



# The Grape Workers Movement

Cesar Chavez was greatly influenced by contemporary leaders like Mohandas Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He believed that he could lead people to use the practices of peaceful non-violence to improve the lives of migrant farm workers by improving their working conditions. In 1962, he left his work at the Community Service Organization and started a union called the National Farm Workers Association.

1. What is a union?
2. What kinds of things do unions do?
3. Why did Chavez have trouble convincing people to join his union?

One of Cesar's first major actions organized by the National Farm Workers Association was to strike against grape farmers. The strike began in Delano, California. Cesar and sixty-seven other farm workers marched 340 miles to Sacramento, the state capital. The journey took several weeks, and more and more people joined them along the way. By the time they got to their destination, thousands of people had joined their protest. But the march was only the beginning. The union also organized a boycott of grapes. The fight lasted for five years, but in the end, the grape growers agreed to many of the things the workers were demanding and signed a contract with the union.

4. What is a strike?
5. What is a boycott?
6. Why do you think the grape workers movement was successful?