



# **February One: The Story of the Greensboro Four**



## **Teacher's Guide**

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# February One: The Story of the Greensboro Four

Introduces students to an important moment in Civil Rights History that happened in North Carolina but had an impact on the world.

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# FEBRUARY ONE: THE STORY OF THE GREENSBORO FOUR

## Objective:

To introduce students to an important moment in Civil Rights History that happened in North Carolina but had an impact on the world.

## Social Studies Standards:

In classrooms today social studies education is governed by standards. There are 2 types of standards, content standards and process standards. Content standards are divided among five knowledge strands. The content standards are broad statements of what students are expected to know in each strand. Process standards, are the skills, needed for success in social studies. They address what students should be able to do.

A program such as February One offers many opportunities for classroom practice with process standards and contains information that addresses specific content standards.

## South Carolina Content Standards:

### Grade eight

#### II. Power, Authority, & Governance: Government/Political Science

- 8.6 The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the foundations of American democracy, including its basic principles and the foundations of the American political system. The student should be able to:
  - 8.6.3 summarize the importance of shared political values and principles to American democracy;
  - 8.6.4 explain how political parties and other associations and groups provide opportunities for participation in the political process; and
  - 8.6.5 describe how public policy is formed and carried out at the local, state, and national levels.

- 8.7 The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the role of the citizen in American democracy, including personal and civic rights and responsibilities. The student should be able to:
  - 8.7.2 differentiate between personal, political, and economic rights;
  - 8.7.3 explain the importance of personal responsibilities and civic responsibilities in the operation of a democracy;
  - 8.7.4 identify the factors that enhance the effectiveness of citizens and promote the functioning of American constitutional democracy;
  - 8.7.5 describe the means by which Americans can monitor and influence politics and governments;
  - 8.7.6 justify the importance of political leadership and public service in a constitutional democracy; and
  - 8.7.7 explain the struggles for equity in the political arena that affected African Americans, women, and other ethnic and religious groups.

### Grades 11 and 12

#### I. Time, Continuity, and Change: History

- 12.2 The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the major developments in the United States and South Carolina from the end of World War II to the present. The student should be able to:
  - 12.2.5 evaluate the struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil liberties.

#### II. Power, Authority, & Governance: Government/Political Science

- 12.4 The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the foundations of American democracy, including its basic principles and the foundations of the American political system. The student should be able to:
  - 12.4.5 explain the many forms of diversity in American society and why conflicts have arisen from diversity;
  - 12.4.6 assess the ways conflicts about diversity can be resolved in a peaceful manner that respects individual rights and promotes the common good;
  - 12.4.7 describe the character of American political conflict and explain factors that usually prevent violence or that lower its intensity;
  - 12.4.8 evaluate and take and defend positions on issues in which fundamental values and principles are in conflict, including conflicts between liberty and equality and conflicts between individual rights and the need to maintain social stability;
  - 12.4.9 evaluate and take and defend positions on current issues involving constitutional protection of individual rights;
  - 12.4.10 identify some important American ideals and explain, using historical and contemporary examples, discrepancies between American ideals and the realities of political and social life; and
  - 12.4.11 identify and give examples of ways in which discrepancies between the reality and the ideals of American constitutional democracy can be reduced by individual action, social action and political action.

- 12.5 The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the role of the U.S. Constitution in American democracy, including the ways in which the U.S. government established by the Constitution embodies the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy. The student should be able to:
- 12.5.12 describe the historical and contemporary roles of prominent associations and groups in local, state, or national politics;
  - 12.5.13 define public policy and identify examples at local, state and national levels; and
  - 12.5.14 explain how citizens can monitor and influence the formation and implementation of public policies.

## South Carolina Process Standards:

### Grades 8, 11, and 12

#### TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE: HISTORY

- A. Chronological Thinking
  - Use the temporal structure to construct a historical narrative or story.
  - Interpret data presented in time lines.
  - Create time lines.
- B. Historical Comprehension
  - Utilize the visual data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings
- C. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
  - Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative.
  - Distinguish between historical facts and historical interpretation.
  - Compare different stories about a historical figure, era, or event.
  - Consider multiple perspectives.
- E. Historical Issues: Analysis and Decision-Making
  - Identify problems and dilemmas in the past.
  - Analyze the interests and values of the various people involved.
  - Identify causes of a problem or dilemma confronting people in historical situations.
  - Propose alternative ways of solving a historical problem or dilemma.
  - Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.
  - Evaluate implementation and consequences of a decision.

#### POWER, AUTHORITY, AND GOVERNANCE: GOVERNMENT/POLITICAL SCIENCE

- A. Explaining and Analyzing
  - Analyze reasons for acts, occurrences and trends.
  - Explain the causes and effects of events and phenomena.
  - Analyze the reasons or motivations for the use of emotional language.
  - Distinguish between opinion and fact.
  - Distinguish between means and ends.
  - Interpret the meaning or significance of events, ideas, phenomena.

## Process Standards Communicating in Social Studies:

- A. Communicating in Writing  
Communicate in written form using appropriate writing standards.  
Communicate their interpretation of issues in paragraphs, essays, and term papers.
- B. Communicating Orally  
Communicate in oral form using appropriate oral standards.  
Practice active listening in order to respond to questions and counter arguments.
- E. Communicating Socially  
Work with others to gather information.  
Work with others to analyze the consequences of decisions that affect the group.  
Work with others to produce alternative solutions to a problem.  
Demonstrate responsible citizenship within the school community and the local and national communities.

## National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies:

### Middle Grades

- I. Culture
  - d. Explain why individuals and groups respond differently to their physical and social environments and/or changes to them on the basis of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs.
  - e. Articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.
- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
  - e. Develop critical sensitivities such empathy and skepticism regarding attitudes, values, and behaviors of people in different historical contexts.
  - f. Apply ideas, theories, and modes of historical inquiry to analyze historical and contemporary developments, and to inform and evaluate actions concerning public policy issues.
- IV. Individual Development and Identity
  - f. Identify and describe ways region, ethnic, and national cultures influence individuals' daily lives.
  - g. Identify and interpret examples of stereotyping, conformity, and altruism.

- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
  - a. Demonstrate and understanding of concepts such as role, status, and social class in describing the interactions of individuals and social groups.
  - d. Identify and analyze examples of Tensions between expressions of individuality and group or institutional efforts to promote social conformity.
- VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
  - d. Explain and analyze various forms of citizen action that influence public polity decisions.
  - f. Identify and explain the roles of formal and informal political actors in influencing and shaping public policy and decision-making.

### High School Grades

- I. Culture
  - e. Demonstrate the values of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.
  - f. Interpret patterns of behavior reflecting values and attitudes that contribute or pose obstacles to cross-cultural understanding.
  - g. Construct reasoned judgments about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues.
  - h. Explain and apply ideas, theories, and modes of inquiry drawn from anthropology and sociology in the examination of persistent issues and social problems.
- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
  - e. Investigate, interpret, and analyze multiple historical and contemporary viewpoints within and across cultures related to important events, recurring dilemmas, and persistent issues, while employing empathy, skepticism, and critical judgment.
  - f. Apply ideas, theories, and modes of historical inquiry to analyze historical and contemporary developments, and to inform and evaluate actions concerning public policy issues.
- IV. Individual Development and Identity
  - f. Analyze the role of perceptions, or perception, attitudes, values, and attitudes, values, and beliefs in the beliefs on personal identity.
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
  - a. Apply concepts such as role, status, and social class in describing the connections and interactions of individuals, groups, and institutions in society.
  - d. Identify and analyze examples of tensions between expressions of individuality and efforts used to promote social conformity by groups and institutions.

- VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
  - d. Compare and analyze the ways nations and organizations respond to conflicts between forces of unity and forces of diversity.
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices
  - e. Analyze and evaluate the influence of various forms of citizen action on public policy.
  - f. Analyze a variety of public policies and issues from the perspective of formal and informal political actors.

## Pre Viewing Activities:

Use the listing of people within the video and the timeline to guide student viewing of the program. A written outline to follow can do a great deal toward keeping students focused, and can enhance student understanding.

The instructor may set up the scenes and provide historical background for the lesson before viewing. Also, the Web sites listed later in the guide (<http://www.sitins.com> is especially helpful) may be investigated by groups of students to use the information as interest creators before viewing the video.

Add additional national events to the timeline to put the time frame into a better perspective.

## Video Synopsis:

Despite hard-fought gains in the fight for racial equality, segregation remained firmly entrenched in 1960 America. Black citizens in the South were still treated as second-class citizens and their calls for justice remained largely unheard by the nation. There had been some advances in the arena of civil rights with the *Brown v. the Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court decision (1954), the Montgomery bus boycott (1955-1956) and the federally enforced desegregation of Little Rock (Ark.) High school (1957), but after that, strong defiance by ardent segregationists pushed the Movement into retreat.

February 1, 1960 changed all that.

Based largely on first hand accounts and rare archival footage, *February One* documents one volatile winter in Greensboro that not only challenged public accommodation customs and laws in North Carolina, but served as a blueprint for the wave of non-violent civil rights protests that swept across the South and the nation throughout the 1960's.

## Principal Characters:

**David Richmond** is one of the original four participants who took part in the Woolworth sit-ins. He was born in Greensboro and graduated from Dudley High School, where he was one of the most popular students. During high school, he belonged to many clubs, and played many sports. He was on the track team, and in 1959 set the state high jump record. At A&T, he majored in business administration and accounting. After leaving A&T, he became a counselor-coordinator for the CETA program in Greensboro. Forced to leave Greensboro because his life was threatened, he lived in the mountain community of Franklin for nine years.

When his elderly parents became ill, he returned to Greensboro to take care of them. David is the only one of the four that returned to live in Greensboro, and he had a very hard time finding a job as he had to fight against the stigma of being a troublemaker. Finally he was able to find work as a janitor for the Greensboro Health Care Center. In 1980, the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce awarded him the Levi Coffin Award for "leadership in human rights, human relations, and human resources development in Greensboro."

He was married and divorced twice and has three children. His son, Chip Richmond, was a starter on the football team at Wake Forest University. David battled many demons as he grew older, including alcoholism, and a sadness that he could not do more to improve the world he lived in. Richmond died in Greensboro on Dec. 7, 1990. He was 49 years old. A&T awarded him a posthumous honorary doctorate degree.

**Franklin McCain** is another one of the original four who took part in the Woolworth sit-ins. He was born in Union County, and reared in Washington, D.C. During his Junior year in High School, his family moved to Greensboro and he attended Dudley High School. However, his family moved back to DC and he graduated from Eastern High School in Washington. He received a B.S. degree in chemistry and biology from North Carolina A&T State University in 1964. While he was an A&T student, he roomed with David Richmond -- another of the original sit-in participants -- and around the corner from Ezell Blair Jr. and Joseph McNeil on the second floor of Scott Hall. McCain grew up deeply influenced by Jesus Christ and his grandmother. Franklin talked times about how his grandparents and parents would tell him "The Big Lie." "The Big Lie" went something like this... if he behaved in a respectful and modest way, and kept up his grades, that all opportunities would be open to him. As he grew older, he realized that the color of his skin kept a lot of opportunities from him, even one as simple as sitting down with other folks at a lunch counter. The way the world was structured made him very angry and he knew that if he didn't do something about it, he would not be able to live with himself.

After he graduated from A&T in 1963, he stayed in Greensboro, and went to Grad School. In 1964 he married the former Bettye Davis. They have three sons. In 1965 he joined the Celanese Corporation in Charlotte as a chemist and is now retired. As a resident of Charlotte, Franklin has been on many boards and has worked to bring about some changes in the educational, civic, spiritual and political life of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.

**Jibreel Khazan** is another one of the original four who took part in the Woolworth sit-ins. Born Ezell Blair Jr., in Greensboro NC, he graduated from Dudley High School, where his father was a teacher. His father was one of the early members of the NAACP in Greensboro, and introduced Ezell, and his two sisters Jean and Shelia to the idea of activism at a young age. Ezell was a member of the NAACP youth groups, who were involved with many issues around the community. They also discussed important issues of race at the dinner table. In 1964 he received a B.S. in sociology from North Carolina A&T State University. While a student at A&T, Khazan was president of the junior class, the student government association, the campus NAACP and the Greensboro Congress for Racial Equality. He attended law school at Howard University for almost a year. After finding it nearly impossible to find a job in Greensboro because of his reputation as being one of those four troublemakers, he moved to New Bedford, MA in 1965. New Bedford has a special place in his heart because it was where Frederick Douglas escaped to freedom, and indeed while the video crew was in New Bedford we went to see the Frederick Douglas House. In 1968, he became a member of the New England Islamic Center and took on his present name.

Khazan works with developmentally disabled people for the CETA program in New Bedford, Mass. He also has worked with the AFL/CIO Trade Council in Boston and the Opportunities Industrialization Center and at the Rodman Job Corps Center. He is married to the former Lorraine France George of New Bedford. They have three children, one of whom graduated from A&T.

**Joseph McNeil** is another one of the original four taking part in the Woolworth sit-ins. A Wilmington native, he graduated from Williston Senior High School. Soon after high school, his parents moved the family to New York, where he was able to experience a much more open society. Joe came to NC A&T on full scholarship, and found it hard to live in the segregated South. His roommate at Scott Hall on the A&T campus was another sit-in participant, Ezell Blair Jr. Joe's breaking point came after Christmas vacation, when he returned by bus from New York, and was not served a hot dog at the Greensboro Greyhound terminal. McNeil earned a degree in engineering physics from North Carolina A&T State University in 1963. Thirty minutes after graduating, Joe McNeil was commissioned by the U. S. Air Force and spent six years as an officer and attained the rank of captain. He recently retired from Air Force Reserves, having achieved the rank of Major General. During his tenure in the Air Force, he started a series of diversity programs, which profoundly changed the culture of that institution. He worked in computer sales for IBM, as a commercial banker for Bankers Trust in New York City, and as a stockbroker for E.F. Hutton in Fayetteville. He now resides in Hempstead, N.Y. He is married to the former Ina Brown, and they have five children.

## Other Characters:

**Shelia Blair-Cheng & Jean Howard:** Jibreel's sisters

**Corene Blair:** The matriarch of the Blair family... Mrs. Blair was a school teacher all her life, until she retired, as was her husband Ezell Blair Sr. Despite both having jobs in the public sector which could have been easily threatened, they were both very supportive of what their son, and later their daughter Jean set out to do in the struggle to gain equal civil liberties. Ms. Blair visited her daughter in the old polio hospital, which had been turned into a makeshift prison, when she was arrested during the 1963 protests. She used to cook a bunch of food and bring it to the girls who were held there.

**Lewis Brandon:** Mr. Brandon is an alumnus of North Carolina A&T State University. He was older than the Greensboro Four, but still participated in the Sit-ins.

**Walter "Sticky" Burch:** Mr. Burch is a retired police officer and a former sheriff of Greensboro, NC, who served on the police force during the Sit-ins. The police played an important role in the Sit-ins, and the fact that the demonstrations remained non-violent is a testament to their policy toward the protesters, especially if compared to other parts of the country, where the police actively participated in violent actions against demonstrators.

**Dr. William Chafe:** Dr. Chafe is the Dean of Arts & Sciences at Duke University. He is the author of "Civilities and Civil Rights," the authoritative book on race relations and the Civil Rights Movement in Greensboro, NC. Duke historians William Chafe, Raymond Gavins and Robert Korstad co-direct the Behind the Veil project which documents African American Life in the Jim Crow South. This project represents an effort to correct historical misrepresentations of African American experiences during the period of legal segregation in the U.S. The project, a collaborative research effort, does this by encouraging scholars to listen to the voices of those who survived an era of profound racial oppression. The Behind the Veil Collection is housed at the Duke University Special Collections, and parts of it can be accessed online at: <http://cda.aas.duke.edu/btv/btvindex.html>

**Leonard Guyes:** Mr. Guyes was the owner and manager of Prego-Guyes, a woman's apparel shop, located across the street from Woolworth's. He is a contemporary of C.L. "Curly" Harris, and was able to offer the perspective of the white merchants, whose business was adversely affected by the demonstrations.

**C.L. "Curly" Harris:** C.L. Harris, called Curly was the manager of Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina during the 1960 Sit-ins. Mr. Harris worked at Woolworth's through High School and College and took it very seriously when he became the manager at the downtown Greensboro location. He took a lot of pride in running a successful store, and in fact, his store was the leader in Southeast sales. As well, his store employed a large number of blacks, working alongside whites. However, like was the custom back then, there were separate facilities for Blacks & Whites, even among the staff. When he did integrate the lunch counter, he did it quietly, and offered for his employees to be the first people to eat at the counter. His diary of the events that took place during these demonstrations is available to look at the UNC-Greensboro archives, where he donated them before he died in the late 1990's.

**Vincent Harding:** Mr. Harding was the first director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center in Atlanta and served as director and chairperson of The Institute of the Black World. He was senior academic consultant to the award-winning PBS television series, *Eyes on the Prize*. He currently serves as co-chairperson of the Veterans of Hope Project: A Center for the Study of Religion and Democratic Renewal at Iliff, and as Vice President of Institutional Transformation. Among his publications are *The Other American Revolution*; *There Is a River, Vol. 1*; *Hope and History*; *Martin Luther King: The Inconvenient Hero*, and *We Changed the World* (with R. Kelly and E. Lewis). Dr. Harding has had a long history of involvement in domestic and international movements for peace and justice, including the southern Black freedom struggle.

**Ralph Johns** was born of Syrian immigrant parents in New Castle, Pa. He was a bit player in the movies during the 1930s, but he settled in Greensboro in 1944 after he was discharged from the Army Air Force. He opened a clothing store on East Market Street, which attracted many A&T students as customers, including the Greensboro Four. He is thought to have encouraged the students to challenge segregation and to have tipped off the press on the first day of the sit-ins at Woolworth. He was the first white person to join the local NAACP chapter.

**Bettye McCain:** Mrs. McCain met Franklin while she was attending Bennett College in 1959. The women at Bennett were very active in their community, and Bettye and many other Bennett Belles participated in the Sit-ins. Her and Franklin have raised three sons, and she is currently the Principal of Long Creek Elementary in Charlotte, NC. She plans on retiring this year.

**Frank Richmond:** Mr. Richmond is the younger brother of David Richmond. Since David wasn't around for it fell on Frank to tell us what it was like to grow up in the Richmond family in segregated Greensboro. He told us several stories about how popular David was in high school, that everyone wanted him to be part of their group or club, and how Frank himself looked up to him growing up.

**Hal Sieber:** Editor & Chief of the *Carolina Peacemaker*, the African American newspaper in Greensboro, NC, which is owned by Dr. and Mrs. Killamajaro. Mr. Sieber lived in Chapel Hill during the initial Sit-ins, but shuttled back and forth to Greensboro to keep tabs on what was going on. Understanding the importance of the event from the very beginning, Hal and his good friend David Richmond would go to Woolworth's on February 1st even as early as the late 1960's, to enjoy a cup of coffee together and a donut to commemorate the anniversary. From there, he started the February One Society, and held yearly celebrations, which such esteemed guests as Coretta Scott King. He has also written several short books on the subject, and continues to write for the *Peacemaker*, on many topics, usually dealing with the history of Greensboro.

**Geneva Tisdale:** Ms. Tisdale worked for Woolworth's for over 40 years, starting before the Sit ins took place till the store closed in the early 1990's. She worked along side white folks and prepared their meals but was unable to eat with them. When manager C. L. Curly Harris integrated the Woolworth lunch counter in July of 1960, Ms. Tisdale was amongst the group of employees that got to be the first to sit at the counter. She had an egg salad sandwich, something that wouldn't take very long because she was very nervous. Nothing occurred during their lunch.

**Ann Dearsley-Vernon:** Mrs. Vernon was one of the 3 white female students, from Woman's College, who came downtown to demonstrate on the fourth day. Mrs. Vernon had come to the states from England, and found herself drawn to the Civil Rights struggle. She did almost get kicked out of school for her actions, and it took her persuasive father to convince the Chancellor to keep her in. Mrs. Vernon still goes around Virginia (where she now lives) to talk about the events of 1960 and the lasting impact it has had on her life.

**Claudette Burroughs-White:** Mrs. White was one of the first black students to enroll at the then Woman's College, and all female public college that became UNC-Greensboro. She participated in the Sit-ins, and was actually once asked by her friends to leave the scene because she was having a hard time controlling her anger. Even after the white female students from Woman's College were forbidden from participating in further demonstrations, she was able to continue coming, as long as she left her official Woman's College jacket back at school. Now serving as a city council woman in Greensboro, Mrs. White works tirelessly to improve race relations in the city.

## Time Line:

**1954 Brown v. Board of Education - Supreme Court rules that segregation is unconstitutional:** Deep in the heart of the segregated south, where Plessy vs. Ferguson, separate but equal, was the law of the land, a black third-grader named Linda Brown was forced to walk a mile to her school, when a better facility was only seven blocks away. Her family joined together with families from South Carolina, Virginia and Delaware to bring their plea for equal treatment to the United States Supreme Court. Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education became a landmark case, when the justices concluded, "In the field of public education the doctrine 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

**1955 The Murder of Emmett Till:** Integration was slow to come, and in 1955 the brutal murder of fourteen year old Emmett Till, who had left Chicago to visit relatives in Money Mississippi, showed that equal treatment for African Americans was still a long way off.

Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Bradley made the painful decision to have an open casket funeral. She wanted the rest of the world to see what had happened to her son. Although there was plenty of evidence to convict the two men charged with the murder, they were found not guilty by a jury of their peers.

**1955-1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott:** By the end of 1955, prompted by the Brown vs. Board case, Jo Ann Robinson, a professor at the all-black Alabama State College and member of the Women's Political Council in Montgomery started planting the seeds for a bus boycott. The state NAACP became involved, and the idea was to wait for the right person to be arrested so they could bring their case to the courts. The right person proved to be Rosa Parks. On Thursday, December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on her bus ride home from work. That night, Jo Ann Robinson, with other community leaders, such as Martin Luther King Jr., organized what they thought would be a one day boycott. Seeing that one day would not be enough, they quickly organized a "private taxi" system to get African Americans to and from work. With their own transportation system in place, the boycott was able to go on for a whole year, forcing Montgomery to completely integrate their bus system by the end of 1956.

**1957 National Guard helps to integrate Little Rock High School:** The Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision was slow in being implemented. Finally in 1957, Little Rock Central High School was supposed to start the school year desegregated. When the Little Rock Nine arrived at Central on September 3, they were met by the Arkansas National Guard who had been commanded to monitor the situation by Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus. The National Guardsmen kept the nine students from entering Central High School. On September 20, Judge Davies granted an injunction against Governor Faubus and three days later the group of nine students returned to Central High School. Although the students were not physically injured, a mob of 1,000 townspeople prevented them from remaining at school. Finally, President Eisenhower ordered 1,000 paratroopers and 10,000 National Guardsmen to Little Rock, and on September 25, Central High School was desegregated.

**February 11, 1958:** Martin Luther King comes to Greensboro, North Carolina and speaks at Bennett College

Two years after the end of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to come to Greensboro, North Carolina to spread his message of passive non-violent resistance. North Carolina A&T being a state funded school was unable to risk allowing MLK to speak on their campus. Dr. Willa B. Player, the President of Bennett College, volunteered Pfiefer Chapel on Bennett Campus to house Dr. King. The audience filled the chapel, and they made an overflow room in the little theater that was attached to chapel. Ezell Blair Jr. and David Richmond were there with their fathers.

**Fall 1959:** Ezell Blair Jr., Franklin McCain, David Richmond and Joseph McNeil enter North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University as freshman.

**Winter 1960:** Joseph McNeil is denied service at the Greyhound Bus Station in Greensboro, North Carolina.

**January 31, 1960:** The four young men, after weeks of discussion decide that tomorrow is the day they will finally take action.

**February 1, 1960:** The four men meet at the A&T library and walk downtown to Woolworth. They chose Woolworth because it was a chain, and in the Northern stores there was no segregation of eating facilities. As well, African American customers were served at all the counters at Woolworth except one, the sit down lunch counter, which made a very good point for unfair discrimination.

When the four returned to campus, they created the Student Executive Committee, and put together a hand out which gave instructions on how to act calmly and remain non-violent. (An original copy of this document is on hand at the Archives at NC A&T)

**February 2, 1960:** TV cameras and newspaper reporters arrive on the scene, bringing a lot of publicity to the movement the four had started. That day there was an article and picture in the Greensboro paper, as well as television news reports on stations like WFMY – TV.

**February 3, 1960:** The print and television media spread the word of the protests, and on the third day the opposition started to come in. A lot of poorer whites from outlying areas came to town to stand in opposition to the protestors. The media also spreads the word to other black communities, and protests start sprouting up in other cities in the South.

**February 4, 1960:** Women from Bennett College and Woman's College start coming down to the lunch-counter to join in the protest, including three white students, who had an interesting run in with the opposition.

The protest continued to spread.

**February 5, 1960:** More than 300 people crowd into Woolworth. The tensions are getting high. Meanwhile more and more southern cities are joining in the protest. There is also a protest at a Woolworth in New York City to protest the policies of the Southern branch of stores.

**February 6, 1960:** There are more than 1000 people in Woolworth, and the tensions are about to boil over. At about 1:00pm a bomb threat is called into Woolworth, and C.L. Harris, the store manager shuts down the store. The students walk back to campus, feeling they have scored a small victory.

**April 15-17, 1960:** The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is formed in Raleigh by a group of Shaw University students. Martin Luther King Jr. is present and calls the Sit Ins a "turning point" in history.

**April 1960:** After nearly two months of fruitless negotiations with the Advisory Committee on Community Relations, set up by Mayor George Roach, and headed by businessman Edward Zane, protests resume downtown.

**July 26, 1960:** C.L. Harris decides to integrate the lunch counter at Woolworth's, offering the first meal to his black employees.

**1961 Freedom Rides:** In 1961, bus loads of people waged a cross-country campaign to try to end the segregation of bus terminals. The nonviolent protest, however, was brutally received at many stops along the way.

**1962 University Of Mississippi Riots:** President Kennedy ordered Federal Marshals to escort James Meredith, the first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi, to campus. A riot broke out and before the National Guard could arrive to reinforce the marshals, two students were killed.

**1963 Birmingham:** In 1963, Birmingham was a hotbed of activism. Black men and women held sit-ins at lunch counters where they were refused service, and "kneel-ins" on church steps where they were denied entrance. Hundreds of demonstrators were fined and imprisoned. In 1963, Dr. King, the Reverend Abernathy and the Reverend Shuttlesworth lead a protest march in Birmingham. The protestors were met with policemen and dogs. The three ministers were arrested and taken to Southside Jail.

**1963 March on Washington:** Despite worries that few people would attend and that violence could erupt, A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin organized the historic event that would come to symbolize the civil rights movement. A reporter from the Times wrote, "no one could ever remember an invading army quite as gentle as the two hundred thousand civil rights marchers who occupied Washington."

**1964 Civil Rights Act:** The 1964 Civil Rights Act made racial discrimination in public places, such as theaters, restaurants and hotels, illegal. It also required employers to provide equal employment opportunities. Projects involving federal funds could now be cut off if there was evidence of discriminated based on color, race or national origin.

**1965 Voting Rights Act:** A natural follow up the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this act concentrated on eliminating discrimination in the area of voting, specifically outlawing poll taxes, literacy tests and the Grandfather Clause.

## Other Names associated to the Sit Ins:

- Reverend Otis Hairston
- George Simpkins
- J. Spencer Love
- Edward R. Zane
- Mayor George H. Roach
- Police Chief Paul Calhoun

## Post Viewing Activities:

Review the timeline again to better understand the effect the Greensboro sit-in had on civil rights activities.

Use the Web sites for further study and student prepared multi media presentations.

Use the discussion questions to analyze what students saw in February One, as group discussions, or as essay or presentation topics.

## Discussion Questions:

Explore the role of C.L. Harris in the events that took place. He often time thought he was harshly judged by history as a villain.

Jean Howard makes an interesting point about segregation having ills, but all so advantages. Discuss the impact segregation had in the 1960's, both bad and good and compare it to the type of racism that exists today. Does Segregation still go on today? Is it institutional, or is it a choice, or both?

Explore what happened to David Richmond, and discuss the cost of taking action the way these four young men did?

Discuss why youth were in a better position to start a movement like this having fewer if any responsibilities, no job, no family to support, etc.

There had been other Sit-ins attempted before the successful one in Greensboro. Discuss why this one in Greensboro was successful.

- The determination of the four youths involved.
- The role of the media in spreading the word.
- Greensboro and its image of itself as a moderate and progressive Southern City.
- The role of the police force.
- The role of the rivalry between the Historically Black Colleges (in helping with the spread of them).

Explore the economic impact of the Sit-ins that occurred around North Carolina.

Why should this event be considered American History and not simply African American History.

Explore the Gandhian philosophy of passive and non-violent resistance. Make an argument for why this was the right or wrong approach to the problem.

If the students were faced with similar issues, how would they have chosen to act.

Look at other movements during this time period and compare them to the Greensboro Movement.

What lessons can we learn from this event today? Why is it important to remember this event? Has there been any recent event which compares with this one?

Do you think direct action protest would work today? Has it? Look at recent events?

Nelson Mandela has commented that the thought of four young boys from Greensboro helped him get through many days in prison. The students at Tiananmen Square cited the Greensboro protest as an inspiration. Explore the international impact of February One.

## Links:

**<http://www.februaryonedocumentary.com>:** The Official site of *February One: The Story of the Greensboro Four*

**<http://www.sitins.com>:** The most comprehensive site on the Greensboro Sit Ins on the web. Hosted by the Greensboro News and Record, they have bios, articles, audio clips, and extensive resources.

**<http://www.sitinmovement.org/default.asp>:** The official site of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum.

**<http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/>:** Home of the Stanford Papers Project, a comprehensive site of Martin Luther King's papers, sermons, speeches, etc.