

# Speaking Truth

## *Watershed Moments in Global Leadership*



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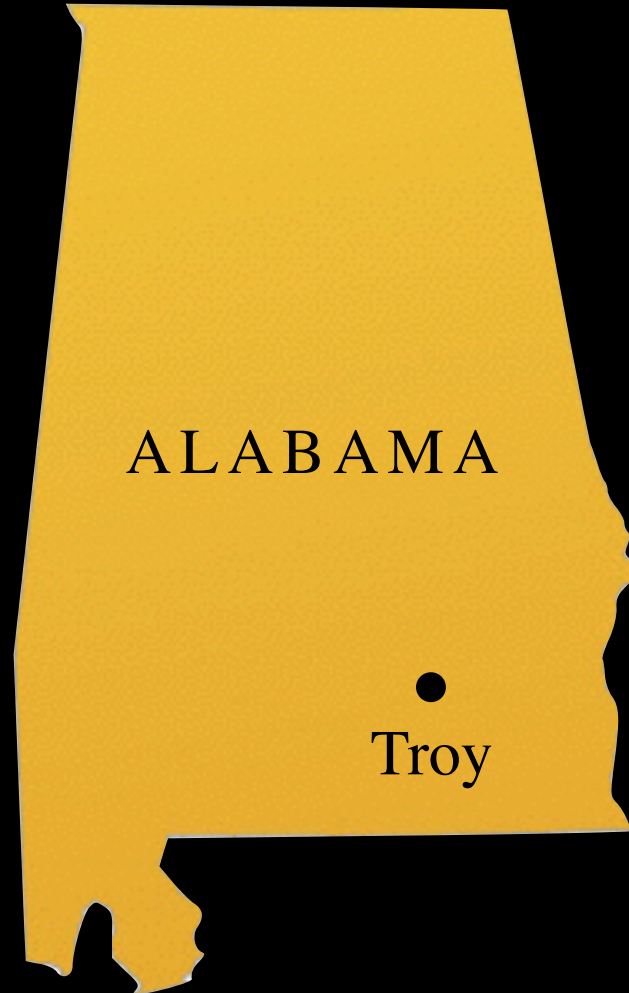
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Congressman John Lewis

# Congressman John Lewis is a living role model for the American Civil Rights Movement



John Lewis was born the son of poor sharecroppers  
outside of Troy, Alabama on February 21, 1940



John Lewis's early education was in the  
segregated schools of Pike County, Alabama



As a teenager in the 1950s, John Lewis was inspired by the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Rosa Parks, center, was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man, sparking the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956



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John Lewis attended Fisk University, a historically black university in Nashville, Tennessee



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While at Fisk, John Lewis began organizing sit-ins  
at segregated lunch counters in Nashville



# John Lewis wrote and handed out guidelines for activists participating in the sit-ins

## Do Not:

- Strike back nor curse if abused.
- Laugh out.
- Hold conversations with a floor walker.
- Leave your seat until your leader has given you permission to do so.
- Block entrances to stores outside nor the aisles inside.

## Do:

- Show yourself friendly and courteous at all times.
- Sit straight: always face the counter.
- Report all serious incidents to your leader.
- Refer information seekers to your leader in a polite manner.
- Remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King.
- Love and non-violence is the way.



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John Lewis applied those nonviolent principles when he volunteered to be a Freedom Rider in 1961



The Freedom Riders rode integrated busses from Washington, D.C. through the southern states to protest state laws enforcing racial segregation



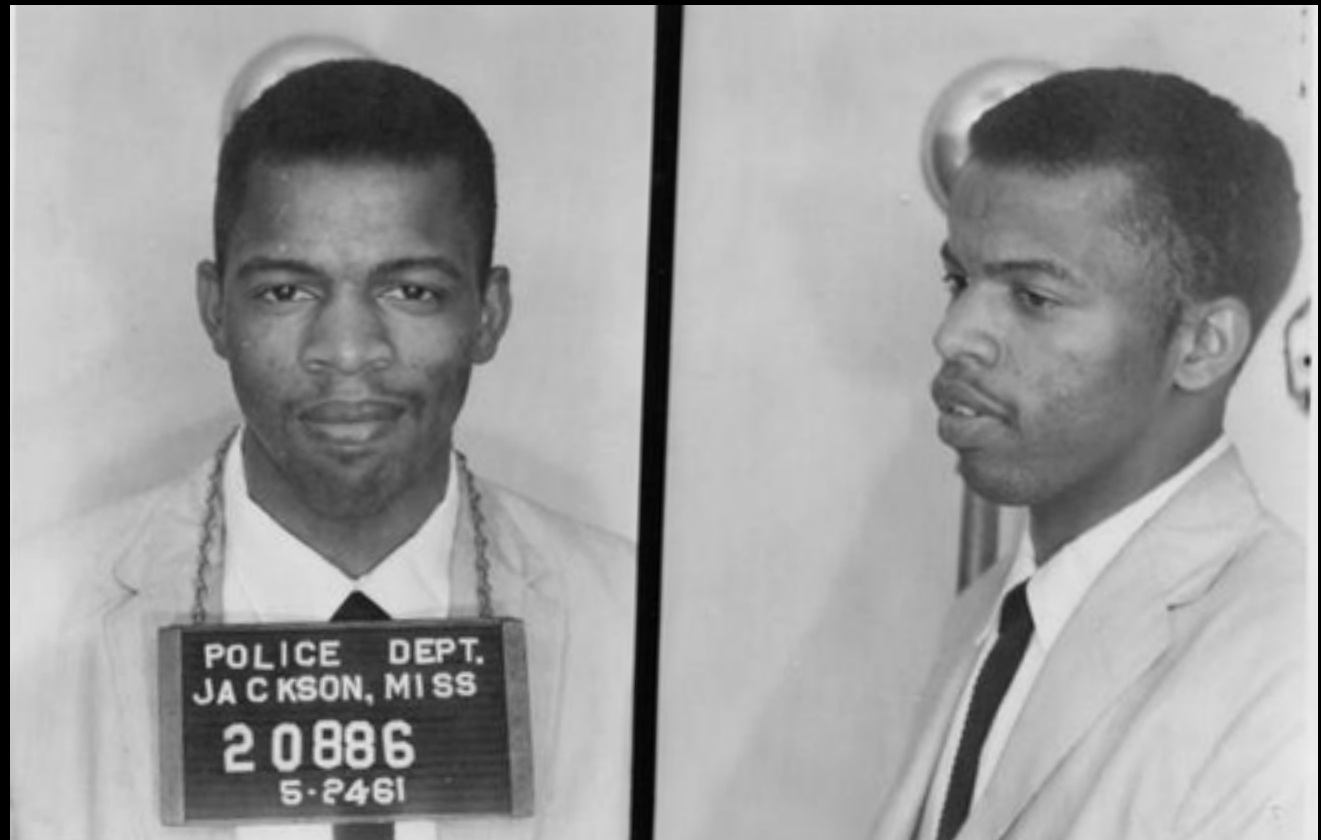
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Despite the nonviolent behavior of John Lewis  
and the other Freedom Riders, they  
were viciously attacked and brutalized



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John Lewis was jailed in Mississippi during the Freedom Rides for using a white restroom



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In 1963, John Lewis was an organizer and keynote speaker at the March on Washington



On August 28, 1963, over 200,000 Americans peacefully demonstrated in Washington, D.C. and heard speeches about social justice, including Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech



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Less than a month after the March on Washington,  
white supremacists bombed a black church in  
Selma, Alabama, killing four young girls



L-R, Addie Mae Collins, Carol Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley



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# The murders in Selma seemed to be a turning point for the American Civil Rights Movement



March Luther King, Jr. looks on as President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act into law on July 2, 1964



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But John Lewis and other activists in the Movement knew that there would be no real change until everyone had the unchallenged right to vote

**The State of Louisiana**

**Literacy Test (This test is to be given to anyone who cannot prove a fifth grade education.)**

**Do what you are told to do in each statement, nothing more, nothing less. Be careful as one wrong answer denotes failure of the test. You have 10 minutes to complete the test.**

1. Draw a line around the number or letter of this sentence.
2. Draw a line under the last word in this line.
3. Cross out the longest word in this line.
4. Draw a line around the shortest word in this line.
5. Circle the first, first letter of the alphabet in this line.
6. In the space below draw three circles, one inside (engulfed by) the other.

First section of a literacy test given to black voters to discourage voting



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# In 1965, John Lewis became the Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)



The SNCC was one of the most important organizations in the American Civil Rights movement, helping to organize sit-ins, freedom rides, the March on Washington and voter registration drives all across the South.

# As Chairman of the SNCC, John Lewis organized voter registration drives and marches



John Lewis, second from left in front row, singing protest songs in front of the Nashville police station with fellow SNCC members, including Diane Nash, center



In March 1965, after a black protester was murdered by the police in Selma, Alabama, John Lewis organized a peaceful march of 600 people



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# The day of that first march in Selma became known as “Bloody Sunday”



Alabama State Troopers use tear gas to break up the voting march at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, March 7, 1965

John Lewis was one of 58 people injured that day, his skull fractured by a police baton



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Just two weeks later, with the world's attention focused on the violence in Alabama, John Lewis and Martin Luther King, Jr. led 25,000 people on a peaceful march from Selma to Montgomery



The frontline of the third Selma Civil Rights March on March 21, 1965  
John Lewis, far left, with Martin Luther King, Jr., center



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The courage and determination of John Lewis and other Civil Rights activists paid off later that year when the Voting Rights Act became law

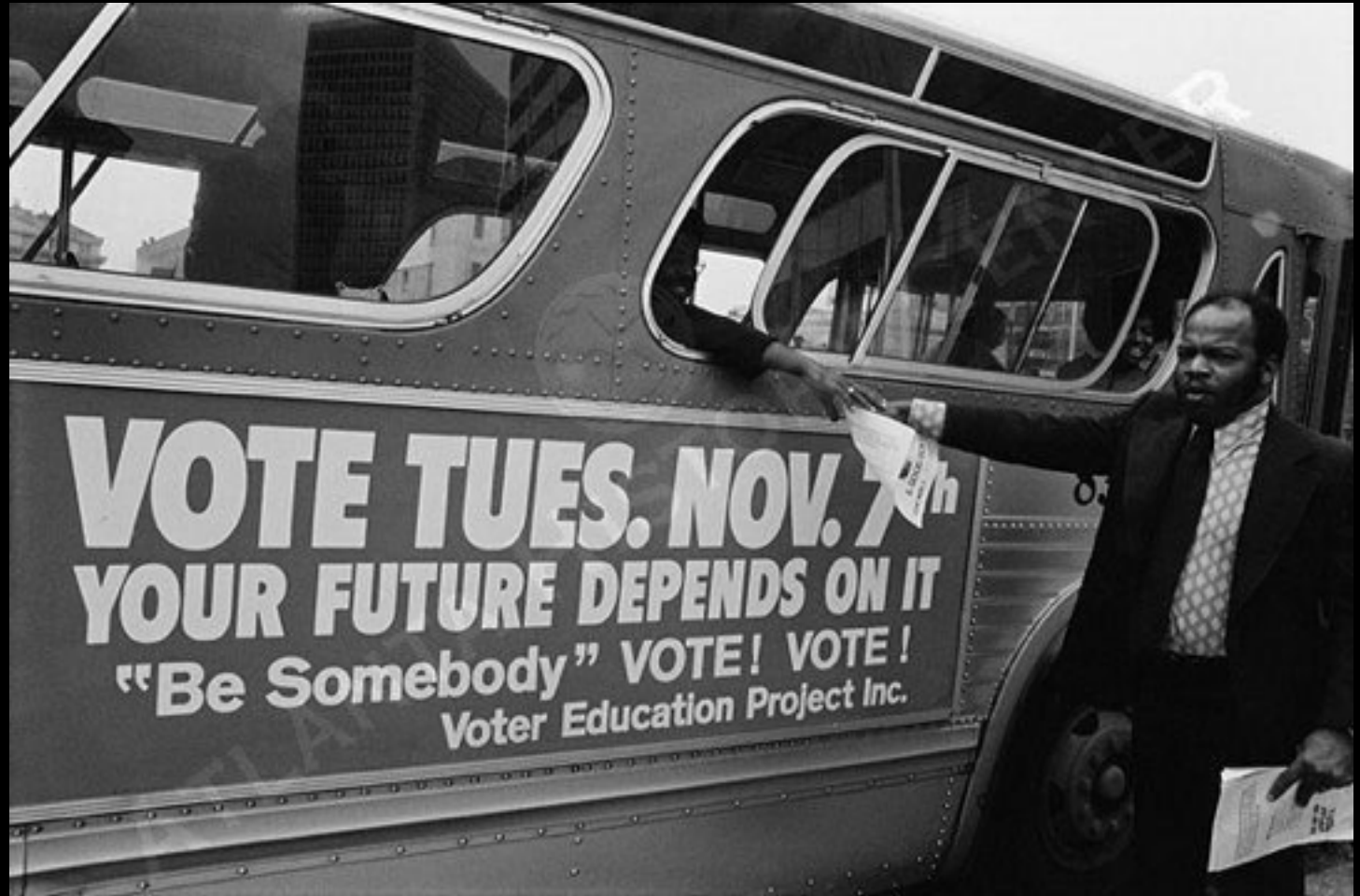


President Johnson greets Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks at the signing of the Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965





In the late 1960s, John Lewis became director of the Voter Education Project, helping to register over 4 million new voters





In 1977, John Lewis was appointed by President Carter to lead ACTION, a federal agency directing over 250,000 volunteers



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In 1986, after serving on the Atlanta City Council for five years, John Lewis was elected to the United States Congress



On February 15, 2010, Congressman Lewis received the Medal of Freedom from President Obama



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Congressman John Lewis is still in the U.S. Congress, and is considered the elder statesman for the Civil Rights Movement



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