



Name:



Date:

The 1968 Sanitation Workers' Strike that Drew MLK - Answer Key

([Source](#))

Instructions: Read the website resource and complete the video guided practice.

- 1) On February 12, 1968, 1,300 Black **sanitation** workers in Memphis began a strike to demand better working conditions and higher pay.
- 2) The **strike** drew Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Memphis, Tennessee, which was the setting for his "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech and his assassination.
- 3) The city of Memphis expected **garbage** collectors to work long hours for meager wages and without overtime pay.
- 4) A couple of weeks before the strike, workers' dissatisfaction reached new heights when two men, Echol Cole and Robert Walker, were **killed** while on the job.
- 5) When the city then refused to provide **compensation** to the deceased workers' families, workers walked off the job in disgust.
- 6) According to the King Institute at Stanford, the strike kicked off successfully with a several-hundred-person **sit-in**, which led the city council to acknowledge the sanitation workers' union and support raises.
- 7) The mayor, however, refused these concessions, and, on February 23, 1968, police confronted peaceful protesters with **tear gas**.
- 8) Memphis' Black leaders formed a **coalition** to support the strike and invited Dr. King to come and lend his voice to the struggle.
- 9) This cause was well **aligned** to King's priorities at the time.
- 10) Dr. King gave a speech to a 25,000-person crowd in **Memphis** on March 18, 1968.
- 11) On March 28, 1968, King returned to Memphis to lead a **march** in support of the strike.



- 12) The protest turned ugly when an outside group became **violent**.
- 13) In response, protesters marched wearing “I Am A **Man**” sandwich boards, demanding that they be treated with dignity.
- 14) On April 3, King returned to Memphis and delivered his **last** speech, “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop.”
- 15) On April 4, **1968**, King was fatally shot at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis.
- 16) In Memphis, the sanitation workers’ struggle continued, with the added support of King’s widow, Coretta Scott King.
- 17) A few days after King’s assassination, Mrs. **King** and other leaders returned to Memphis’ streets to support the workers.
- 18) On April 16, 1968, the city agreed to grant **raises** to African American employees and recognize the workers' union.