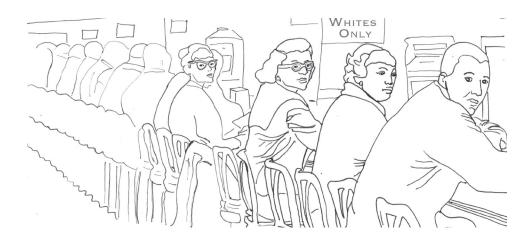# Protesting Peacefully

John Lewis was a leader who fought for equal rights alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. John led many protests against racist laws. A protest is when people get together to show they are upset.

John felt that it was best to protest in a peaceful way. This is called a peaceful protest. A sit-in is one way to protest peacefully. You do this by sitting in one place and not moving. John led many sit-ins. Most of the sit-in protesters were black. They would sit down in places marked "whites-only" and would not move. Sit-ins lasted for hours and, sometimes, for days.

John remembers his first protest. Together with a group of protesters, he went into a "whites-only" restaurant and sat down at the counter. Even though they were told things like "We don't serve your kind here," they did not leave.

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Most sit-ins ended when police were called. The police had to drag the protesters away. The protesters didn't fight with the police, but let the police carry them like dolls.

A boycott is another type of peaceful protest. A boycott is when you stop buying or using something. A very famous boycott took place in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955.

The boycott was started after Rosa Parks was arrested for sitting in the front of a public bus. In those days, the front of the bus was for "whites-only." This rule was racist as well as unfair to black people, who paid the same fare as white people.

The black community of Montgomery was angry that Rosa was arrested. The people were fed up with racist laws and unfair rules. To protest, the black community boycotted the bus company. This meant that they didn't buy tickets or ride the bus. Their boycott lasted for a whole year. The bus company lost money. There were not enough people buying tickets.

The boycott showed the company that it needed its black customers to stay in business. It showed the company that it had to treat all its customers equally. The boycott got the bus company to change its rules.

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