Anatomy of a Movement: The Montgomery Bus Boycott

Sample Questions and Answers About the Montgomery Bus Boycott

**What do we know about this movement?**
  - 1960s (1956)
  - Montgomery, AL
  - Rosa Parks was chosen by her community to keep her seat on the bus.
  - People were ready to take a stand against racism

**What changes were made as a result of this movement?**
- African Americans were able to sit in any available seat - not just in the back of the bus
- It brought the community together
- Opened people's eyes - they said "let's fight for more"
- Established African Americans' power
- It contributed to desegregation everywhere
- Created leaders
- Made the churches stronger
- The boycott spread to other cities - it was a model
- Raised the profile of Jim Crow laws to an international level
- It led to the hiring of African American drivers - down the road.
- It gave people hope
- Gave a model for organizing a boycott
- Helped build networks across the South
- It was a catalyst for a larger movement - it made the "impossible" possible

**What were the major activities?**
- PLANNING!
- Walking to work
- Individuals made the choice not to ride the bus
- Organizing a transportation system - especially the taxi drivers
- Picketing and marching
- Leaders were chosen
- Handing out flyers
- A rally every night
- Mass meetings
- Prayer and singing - keeping people's spirits fed
- A committee of leaders negotiated with the city leaders to settle the boycott
- House visits

**Who was involved?**
- Everyday people - majority of community people made sacrifices
- Black women
- Black men
- NAACP
- Rosa Parks
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- The first woman who refused to give up her seat —— (need name!)
- Black churches (including the ministers)
- Taxi Drivers
- Highlander Center (provided planning facilities and political education)
- People with cars
- People from Monroe, LA (they had staged an "unsuccessful" bus boycott several years prior, and shared the lessons learned with Montgomery leaders)

**What resources did they have/utilize?**
- Churches - facilities and people
- People with cars
- Taxis and drivers
- Money
- People shared food and necessities with each other - when they lost their jobs because of the boycott
- Organization