

LAUNCH TEXT | INFORMATIVE MODEL

This selection is an example of an **informative text**, a type of writing in which the author examines concepts through the careful selection, organization, and analysis of information. This is the type of writing you will develop in the Performance-Based Assessment at the end of the unit.

As you read, think about how the writer describes events. Mark the text to help you answer this question: How does the writer help the reader understand the importance of these events?

1963:

The Year That Changed Everything

^ During the Children's Crusade of May 1963, police turned fire hoses on young civil rights protesters, including this girl who was knocked to the ground by the force of the water.

NOTES

- 1 **I**n 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution ended slavery. Nearly a century later, African Americans continued to struggle for equality under the law. A number of major events in this dramatic battle took place in 1963.
- 2 In April of that year—from behind the bars of a jail cell in Birmingham, Alabama—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote a message that would inspire countless others. King had been arrested for breaking a law banning public protest. His message, the famous “Letter From Birmingham Jail,” defends nonviolent resistance to injustice. “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” King wrote. He added, “Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”
- 3 In early May, the young people of Birmingham took King’s message to heart. Disobeying a court order, more than 1,000 African American students marched from the 16th Street Baptist Church. The next day, the students marched through Kelly Ingram Park. They were met by an angry white mob as well as police who blasted

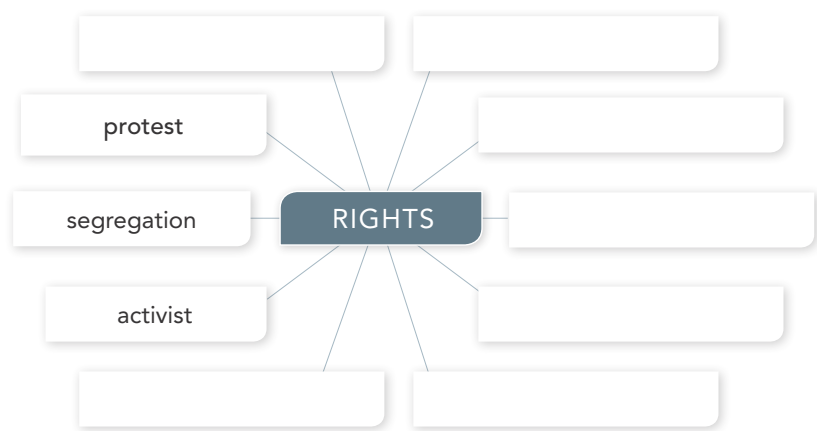
them with water from fire hoses and terrified them with dogs. The teenagers were jailed in temporary cells at the county fairgrounds. On the seventh day of the Children’s Crusade, city officials agreed to negotiate with the African American community. A few days later, the two sides reached an agreement to end local segregation.

- 4 News of the Children’s Crusade spread in the media, helping to transform the way Americans saw the civil rights movement. The *New York Times* ran more stories about civil rights in the two weeks after the Children’s Crusade than it had in the previous two years combined. Scenes of children under attack were filmed and broadcast all over the world, setting off a global outcry. Polls showed that Americans across the land believed racial justice was the nation’s biggest problem.
- 5 The struggle for civil rights continued to be marked by violence. On May 28, 1963, four African American college students in Jackson, Mississippi, were assaulted for sitting at a segregated lunch counter. Two weeks later, on June 12, an assassin killed civil rights activist Medgar Evers outside his home in Jackson.
- 6 That summer brought a landmark event in civil rights history. This was the March for Jobs and Freedom that took place in Washington, D.C., on August 28. Under the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. King delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech to a crowd of 200,000 people from all walks of life. The peace and hope of that event did not last long. On September 15, a bomb exploded inside Birmingham’s 16th Street Baptist Church. The attack killed four little African American girls and injured twenty-two other people.
- 7 The struggle continued throughout 1963. The Southern Regional Council has records of protests that took place in more than 100 southern towns. Approximately 20,000 demonstrators were arrested. With words and actions, they delivered a demand for justice that could not be ignored.

NOTES

WORD NETWORK FOR LITERATURE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Vocabulary A Word Network is a collection of words related to a topic. As you read the selections in this unit, identify interesting words related to the idea of civil rights and add them to your Word Network. For example, you might begin by adding words from the Launch Text such as *protest*, *segregation*, and *activist*. Continue to add words as you complete this unit.



Tool Kit
Word Network Model