In 1957, scientists from the Soviet Union launched a small silver ball into orbit. They called their machine Sputnik, and it was the first man-made object to send a radio message from outer space. This is what started the space race between the United States and the Soviet Union. During the 12 years after Sputnik was launched, American and Soviet scientists raced to see who could be the first to send people to the moon. The Soviets were ahead for most of the race. They were the first to send people into space and bring them back home safely, but American scientists kept working. We finally won the space race in 1969 when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were the first people to walk on the moon.

Florida played a very important part in this race. Our city of Cape Canaveral was where some of our best scientists and engineers worked together to build one of our planet's first spaceports. Today, we call this spaceport the Kennedy Space Center. It was built a few miles away from Cape Canaveral. It is where we launch rockets, satellites and other spacecraft into orbit around our planet.

The Space Program

1. Mercury: Pioneers in a New World

The main goal of the Mercury program was simply to get someone into space. A small one-man capsule rode high on top of a tall rocket. The six Mercury flights were generally pretty short—the first few only lasted 15 minutes—but even so, this was the beginning of America's adventures in space. Alan Shepard, a Navy test pilot, was the first American in space. He did it with a quick suborbital flight in his capsule called Freedom 7. "Suborbital" means the capsule flew into outer space, but not into orbit around the Earth. John Glenn was the first American to orbit the Earth in Friendship 7. You may have heard of Glenn. He went up into space again in 1998 in the space shuttle.

2. Gemini: Twice the Adventure!

The Mercury program proved a person could be sent into orbit and land again safely. But was that all there was to exploring space? No way! Could we steer a spacecraft in orbit, instead of just sending it up and bringing it back down? Could we put two people in space? Could astronauts walk in space outside their capsules? Could two spaceships come together out there? These questions were all answered by the second phase of manned spaceflight in America, the Gemini program. In the Gemini program, each capsule held two astronauts and included new space experiments. What were the answers to their questions? Yes, yes, yes and yes.

3. Apollo: Shoot for the Moon

The Gemini program was a great success. After that, it seemed like all we had to do was build a rocket that would go to the moon. The moon is 240,000 miles away, farther than anywhere on Earth, and it became the job of the Apollo program to get us there. Until then, the rockets that took people into outer space had been about 100 feet tall. Do you want to guess how tall Apollo's Saturn V rockets were? They were almost 400 feet high— as tall as a 40-story building! Inside was enough fuel to get astronauts as far as they needed to go and in style. Some Apollo missions were test flights, traveling farther and faster than ever before, just to see if the ships could do what they needed to do. Then, on July 20, 1969, 500 million people watched on television as Neil Armstrong became the first human being to walk on the moon. Everyone listened as his voice came through loud and clear: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." On later Apollo missions, from 1969 to 1972, astronauts collected rocks and even rode around in special electric "moon buggies" called Lunar Rovers. There are currently three Lunar Rovers still parked on the moon. Astronauts placed a metal plaque on the moon's surface that says, "We came in peace for all mankind."

4. Skylab: Living in Space

Our space program didn't stop after we landed on the moon. The last few Apollo missions were used to send a space station into orbit. The station was called Skylab. It was a place where astronauts could live and work in outer space for long periods of time. Three groups of astronauts worked in Skylab between 1973 and 1974. They did scientific experiments, miles and miles above the Earth's surface.

Skylab fell from orbit on July 11, 1979, after solar storms hit the Earth's atmosphere. Pieces of the station fell into the ocean. Thankfully, nobody was hurt, but it put an end to American space stations for a while.

Skylab prepared the way for the International Space Station. For example, scientists from Canada built a large robot arm for the space shuttle that helped put the new space station together.

5. STS: Commuting to Space

The Apollo and Skylab missions weren't the end of our adventures in space. Not by a long shot! Plans were made for a spacecraft that could be used again and again, taking off for space and landing safely on Earth again. The result? The STS, which stands for "Shuttle Transportation System." That was the official title for the space shuttle program. The shuttles took off with the help of huge rockets but landed by themselves on runways, much like jet planes. They carried anything that needed to get into orbit— up to 65,000 pounds. The first shuttle, Columbia, was launched in 1981. More than 130 shuttle missions took place over 30 years, and astronauts became more comfortable living and working in outer space than ever before. However, NASA decided to end the space shuttle program, and the last flight took place in 2011.

Challenger

Brave men and women of the space program have always understood that space exploration is dangerous. Every once in a while, someone pays the highest price anyone can pay for the cause of knowledge and exploration: his or her own life. Near the visitor center at Spaceport U.S.A. is a monument to astronauts who have died in the space program. Our country will always remember the tragedy of the space shuttle Challenger in 1986 that killed all seven crew members, including Christa McAuliffe, who would have been the first schoolteacher to travel in space. As long as people continue to explore the far reaches of outer space, these brave astronauts will be remembered as heroes.

Columbia

The morning of Feb. 1, 2003, dawned clearly and brightly. Before sunrise, stargazers as far west as California and Utah watched a bright streak heading east across the sky. It was the space shuttle Columbia, returning to Earth after more than two weeks in outer space. Its payload included, among other things, science experiments by school children all over the planet. Its brave crew members were anxious to get home to their waiting families. It looked like another perfect shuttle mission. Then, over Texas, just before 8 o'clock, the unthinkable happened. The shuttle lost contact with mission control for a moment and then simply broke apart. Traveling at more than 12,000 miles per hour and more than 30 miles high, something had gone horribly wrong. In just moments, there was nothing left of Columbia but tiny pieces, strewn from California to Alabama. The shocked and saddened public was warned to report any shuttle pieces they found, but not to touch them because of the danger of toxic fuels and other harmful chemicals that might cover the wreckage. Each piece was an important part of a mysterious and horrifying puzzle, helping NASA to unravel the mystery of what went wrong. Columbia was the oldest surviving member of NASA's five-shuttle fleet, and its crew that day included six brave American astronauts and the first Israeli ever to go into space, a war hero named Ilan Ramon.

Think and Review

1. What was the main goal of the Mercury program?

2. Who was the first American man to orbit the Earth?

3. Who was the first American man in space?

4. What were two of the important things we learned from the Gemini program?

5. On what day and year did the first man walk on the moon? Who was that man?
What were his famous words as he stepped on the moon's surface?

6. What happened to bring the Skylab project to an end?

7. What major event occurred in the Soviet Union to start the era of space travel?

8. Who was the first teacher chosen to take part in an American space shuttle flight?
