**Article of the Week (AoW) Directions**

1. Mark your confusion – either highlighting or underlining.

2. Mark up the text. Annotate the article with comments, questions, inferences, etc. You can use a variety of sentences, phrases, and symbols to show your thinking.

3. Write a developed paragraph response to one of the prompts below.

**Five myths about Rosa Parks**

Source: Justin Taylor/Washington Post/February 3, 2016

Shortly after 5 p.m., on a cool Alabama evening 60 years ago, a 42-year-old woman clocked out from her job as a seamstress at the Montgomery Fair Department Store. Rosa Parks walked westward along Montgomery Street to Court Square to board the Cleveland Avenue bus to make the 5-mile, 15-minute trek back to her apartment at Cleveland Courts to cook supper for her husband, Raymond.

Encountering a standing-room-only bus and having been on her feet all day operating a huge steam press, Parks decided to cross the street and do some Christmas shopping at Lee's Cut Rate Drug while waiting for a less crowded bus. Around 6 p.m., as she boarded bus No. 2857 at the corner of Montgomery and Moulton streets, Parks was about to change the course of the 20th century.

Here are five myths about what happened that first evening of December in 1955.

**1. Rosa Parks sat in the whites-only section of the bus.**

Montgomery municipal buses each had 36 seats. The first 10 were reserved for whites only. The last 10 seats were theoretically reserved for blacks. The middle 16 seats were first-come, first-served, with the bus driver retaining the authority to rearrange seats so that whites could be given priority.

Parks was sitting in an aisle seat on the front row of this middle section. To her left, across the aisle, were two black women. To her right, in the window seat, was a black man.

**2. If Rosa Parks had not moved, a white passenger would not have had a place to sit.**

A few minutes later, when the bus reached the third stop in front of the Empire Theater, several white passengers boarded, and driver James E. Blake (1912-2002) noticed a white man standing near the front. He called out for the four black passengers in Parks' row to move to the back, where they would have to stand, as all of the seats were now taken.

They did not respond. Blake got out of his seat and instructed the four to move, saying, "Y'all better make it light on yourselves and let me have those seats." Three of the black passengers reluctantly proceeded to go and stand in the back of the bus. Parks, however, refused to get up, sliding from the aisle seat to the window seat, which would have allowed for the white passenger to sit in any of the three seats in her row.

The bus driver asked: "Are you going to stand up?" Parks looked him in the eye and responded with a quiet but resolute "No." She explained that she had gotten on board first, that she paid the same fare and that she wasn't sitting in the white section.

She didn't think it was fair that she had to stand for someone else to sit who arrived after her and that she was not violating the city ordinance. (She didn't complain how nonchivalrous it was that a supposed gentleman would make a woman stand so he could sit, or how irrational it was that he wouldn't even want to sit in the same row with her.)

"Well," Blake responded, "I'm going to have you arrested." Parks gave him the permission he did not request: "You may do that."

Blake called his supervisor, who advised him that after warning the passenger he had to exercise his power and put Parks off the bus. He then radioed the police, who sent officers F.B. Day and D.W. Mixon.

As they boarded the bus while several passengers exited through the rear, the officers debriefed with Blake and then proceeded to peacefully arrest Parks. "Why do you all push us around?" she asked the tired beat cops. Officer Day responded, "I don't know, but the law is the law and you're under arrest." They drove her in their squad car to the city jail, booked her, and held her in a dank and musty cell.

Parks' boss and friend, NAACP President E.D. Nixon, bailed her out that evening. (You can listen to Rosa Parks recount the events here, four months later, in April 1956.)

**3. This was Rosa Parks' first conflict with that bus driver.**

If Parks had been paying attention, she never would have gotten on the bus driven by the tall, blond, 43-year-old Blake. He had a reputation for spitting his tobacco juice, using derogatory language toward blacks (and black women in particular) and making black passengers pay their fare in the front of the bus but re-enter in the rear, only to pull away before they could get back on.

A dozen years earlier -- in November 1943 -- Blake had tried to make Parks exit and re-enter his bus through the crowded rear entrance after she had already boarded his bus in the front. Parks refused, so Blake grabbed her sleeve to push her off the bus. She intentionally dropped her purse and sat down in the white section to retrieve it. As she looked at Blake she warned him: "I will get off. ... You better not hit me."

For the next 12 years Parks intentionally avoided riding on Blake's bus, walking whenever she could, despite her chronic bursitis. But on Dec. 1, 1955, she absentmindedly boarded without noting that she was once again entering a bus driven by Blake. It proved to be a serendipitous mistake.

**4. Rosa Parks refused to stand up because she was tired.**

Parks sought to set the record straight: "People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I was at the end of a working day. ... No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in." She later said she couldn't have lived with herself if she had given in and stood up.

To attribute her action to fatigue would have pointed to weakness rather than to the source of her strength. She insisted that the power to love her enemies came from God: "God has always given me the strength to say what is right."

A faithful member of St. Paul AME in Montgomery, which she referred to as her "special living room," Parks taught Sunday School during the 9:30 morning hour and helped prepare the Lord's Supper during the 10:30 hour. Her faith and her family of faith were lifelines of support. "I had the strength of God and my ancestors."

**5. Rosa Parks was the first black woman to exercise civil disobedience on a Montgomery bus.**

Nearly nine months before Rosa Parks' famous arrest, 15-year-old Claudette Colvin was arrested on a Montgomery bus for refusing to yield her seat to a white passenger. She refused to move, began yelling about her constitutional rights and had to be physically removed from the bus by police officers.

Although Colvin's actions would not be the precipitating factor in the bus boycott, they did inspire Parks, who served as an activist and secretary with the Montgomery NAACP, which sought to challenge Jim Crow laws whenever they could. Colvin joined four other plaintiffs in the court case Browder vs. Gayle, challenging the constitutionality of the bus segregation ordinances of Montgomery.

When the Supreme Court upheld the ruling on Dec. 20, 1956, ordering Alabama to end racialized bus segregation, so ended the remarkable 381-day bus boycott by the black citizens of Montgomery, which had begun the Monday after Parks's arrest.

Why did Parks' actions spark the boycott when a similar action by Colvin did not? Several answers can be given, based upon their differences in age, deportment, reputation and demeanor.

According to James Farmer, founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, what set Parks apart was that she had an almost "biblical quality." "There was," he recalled, "a strange religious glow about Rosa -- a kind of humming Christian light."

When a Christian woman of her stature and humility was unjustly treated in that fashion, the leaders -- including a 26-year-old Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., whose own church was just a half-mile east of where Parks was arrested -- saw an opportunity and made their move.

"There comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression," King explained at the mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church on the first day of the boycott. "There comes a time, my friends, when people get tired of being plunged across the abyss of humiliation, where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair. There comes a time when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life's July and left standing amid the piercing chill of an alpine November. There comes a time."

Dec. 1, 1955 -- more than 60 years ago -- Rosa Parks determined that there did indeed come a time. And the rest, as they say, is history.

That creates enough of a security problem, but what about a fleet of robot cars? In order to take full advantage of their potential, they'd have to be constantly sending and receiving wireless signals. And at least in theory, a car that is fully automated and fully connected can be taken over by someone other

**Respond to one of the following prompts. Use the a separate sheet of paper.**

1. What new informational have you learned from this article? Explain.
2. Select a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph and respond to it.