

Primary Source

Civil Rights Act, 1964



To what extent did Founding principles of liberty, equality, and justice become a reality for African Americans during the civil rights movement?

- ☐ I can interpret primary sources related to Founding principles of liberty, equality, and justice in the civil rights movement
- ☐ I can explain how laws and policy, courts, and individuals and groups contributed to or pushed back against the quest for liberty, equality, and justice for African Americans.
- ☐ I can create an argument using evidence from primary sources.
- ☐ I can analyze issues in history to help find solutions to present-day challenges.

Building Context

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is widely recognized as one of the landmark pieces of legislation of the twentieth century. While the federal government had created a variety of other civil rights laws since Reconstruction, none of them adequately protected African Americans from discrimination and segregation. This law, however, provided protections for a variety of rights, including the right to vote, hold employment, access federal assistance programs, and enjoy equal access to public accommodations.

Civil Rights Act 1964

Source: <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=97&page=transcript>

TITLE I: Voting Rights

(2) No person acting under color of law shall—
(A) in determining whether any individual is qualified under State law or laws to vote in any Federal election . . .

(B) deny the right of any individual to vote in any Federal election because of an error or omission on any record or paper relating to any application, registration, or other act requisite to voting . . .

(C) employ any literacy test as a qualification for voting in any Federal election unless (i) such test is administered to each individual and is conducted wholly in writing, and (ii) a certified copy of the test and of the answers given by the individual is furnished to him within twenty-five days

TITLE II . . .

All persons shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, and privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation, . . . without discrimination or segregation on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin . . .

Each of the following establishments which serves the public is a place of public accommodation . . .

any inn, hotel, [or] motel . . .

any restaurant, cafeteria, [or] lunchroom . . .

any motion picture house, theater, concert hall, sports arena, stadium or other place of exhibition or entertainment. . .

Notes

Comprehension and Analysis Questions

1. What specific protections did this law provide?

2. Do you believe this law sufficiently addressed the issue of segregation? Why or why not?