Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.
A clipping of a newspaper article describes a suit filed by several attorneys against the Memphis City Schools Board of Education. According to the suit, Memphis City Schools had been illegally operating a segregated school district on the basis of a theory of white supremacy in violation of the Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education*. 
A press release from the Memphis chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People dated December 17, 1961. The release details some progress in civil rights on the issues of voting and education made in 1961.
“We thought we would do something different, and that is start with first grade. In all the other places they started with high school. Our contention was that no, those white high schoolers are already tainted. First graders, no. Let's go with first grade.”

Sheila Malone (left) and Sharon Malone (right), twin sisters who were part of the Memphis 13. Photograph is by Ernest Withers, a Memphis-based photographer known for the images he captured of the Civil Rights Movement.
A group photograph picturing 12 of the Memphis 13.
Dwania Kyles (left) shows a drawing to Harry Williams (center) and Menelik Fombi, known as Michael Willis at the time (right). The three children together integrated Bruce Elementary School as part of the Memphis 13.
“I was scared. There was days I didn’t want to go, you know, but then, my mom was the backbone, you had to go. You need an education, so that’s one of the things she inspired us. You go get your education and you can be anything you want to be. So that’s what I did.”

“I can remember on one of those days you were asked so what do you want to be when you grow up. I knew what was acceptable to say, and I knew what would not be acceptable to say because I would be discouraged. Because at that time it was the entertainment business. You know, and it probably would have come out a movie star or something like that because I remember I was in elementary school and saying, ‘I will not say that and have them rip my dream apart.’ So I said ‘a nurse,’” cause I knew that was something I could probably (nods). Cause it’s very difficult being in a situation where you never get to see images of your self in a positive light.”

“And my first-grade teacher, she was so nice that you didn’t feel threatened. I didn’t feel scared or threatened or anything because she was so nice. It made you feel like you didn’t have nothing to worry about.”

“I used to hold my hand up all day to ask a question and they wouldn’t let me answer it. Like if I knew the answer. And at first she called on me, but then she stopped calling on me and I’d just be holding my hand up the whole day.”

An inside page of the Commercial Appeal from October 4, 1961, including articles about school integration and a photograph of white children being escorted away from Rozelle Elementary School by their mothers.
“Memphis is unique in the fact that we were babies...I wonder sometime what would have happened had they done it the other way. That could have been disastrous. I don’t know if there’s a perfect time to go through fire if you’re wearing a suit made of gasoline.”

“I knew that I was not equal. I felt that when I was a kid. That's the knowledge I gained.”

“I’m glad my mom chose for us to go to Gordon. I’m glad she did that. In fact I’m glad all 13 of us parents they stood up for that because why, why should our kids not have the same?”

“And it just made you think that why wasn’t it like this all the time? Why did have to be a Black school and a white school? It seem like it should have been like this all the time. It shouldn’t have had to take a lawsuit. I was glad I was one of the first 13. It did, to me, make you grow up to be a better person.”