

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY

DOLORES HUERTA AND THE DELANO GRAPE STRIKE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Instructions

Read the following Dolores Huerta biography. Pretend you are a reporter for a local newspaper and your editor has asked you to write an article on Dolores Huerta in honor of the anniversary of the Delano grape strike. Create a list of ten questions you would like to ask Huerta regarding the strike and her involvement. Then conduct research to find answers to your questions and write a newspaper article using your findings.

Dolores Huerta was born on April 10, 1930 in Dawson, New Mexico. After her parents divorced, she moved with her mother and siblings to Stockton, California, where her mother opened a hotel and restaurant. When migrant farmworkers in the region could not afford to rent a room, Huerta's mother usually let them stay at the hotel for free.

After graduating from college in 1952, Huerta began working as an elementary school teacher. While teaching the children of migrant farmworkers, Huerta became upset that many of her students did not have shoes or enough to eat. In 1955 she quit her job and opened the Stockton branch of the Community Service Organization (CSO), an organization that fought for the equal rights of farmworkers and helped pass laws that protected the workers. During this time, Huerta met César Chávez, another spokesperson for the rights of farmworkers.

In 1962 Huerta and Chávez left the CSO and formed the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). This group worked to organize a union to help farmworkers. In 1965 the NFWA organized the Delano Grape Strike in California. During the strike, Huerta worked out contracts between the businesses and workers that gave farmworkers health benefits and also made the businesses agree to stop using dangerous pesticides. Later, the NFWA merged with another group to form the United Farm Workers (UFW).

The UFW worked for higher wages and benefits for farmworkers who had lost their jobs. It also led boycotts against grape and lettuce growers. The boycotts received national support. As a result, Congress passed the Agricultural Labor Relations Act, which allowed farmworkers to join groups that fight for better wages and safer working conditions.

In 2023, Huerta continues to work for the rights of farmworkers. She gives speeches all over the world. Huerta works to improve the lives of women as well.

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