

TAKING SIDES



LEVEL: high school
SUBJECT: social studies
TIME: 15 minutes

What is leverage? A good idea? Money? Organization? All these things (and more) are considered leverage. Leverage is something that we all have. No matter how seemingly powerless we are, we have the power to change the lives of many people.

Ask students if they recognize the names listed below; then tell them about these people's accomplishments.

1. Margaret Knight (1869): She changed lunchtime and grocery shopping.
2. Whitcomb Judson (1896): Only Levi's held out.
3. Chester Carlson (1938): Teachers live by his invention.
4. Linda Brown (1954): Her leverage was close to home.
5. Jane Addams (1880s): A small inheritance and big determination.
6. Rosa Parks (1955): Most important bus ride ever.
7. Charles Richard Drew (1940s): Leverage was in his blood.

TAKING SIDES—NOTES

1. She invented the flat-bottomed paper bag and dozens of other items, for which she earned very little. This grade school dropout had an estate of only \$275.
2. He invented the zipper.
3. In the back room of his mother's beauty parlor, he invented dry (Xerox) copying. His first machine is in the Smithsonian Institution.
4. Linda Brown of Topeka, Kansas, was denied admittance to an elementary school three blocks from her home because of her race. Her family's lawsuit (Brown vs. the Board of Education) finally put an end to legal segregation in schools.
5. With her Hull House, she improved life for hundreds of immigrants and changed Chicago politics. She won public office before she could vote.
6. When Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white passenger, she was arrested and found guilty of breaking a Montgomery, Ala., city ordinance. Her act sparked a year-long boycott of city buses until the Supreme Court declared bus segregation illegal.
7. Dr. Drew found a safe way to process and store blood plasma for a longer period of time. He was in charge of shipping tens of thousands of pints of blood to Britain during World War II, which saved many British and American lives in the European theatre.

LEVERAGE