

**BECAUSE
OF THEM
WE CAN**

BOX

JUST FOR KIDS

BECAUSE OF ELAINE BROWN

AGES 9-12



CHAIRWOMAN ON THE THRONE



Elaine Brown (born March 2, 1943) is an American prison activist, writer, and singer. She was also a Black Panther Party **chairwoman**.

Elaine grew up in Philadelphia. Her mother, Dorothy Clark, worked hard to provide for Elaine's private schooling, music lessons, and nice clothing. During her childhood, she studied classical piano and ballet for many years. She graduated from Philadelphia High School for Girls, a public school for young women, and she studied at Temple University for less than a semester. After **withdrawing** from Temple, Elaine moved to Los Angeles, California, to try being a professional songwriter. While in Los Angeles, Brown enrolled in the University of California Los Angeles in September 1968. She later went on to briefly attend Mills College and Southwestern University School of Law.

During her time in California, Elaine became involved with the **Black Liberation Movement**. She also became involved in politics and began working for the radical newspaper *Harambee*. Soon after, Elaine became the first representative of the Black Student **Alliance** to the Black Congress in California. In April 1968, after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., she attended her first meeting of the Los Angeles chapter of the Black Panther Party.

During her time with the Black Panther Party, Elaine helped to create the BPP's initial Free Busing to Prisons Program, Free Legal Aid Program, and the Free Breakfast for Children program in Los Angeles. It's said that the Free Breakfast for School Children program was one of the most impactful things that the Black Panther Party **innovated**.

GLOSSARY

Chairwoman: a woman chosen to preside over a meeting.

Withdrawing: to stop participating in something.

Black Liberation (Power) Movement: The Black Liberation/Power movement emphasized racial pride, economic empowerment, and the creation of political and cultural institutions for African-American people in the United States.

Alliance: a union between people, groups, countries, etc. : a relationship in which people agree to work together

Revolutionary: (1) Relating to, involving, or supporting a political revolution. (2) causing or relating to a great or complete change.

Innovated: to do something in a new way : to have new ideas about how something can be done.

Black Panther Party: The Black Panther Party (BPP), originally the **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense**, was a revolutionary political organization founded by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton in October 1966 in Oakland, California.

Political: of or relating to politics or government.

Solicit: to ask for (something, such as money or help) from people, companies, etc.

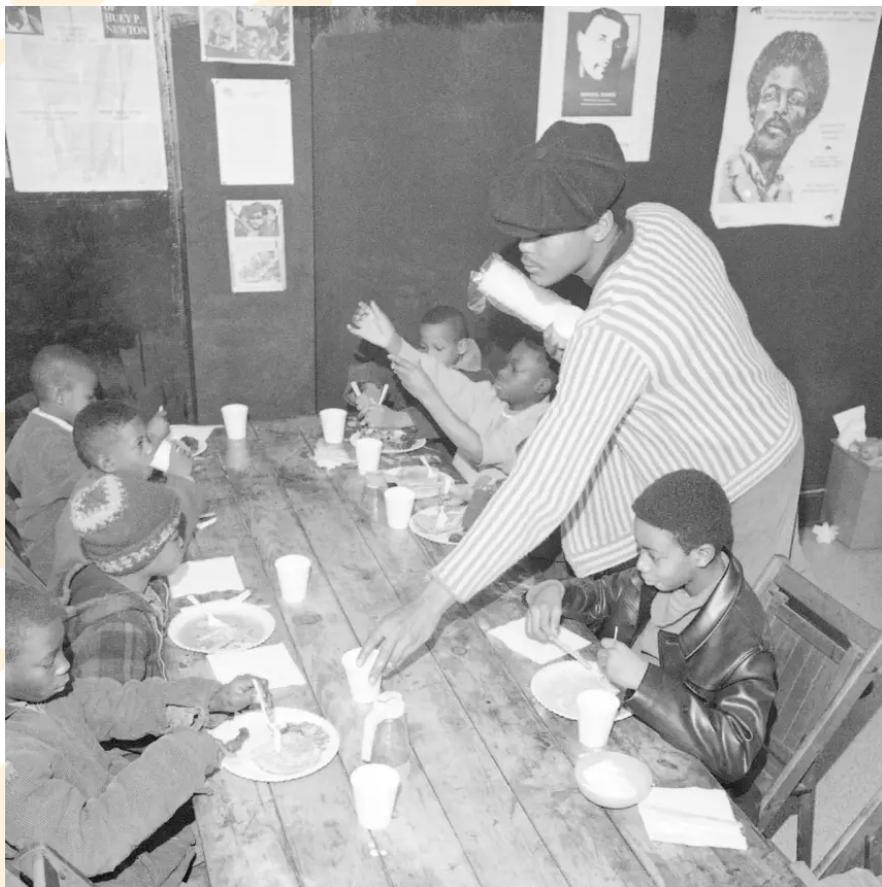
Nutritionist: a person whose job is to give advice on how food affects your health

Lectured: a talk or speech given to a group of people to teach them about a particular subject

Accustomed: familiar with something so that it seems normal or usual.

Subjugation: the action of bringing someone or something under domination or control.

BLACK PANTHERS' BREAKFAST PROGRAM



In 1969, a large group of children sat down to a free breakfast before school. There were many things on the menu that looked like our school lunches today: chocolate milk, eggs, bacon, cereal, fruit and more.

However, this breakfast wasn't served by a school cafeteria. Instead, breakfast was served thanks to the **Black Panther Party (BPP)**. The Black Panther Party was a **revolutionary political** organization founded by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton in October 1966 in Oakland, California. They had a message of black power and a commitment to ending police brutality and the **subjugation** of Black Americans. One of their most important contributions to The Civil Rights Movement was their BPP Breakfast Program.

"The children, many of whom had never eaten breakfast before the Panthers started their program," the Sun Reporter wrote, "think the

Panthers are 'groovy' and 'very nice' for doing this for them."

The Free Breakfast for School Children began in January 1969 at an Episcopal church in Oakland, and within weeks it went from feeding a handful of kids to hundreds. The program was simple: party members and volunteers went to local grocery stores to solicit donations, consulted with **nutritionists** on healthful breakfast options for children, and prepared and served for free!

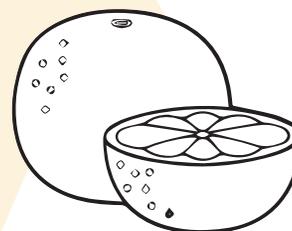
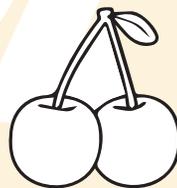
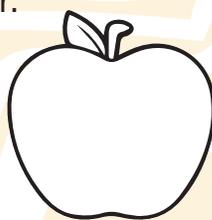
School officials immediately reported results in kids who had free breakfast before school. They stated that many students involved in the Free Breakfast for School Children program were more engaged in class and happier.

THE IMPACT OF BROWN AND BREAKFAST

Elaine Brown has continued to advocate for civil rights and African-American people. From 1995 to the present, she has **lectured** at more than forty colleges and universities, as well as numerous conferences.

The Free Breakfast for School Children was embraced by many Black Panther Party posts, nationwide, before the party shut down in 1982. At its peak, the Black Panther Party fed thousands of children per day in at least 45 programs.

BPP's breakfast programs put pressure on political leaders to feed children before school. The result of thousands of American children becoming **accustomed** to free breakfast was that the government was pushed to expand its own school food programs.



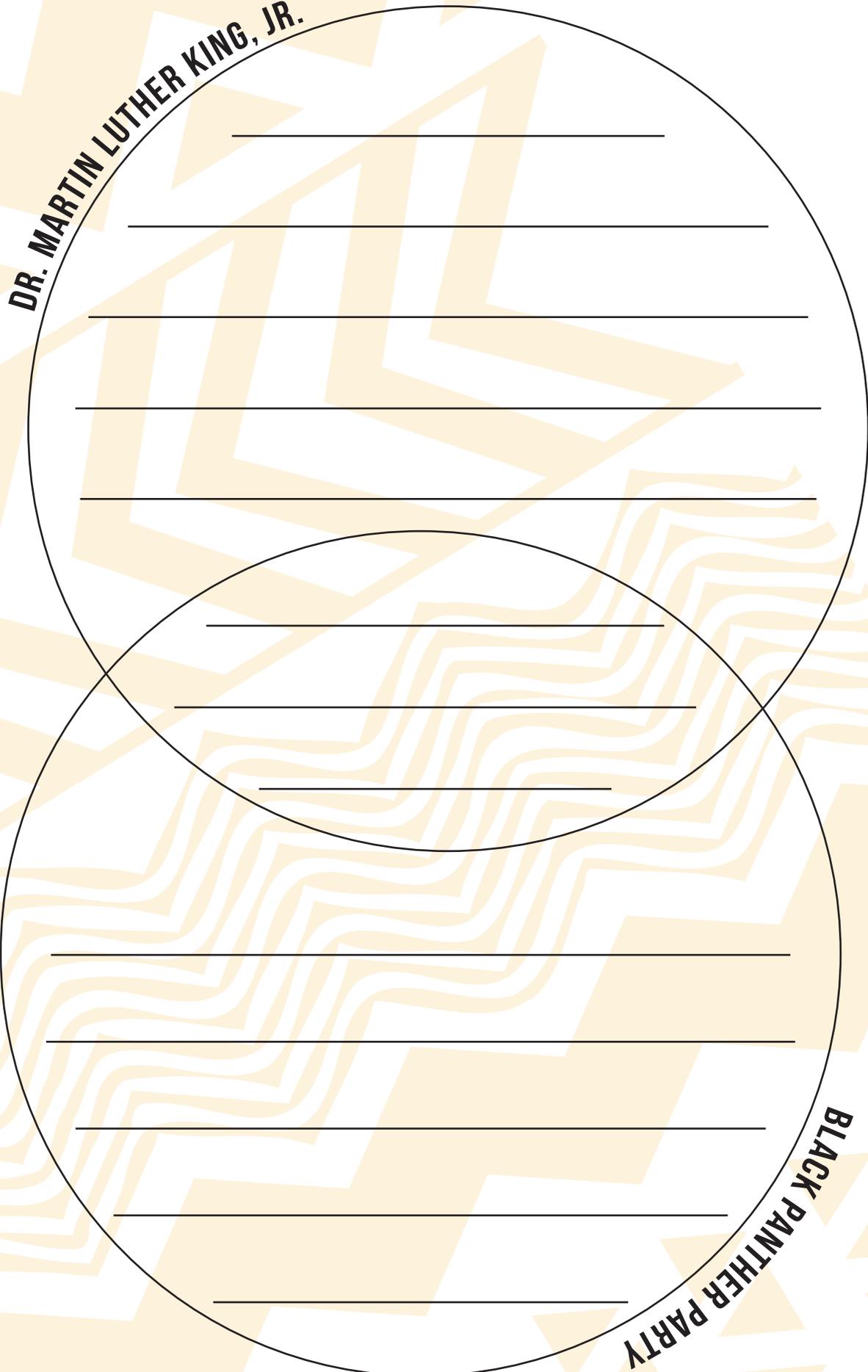


COMPARE THE REVOLUTION

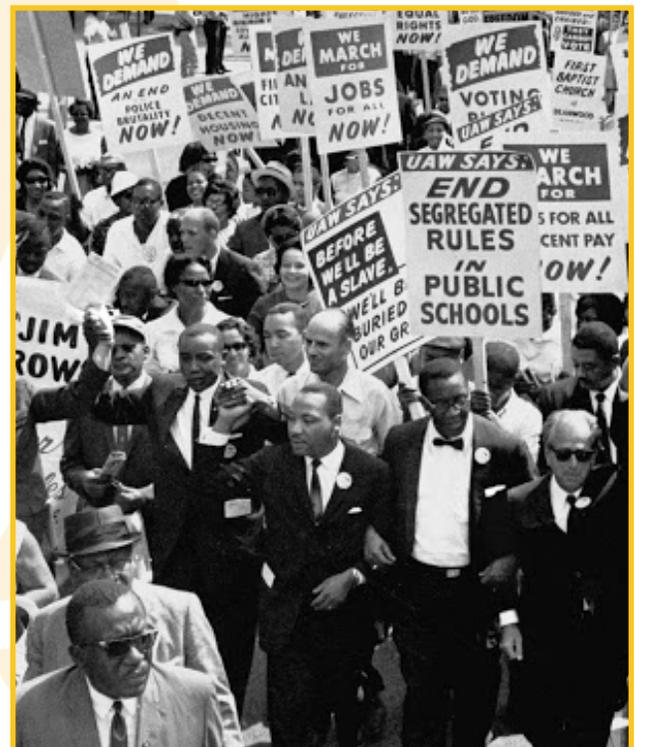
DIRECTIONS: In our last BOTWC box, we learned about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.! If this is your first box, we're sure you know a few things about MLK. If not, use your research skills before jumping into this task.

Below you'll find a picture of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s protest and The Free Breakfast For School Children Protest. Using the Venn Diagram below, compare the two moments using the images and prior knowledge!

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



BLACK PANTHER PARTY



MATH POWER



Directions: Read and answer each question.
Show your work!

There are 482 people in the Black Panther Party, during year two of operation, and there are two locations: Brooklyn and Oakland. Brooklyn has 15 men and 6 women. Oakland has 14 women and 10 men.



1. What fraction of the people are in the Oakland Black Panther Party?



2. What fraction of the Black Panther Party Members are men?

3. What fraction of the Black Panther Party is in Brooklyn?

ANSWERS: (1.) 24/482 (could be simplified to 12/24) (2.) 25/482 (3.) 21/482

TAKE THE PLEDGE

I WILL HONOR
THE SACRIFICES OF
MY ANCESTORS.

I WILL BELIEVE
IN ME.

I WILL PURSUE
MY DREAMS.

I WILL HELP
OTHERS ALONG
THE WAY.