**The Children’s March – Student Handout**

**Guiding Question:** Were the Birmingham civil rights leaders justified in using children to march in protest against discrimination?

**Overview of the activity:** With a partner you will be presenting both sides of the argument to the question above. Your teacher will provide you with reading material help you make a case for both pro and con arguments.

**Directions:**

**Step 1:** Read the handout your teacher gives you. Re-read it and look for details to support your side of the argument – either **for** or **against** using children in the marches.

**Step 2:** Working with your partner, use the reading you received to create three-five points to support your side of the argument. The statements **MUST** come from the reading provided to you and your partner. You will have an opportunity to express how you feel at the end of the discussion.

**Step 3:** When the opposite side presents, write down some main ideas they discuss below.

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**Round 2: Switch Sides**

**Step 4:** Now think about the other side of the argument. With your partner, use the reading your teacher has just given you to write 3 – 5 reasons to support the opposite side of the argument.

**Step 5:** When the opposite side presents, write down some main ideas they discuss below.

**Step 6:** Small group discussion. You may decide for yourself now. Discuss with your group if you agree or disagree with the decision to use children in the protest marches. Try to find one or two ideas that your whole group can agree on and write them below:

Questioning Guide for Whole Group Discussion

1. *Should the Birmingham civil rights leaders used children in protest marches? Why or why not?*
2. *Why do you think James Bevel and Dr. Martin Luther King made the decision to recruit children in the protest marches?*
3. *Why do you think A. G. Gaston and Attorney General Robert Kennedy opposed the decision to recruit children in the protest marches?*
4. *Would you have participated in the Children’s March? Why or why not? If you had participated in the Children’s March, do you think you would have ever been tempted to not follow the ideals of non-violence?*
5. *How might you have reacted if you had experienced (a) yelled and made fun of, (b) hosed by fireman, (c) attacked by dogs, and/or (d) arrested and jailed?*
6. *How might the outcome have been different if the marchers had not followed the principles of the non-violent movement?*