

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Primary Source: Leon's Story

**Directions:** Leon Tillage was born in North Carolina in 1936, the son of a sharecropper. His life story mirrors that of thousands of African Americans throughout the state and the region during the turbulent times of the civil rights era. Below is an excerpt from a book of his recollections, entitled *Leon's Story*. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

There was a five-and-dime. They had twinkling things, like women's earrings and stuff like that, belts for men and tiepins. But they had a long counter that went from one end to the other end, and they would have places for the white people to sit and eat at the counter and then they had a long rope, and hanging from the rope were these little signs that said WHITE ONLY. Well, we couldn't understand why they would do that because no black person would try to sit on the stools, no way. But when it was hot out, I used to walk on the other side of the rope real slowly, and I would look for a young (white) man about my age. And I would look at him and smile, and if he looked back at me and smiled, I would whisper, "Buy me a soda." He would get up and stand beside the rope and I handed him the money, and when he came back he gave me the soda and I thanked him and got out of the store as fast as I could, because if I got caught drinking that soda in the store I would be in trouble. My mother and them, they used to think we was crazy-like, you know, they didn't understand why we would try to buck the system. They stayed in their place, and that's why they got along good. But for us it was bucking the system, it was a dare. I mean, you could buy a soda anywhere; out on the streets they had pushcarts, but it wasn't like the soda that you could get from where you weren't supposed to get it. The soda didn't taste no different from any other soda, it was just where you got it from.

Excerpt is from: Tillage, Leon Walter. *Leon's Story*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux: New York, 1997.

1. Leon said his mother and others "stayed in their place." Why do you think young people like Leon were more likely to "buck the system"? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What Supreme Court case (discussed in Chapter Thirteen) said that the "separate but equal" facilities throughout the South were unconstitutional? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do you think Leon risked getting into trouble for a soda in the five-and-dime store that he could have easily gotten any other place? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## Civil Rights in North Carolina: Greensboro Sit-Ins

February 1, 1960, was a very important date in North Carolina history as well as civil rights history. On that date, four African American students at North Carolina A&T University in Greensboro decided to protest the fact that they could not be served at the Woolworth's store lunch counter alongside white customers. The men decided to "sit in" until they were served. They were refused service on that day, and the next day, and the next. However, they gained nationwide media exposure and began a trend of "sit-ins" that were seen countless places throughout the South and the nation as a whole. After six months of protest, the Woolworth's lunch counter, along with every other lunch counter in the country, was ordered to integrate and allow people of all races to order food alongside one another.

**Directions:** Access an excellent article from the *Tar Heel Junior Historian* magazine through the North Carolina Museum of History's web site at [www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/collateral/articles/f04.story.greensboro.sitins.pdf](http://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/collateral/articles/f04.story.greensboro.sitins.pdf). Read the article and answer the questions below.

1. Who had the young men come to hear give a speech in Greensboro? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What school did the "Greensboro Four" attend? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What were their names? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How many protesters came back with them on the second day? The third day? The fourth day? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How long did the protests last? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the final outcome of the sit-ins? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What two key laws were passed under the Johnson Administration in 1964 and 1965?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_