

## The Freedom Rides

In 1961, a group of civil rights activists known as the Freedom Riders set out to test the enforcement of Supreme Court decisions that declared segregation in interstate bus travel unconstitutional. These riders, both Black and white, traveled by bus through the Deep South to challenge local laws and customs that still enforced segregation in bus stations, waiting rooms, and restrooms.



The Freedom Riders encountered violent resistance almost immediately. In Alabama, one of the buses was firebombed by a white mob. Riders on another bus were brutally beaten. Despite these attacks, the Riders remained committed to nonviolent protest and refused to be intimidated. Their courage drew national attention to the continued defiance of federal desegregation laws in the South and pressured the federal government to take stronger action to protect civil rights.

### Multiple-Choice Questions

1. What was the main goal of the Freedom Rides?
  - A. To recruit new civil rights leaders
  - B. To support voter registration in the South
  - C. To test enforcement of desegregation in interstate travel
  - D. To end school segregation
2. What happened to one of the buses in Alabama?
  - A. It was delayed by heavy rain
  - B. It was escorted safely through the city
  - C. It was firebombed by a mob
  - D. It broke down and had to turn back
3. How did the Freedom Riders respond to the violence?
  - A. They canceled the rest of their trip
  - B. They began to carry weapons
  - C. They responded with more protests
  - D. They remained nonviolent and continued
4. What effect did the Freedom Rides have on the national level?
  - A. They were mostly ignored by the media
  - B. They helped encourage more violence
  - C. They brought attention to violations of federal law
  - D. They discouraged others from joining the movement

### Short Answer Questions

5. Why did the Freedom Riders include both Black and white participants?
6. How did the Freedom Riders influence the actions of the federal government?