

César Chávez Exercises

Comprehension

Complete the sentences. Use information from the reading.

1. Chávez became a full-time farm worker when _____
_____.
2. The Community Service Organization worked to _____
_____.
3. Chávez quit the Community Service Organization because _____
_____.
4. To find members for the new UFW, Chávez _____
_____.
5. In 1965, grape pickers went on strike because _____
_____.
6. In the 1960s, people stopped buying grapes and wine because _____
_____.
7. Chávez fasted in 1968 because _____
_____.
8. The UFW had problems in the 1990s because _____
_____.

Sequence

Work with a partner. Number the events in the correct order.

- _____ The United Farm Workers is founded.
- _____ Chávez works at the Community Service Organization.
- _____ Grape pickers go on strike.
- _____ Chávez fasts for 25 days.
- _____ Chávez plans to testify in an Arizona lawsuit.

Vocabulary

Look at these words from the reading. Put a check next to words that you know. Underline words that you don't know yet. Find the words in the reading. Try to guess their meanings.

boycott
commitment

dispute
fast

migrant
momentum

posthumous
strike

Check the correct meaning for each word.

1. commitment

- _____ a. belief
- _____ b. happiness
- _____ c. suspicion

2. migrant

- _____ a. hard-working
- _____ b. traveling around
- _____ c. living in one place

3. dispute

- _____ a. disagreement
- _____ b. meeting
- _____ c. silence

4. fast

- _____ a. to refuse to speak
- _____ b. to refuse to sleep
- _____ c. to refuse to eat

5. strike

- _____ a. refusing to buy
- _____ b. refusing to work
- _____ c. refusing to talk

6. boycott

- _____ a. to refuse to buy
- _____ b. to refuse to work
- _____ c. to refuse to talk to

7. momentum

- _____ a. energy
- _____ b. money
- _____ c. supplies

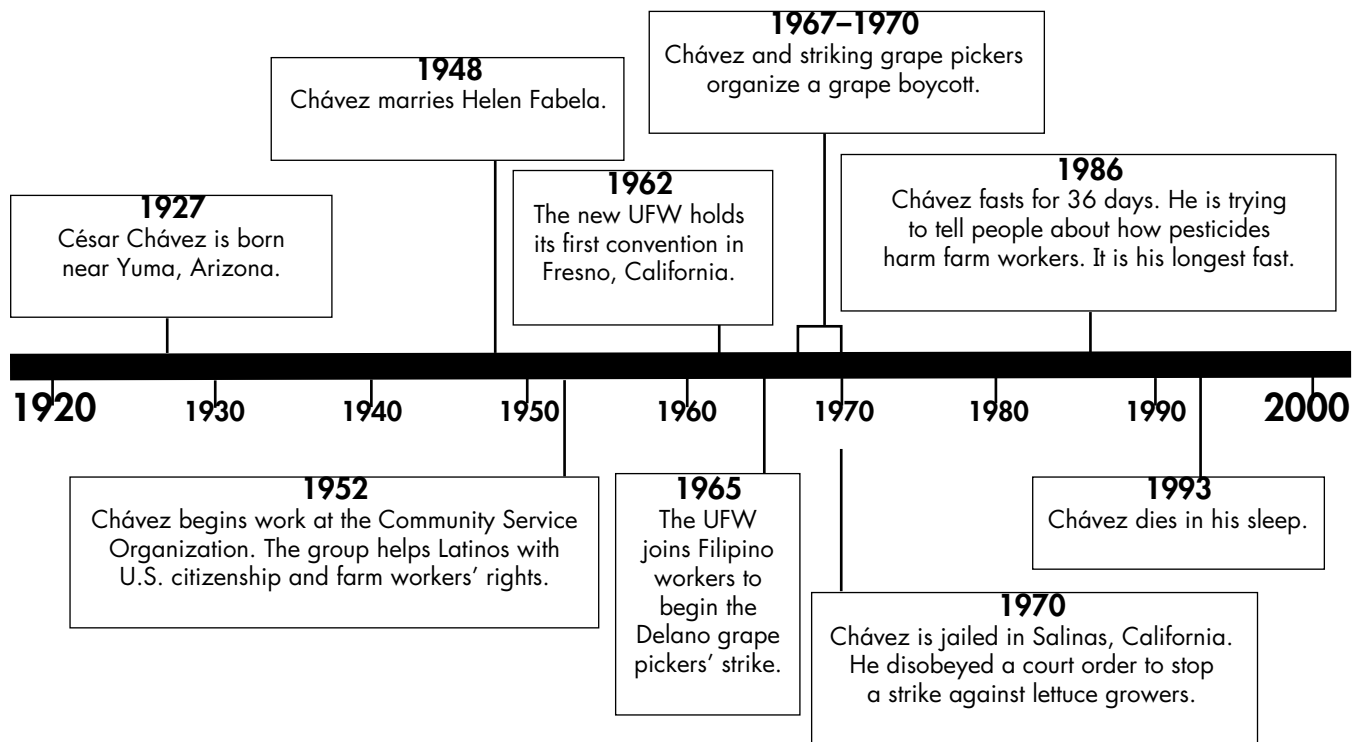
8. posthumous

- _____ a. unfair
- _____ b. late
- _____ c. given after death

Reading a Time Line

A time line shows dates and events in order on a line.

Life of César Chávez



Answer the questions. Use information from the time line.

1. In what year did Chávez join the Community Service Organization?

2. How did the Community Service Organization help Mexican Americans?

3. In what years did farm workers try to get people to support their strike by boycotting grapes?

4. In what year did Chávez fast for the longest time?

5. What was the reason that he fasted then?

6. In what year was Chávez jailed in Salinas, California?

7. Chávez led the UFW from its beginning until he died. For how many years did he lead the union?

Robert Kennedy
called César Chávez
“one of the heroic
figures of our time.”²

**Why did he say
that? Do you agree?
Why or why not?**

Connecting Today and Yesterday

1. What issues did farm workers face in the 1960s? What issues do they face today?
2. March 31, César Chávez’s birthday, is César Chávez Day in many parts of the United States. Why is there a holiday in his honor? Do you know how this holiday is celebrated?

Group Activities

1. Research the UFW strike that began in 1965. How did TV and newspapers report the story? Look for interviews with Chávez. Then tell your group about what Chávez said.
2. Bring in a picture of the UFW flag. Why was it an important symbol for Chávez and his union? Discuss in your group.

Class Discussion

1. How did early experiences influence Chávez’s attitudes and beliefs?
2. Why did Chávez’s family become migrant farm workers?
3. What did Chávez do to get support for the UFW?
4. How did TV influence people’s attitudes about the UFW strike in 1965? Was the TV coverage a benefit or a disadvantage for the farm workers?
5. What are Chávez’s most important contributions to U.S. society? Explain your opinion.

Reflections

1. What was the most interesting thing that you read in this lesson?
2. Can you use anything from César Chávez’s story in your own life? Explain.
3. How can you learn more about César Chávez or the UFW?

Adapted from *American Lives: Readings and Language Activities, Book 1* © 2005 New Readers Press, a Publishing Division of ProLiteracy. Used with permission.