

Activity: Understanding Peaceful Protest



**Suggested Levels:** D B J C S A

**Objective:** Learn about and discuss participation in a peaceful protest like a sit-in, march or walk-out.

**Leader Prep:** Use one or more of the suggested texts to learn about peaceful protests like marches and sit-ins. What have these experiences done to accomplish real change? What are the dangers associated with these experiences?

**Supplies:**

- Chalkboard, whiteboard or easel paper + writing utensil
- Scrap paper and pencils
- Hard copies of your chosen text

**Ways to Include Supporters:**

- Ask if any supporters have been involved in local protests. What did they accomplish? What were the consequences?
- Invite a protest participant to come and speak with you about their experience

1. Start this activity with a discussion about protests. What are some of the protests that have happened in the United States, as well as around the world? Consider remarkable demonstrations like: the March for Our Lives in 2018, the Women’s March in 2017, the March on Washington in 1963, the Woman Suffrage Procession of 1913, the Greensboro sit-ins of 1960, or the Women’s Day Off Strike in 1975 Iceland. Alternatively, you may use one of the suggested texts to answer the questions in Step 2.
2. Choose one demonstration to focus on and answer the following questions on scratch paper or discuss them: 1) Did the protest raise public awareness about the issue it addressed? 2) Did the protest gain attention in the media? 3) Did the protest lead to the introduction of a bill or policy in government? 4) Did the protest create or change a policy or law? 5) What is the status of the issue right now?
3. Based on the answers to your questions, do you think that the protest was successful or unsuccessful?
4. Next, discuss some of the consequences of a protest. Read about the right to peaceful assembly in the U.S. Constitution, and discuss the role of law enforcement during demonstrations. Use research on the internet or in books to understand the consequences that may be associated with protests, including temporary imprisonment, disassembly tactics, and other factors.
5. Lastly, decide as a group whether your issue is something that would benefit from a peaceful protest. If you decide that it is something you’d like to pursue, move on to the next activity. If not, decide on one of the many other ways in this guide that can be valuable to raise awareness about your cause.

Demonstrations: Suggested Reading	
<b>DAISY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Let the Children March</i> by Monica Clark-Robinson</li> <li>• <i>The Youngest Marcher</i> by Cynthia Levinson</li> </ul>
<b>BROWNIE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>If You Lived When Women Won Their Rights</i> by Anne Kamma</li> <li>• <i>Who Was Rosa Parks?</i> By Yona Zeldis McDonough</li> </ul>
<b>JUNIOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>You Wouldn’t Want to be a Suffragist</i> by Fiona MacDonald</li> <li>• <i>Kids on Strike!</i> By Susan Campbell Bartoletti</li> </ul>
<b>CADETTE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sit-In and Stand Out with Elizabeth Johnson-Rice</i> by Habibah Quddus</li> <li>• <i>Glimmer of Hope</i> by the Founders of the March for Our Lives</li> </ul>
<b>SENIOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In Praise of Difficult Women</i> by Karen Karbo</li> <li>• <i>Lunch Counter Sit-Ins</i> by Danielle Smith-Llera</li> </ul>
<b>AMBASSADOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Seventeen Special Issue: March for Our Lives</i> Edited by Hearst Specials</li> <li>• <i>We Rise to Resist</i> by Paula vW. Dáil</li> </ul>