

**The Global Context of the
Civil Rights Movement**
Worksheet

Instructions:

Fill out the questions below. Notice that some questions have multiple parts, so make sure to answer each part. The section of the reading is always given, so that you know where to look for the answer. However, information for the answer is spread throughout the entire section: so make sure to keep adding to your answer as you read the section.

Questions:

1. Why did African Americans in the 1920s think that nonviolent resistance would not work for them?

The Uncomfortable Comparison to Nazism

2. During the *first* years of Hitler's rule, many African Americans felt that they faced an even worse kind of racism in the U.S. than the Jews did in Germany. Why?
3. Why did Jewish Americans fear that fascism might spread to the United States? Why did that fear cause them to work more closely with African Americans?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

4. How did the rise of Nazism overseas contribute to a decline in racial violence in the United States?

5. In what way did racial violence change during the 1930s?

6. How did the Nazi's respond to the U.S. criticism of the Nuremberg Laws?

Fighting the Nazis with a Segregated Army

7. During World War II, the military blood supply was racially segregated, and black men in the military were warned not to interact with European women when overseas. Why did African Americans feel that these practices were similar to those of the Nazis?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

12. What did President Truman do to ensure that racism would be less of a problem in future wars?

White Supremacy Becomes a National Security Problem

13. Why did dozens of new African and Asian nations emerge after World War II, and why did U.S. officials fear the spread of Communism amongst these new nations?

14. The emerging nations of the world were desperately poor and needed support. So why did they seek neutrality instead of forming strong alliances with either the USSR or the United States?

15. What caused U.S. officials to misinterpret the spread of Communism amongst the emerging nations of the world?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

16. Why did racism in the United States cause the emerging countries in Africa and Asia to build stronger economic and political ties with the Soviet Union?

The United Nations and the Humiliation of Foreign Dignitaries

17. Describe the experiences of African and Asian diplomats in the United States, and how those experiences hurt the United States' ability to build positive relations with the nations they represented.

“To Secure These Rights”

18. How did racism harm U.S. international relations, according to the government report titled *To Secure These Rights*? What did the report suggest must be done to solve the problem?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

American Propaganda: Telling Stories About Race and Democracy

19. How did U.S. propaganda frame racial oppression in the United States? What was the purpose of this propaganda?

20. Why did U.S. propaganda about race openly discuss the painful history of slavery, instead of trying to hide that history?

21. Why did U.S. officials feel it was important to send African Americans abroad as part of their propaganda campaign?

22. Many government officials viewed African Americans who strongly criticized racial oppression as harming national security? Why?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

23. Why were the government's efforts at framing racial oppression unsuccessful? What else was necessary, and what important lesson does this teach us about how propaganda functions?

The International Dimension of *Brown v. Board of Education*

24. Why did President Truman's administration try to influence the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*?
25. The Supreme Court Justices considered the issue of national security in their decision to desegregate schools. So why was national security not mentioned in their ruling?
26. According to the National Security Council and the State Department, how did the *Brown* decision influence international opinion about American race relations?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Epilogue: The Civil Rights Movement

27. The world continued to be outraged by racial oppression in the United States for many years after the *Brown* decision to desegregate schools. In what way did the world's outrage change after *Brown*, and why was that new kind of outrage less of a problem for the U.S. government?