WORKSHEET: THESIS DEVELOPMENT
Sample: The Montgomery Bus Boycott

WHO: Who was involved? Who was affected? Rosa Parks, Citizens in Montgomery, Civil Rights Movement leaders, Montgomery’s government officials

WHAT: What happened? Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger, which violated a law enforcing segregation on Montgomery city buses. She was arrested and went to jail. Civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., organized a boycott of buses and challenged the law as unconstitutional.

WHERE: Where was/were the place(s) it took place? Montgomery, Alabama

WHEN: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it? Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1, 1955. The boycott started on December 5 and lasted for 381 days.


WHY: Why is it important? What were the outcomes? The boycott forced change in Montgomery and succeeded in overturning the law requiring racial segregation on public transportation through a Supreme Court battle. This boycott inspired other Civil Rights Movement protests and helped Martin Luther King, Jr. develop nonviolent strategies to fight segregation.

THEME CONNECTION: Breaking Barriers in History
Segregation was a legal barrier that separated people by race. Through Rosa Parks, civil rights leaders challenged that barrier by refusing to give up her bus seat. The Supreme Court battle that followed broke the legal barrier of segregation on public transportation.

Put it all together into a thesis statement.

Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama when she refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger in 1955. The following year-long bus boycott and Supreme Court battle broke the barrier of segregation on public transportation, opening doors for other civil rights movement victories through non-violent protest.
WORKSHEET: THESIS DEVELOPMENT

TOPIC: ____________________________________________________________________________________

WHO: Who was involved? Who was affected?
__________________________________________________________________________________________

WHAT: What happened? What was the main event?
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

WHERE: Where was/were the place(s) it took place?
__________________________________________________________________________________________

WHEN: When did it happen? How long of a time period was it?
__________________________________________________________________________________________

WHY: Why did it happen? What caused it?
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

WHY: Why is it important? What were outcomes?
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

THEME CONNECTION: Breaking Barriers in History

• What was the barrier? _________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

• How did things change? (Was the barrier broken? Did the event contribute to a larger movement? Succeed or fail?)
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

Put it all together into a thesis statement.
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