

## **NEWS BREAK**

Article: **In the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, groups rally for Black political representation**

Section: **MAIN, A6**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, May 17, 2026**, of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

Feel free to adapt this lesson for your students. For instance, some educators may assign this as a homework task, while others might facilitate the reading and discussion of questions within small groups or larger class discussions.

***\*Please take a moment to review all NIE content before classroom use to ensure it is suitable for your students.\****

### **Standards:**

#### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1**

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

#### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2**

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

### **Learning Objectives:**

After reading the article, students will analyze how voting rights and political representation continue to shape communities in the United States today. The article will explain how recent court rulings and redistricting changes may impact Black voters and why many people believe protecting voting rights is important for democracy and equal representation. Students will also learn about the historical significance of the Civil Rights Movement and evaluate how past struggles for equality continue to influence current political and social issues.

### Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think the article will be about, using this picture?
- Are there any clues? What can you infer?

### Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the meaning of the word.

“A crowd of thousands gathered in front of the city’s historic Alabama Capitol, the place where the **Confederacy** was formed in 1861 and where the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke in 1965 at the end of the Selma-to-Montgomery Voting Rights March.”

### **Confederacy Guess:**

### **Confederacy Definition:**

### Comprehension Questions:

1. Thousands of people rallied Saturday in the cradle of the modern Civil Rights Movement to mobilize a new voting rights era as conservative states \_\_\_\_\_ congressional districts that helped secure Black political representation.
2. U.S. Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey called Montgomery “\_\_\_\_\_” in the fight for civil rights. “If we in our generation do not now do our duty, we will lose the gains and the rights and the liberties that our ancestors afforded us,” Booker said.

3. The rally began in Selma, where a violent clash between law enforcement and voting rights activists in 1965 galvanized support for passage of the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling involving Louisiana hollowed out the voting rights law that was already weakened by a separate decision in 2013 and then narrowed further over the years. That helped clear the way for what?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement are alarmed by the speed of the rollbacks, noting that protections won through \_\_\_\_\_ have been weakened in little more than a decade.
6. Kirk Carrington, 75, was a teen in 1965 when law enforcement officers attacked marchers in Selma on what became known as “\_\_\_\_\_”.
7. Montgomery is home to one of the congressional districts that is being altered in the wake of the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A federal court in 2023 redrew Alabama’s 2nd Congressional District after ruling that the state intentionally \_\_\_\_\_ of Black residents, who make up about 27% of its population.
9. While the matter remains under litigation, the state plans special primaries Aug. 11 under the \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Democratic Rep. Shomari Figures, who won election in the district in 2024, said the dispute is not about him but rather people’s opportunity to have \_\_\_\_\_.

**Class Discussion Questions:**

- What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?
- At first, I thought \_\_\_\_\_, but now I think \_\_\_\_\_?

**Deeper-Dive “Connect & Explain” comprehension questions for small groups, entire classes or journal entries and/ or essay prompts for extended enrichment:**

1. Why do you think the organizers chose Montgomery and Selma for this rally? How does the history of these places strengthen the message of the event?
2. The article describes Montgomery as both the birthplace of the Confederacy and an important location in the Civil Rights Movement. What does this contrast reveal about American history and the struggle for equality?

3. Many speakers at the rally said recent voting law changes are connected to past discrimination. What evidence from the article supports this claim? Do you agree or disagree? Explain your reasoning.
4. How can redistricting affect political power and representation? Why do some people believe district maps can either strengthen or weaken democracy?
5. The article discusses the weakening of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Why was this law originally created, and why do many people still see it as important today?
6. Several older activists in the article participated in the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s. Why might they feel frustrated or disappointed about current events? What does this suggest about social change over time?
7. How do Supreme Court decisions shape everyday life for citizens, even beyond the courtroom? Use examples from the article to support your answer.
8. Why might fair political representation matter to communities? How can representation affect laws, resources, and public trust in government?
9. The article presents viewpoints from both voting rights activists and Republican lawmakers. Why is it important to examine multiple perspectives when studying controversial political issues?
10. Some activists believe the country is repeating parts of history. Do you think history repeats itself, or does it simply evolve into new forms? Explain using examples from the article and your own knowledge.
11. What responsibilities do citizens have in protecting democracy? How can teenagers participate in civic engagement before they are old enough to vote?
12. Evaluate the role of the courts, protests, and citizens in shaping democracy in the United States. Which do you think has the greatest influence on protecting civil rights, and why?

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