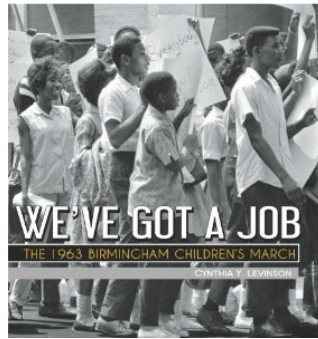


Overcoming Adversity: We've Got a Job: The 1963 Birmingham Children's March

*Book by Cynthia Levinson
Lesson Prepared by Sharon O'Neal
Texas State University
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Selected Grade 4 TEKS:

(10) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the difference between a stated and an implied purpose for an expository text.

(15) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text.

(17) Writing. Students write about their own experiences. Students are expected to write about important personal experiences.

(18) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

(A) create brief compositions that:

- (i) establish a central idea in a topic sentence;
- (ii) include supporting sentences with simple facts, details, and explanations; and
- (iii) contain a concluding statement;

Selected Research:

We know that students actively engaged in responding to literature through writing and discussion, not only have a better attitude and increased interest in reading but also outperform their peers on standardized tests (Swift, K., 1993; Trachtenburg, P., and A. Ferruggia, 1989).

Pressley (2000) reported that students whose background knowledge was tapped and built prior to reading and students who received explicit instruction at the word level as well as in comprehension strategies showed improved comprehension,

Comprehension, therefore, is not an automatic result of reading. Direct instruction is key to the development of comprehension (Sweet & Snow, 2003).

Before Reading/Activity #1

Ask if anyone knows what the word "determination" means. Write the word "determination" in the center of a word map drawn on a chart tablet. Without providing the students with a precise definition of this word, fill in part of the word map. Provide students examples of characters they know from books that were determined. Some examples of characters with determination might be:

Example #1: Our dog will not quit begging for food. She is *convinced* that she can have a snack while we have our dinner. (animal example)

Example #2: Maria *decided* that she did not care how hard she had to work. She was going to make all A's. (person example)

Example #3: In the story of the three pigs the wolf *made up his mind* that he was going to get that pig who lived in the brick house, even if he could not blow it down! (character/animal example)

The teacher might fill in one or two of these examples and see if the children can fill in additional examples.

Explain that the book we are going to share today is a book about children who were determined. They were determined to live in a city where people were treated fairly.

Before Reading/Activity #2

Show students cards with the following words:

Determined	Firm
Unwavering	Powerful
Powerless	Frail
Feeble	Cowardly
Courageous	

I want you to help me place these words into 2 groups. Some of these words are synonyms for "determined" (in other words, some of these words mean almost the same thing as "determined") and some of the words mean the opposite. They would be considered an antonym for "determined."

Let's see if you can help me.

Using a chart tablet and sticky notes, classify the words:

These words remind me of the word "determined"	These words remind me of the opposite of "determined"
Firm Unwavering Powerful Courageous	Powerless Frail Feeble Cowardly

As you place the words in the categories, have students help you determine a rational for placement.

Next hand the students envelopes and tell the students:

"In each of the envelopes you will find some cards with words on them. I want you to take out the words and put them into 2 groups. There is no one right answer, but you will have to tell why you placed the words in each category." Have a blank chart ready:

These words mean almost the same as "_____"	These words mean the opposite of "_____"

While there is no one right answer, the chart may emerge as follows:

These words remind me of "fair"	These words remind me of the opposite of "fair"
Fair Just Acceptable Reasonable OK	Unjust Unfair Unacceptable Unreasonable

Explain that you are going to share a true story. Say:

"This story is true and it was written down by a woman named Cynthia Levinson. Ms. Levinson is a friend of mine and she lives in Austin. She shared with me that she keeps a writers' notebook, just as I do. I do not have a photo of Cynthia's writers' notebook, but I have mine with me and I have a picture of another writer's notebook."

Ask if anyone in the room is a writer. If anyone says they are a writer, ask what they like to write. Do they write stories or do they just write about what happens each day, like in a diary or journal or do they write to answer questions or do they write when they are confused?

Explain that writers do all of those things. At this time show your own "writer's notebook" (WNB) to class. Share the artifacts and notes and writings that you have collected and placed in your notebook. Explain that a notebook can be a spiral or a journal or a large notebook with pockets. A WNB can even be kept on a computer.

Here I will show a photo of Jack Gantos's diary/notebook that he shared at the Texas Book Festival, 2011. Jack Gantos wrote the "Rotten Ralph" series as well as the "Joey Pigza" series." Some of these photos may be available on the web.

Explain that sometimes writers like to think about what words to use when they write. Just as we talked about words earlier, writers might keep such charts in their notebooks. I keep a list of words to use instead of the word "said." It helps me to remember to vary my word choice and make my writing more interesting to my readers.

Today we will be writers. We are going to read some excerpts from Ms. Levinson's book to give you an idea of what life may have been like for children your age and a little older in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963. Explain that life was different. Black and White people often shopped in different stores. They went to different hospitals. They played in different parks. They even drank water from different fountains.

Show the photograph on the cover of this book.

Have students take out paper and pen, play civil rights music softly in the background and have them write about what they see.

Provide 5 minutes for a quick write, 5 minutes to pair share and 5 minutes for 1 or 2 students to share with the entire group.

During Reading

Read Aloud the Prologue and if time permits, Chapter One.

If time is short consider this activity in place of reading Chapter One.

Next select 3 children to portray the children in this story. (see Attachment #1)

Have them wear nametags that show their names to the students.

After Reading/Activity #1

After the readers' theater is performed, ask students if they have any questions or thoughts about what happened in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963.

Ask if anyone would have had the courage that Audrey did to go to jail so that all of America would pay attention and change the laws?

Display the following quotes by Dr. Martin Luther King.

1. "There are those who write history. There are those who make history."
2. "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."
3. "The time is always right to do the right thing."

Place them on three chart tablets.

Read each one and ask students what they think each quote means. (If time is short, choose only one quote.)

Ask students to read the quote and share what they are thinking.
What does it mean to them?

If students are quiet, tell them what you think. (See italicized words for example words.) Keep it brief and as soon as a child wants to contribute, use sticky notes to post their words.

"There are those who write history. There are those who make history."

Audrey was a person who made history. She did something that took courage. Because of her action, laws changed in Alabama.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Audrey was not silent about things that mattered. Because of what she did, life was different for all people of color in Alabama.

"The time is always right to do the right thing."

It is not always easy to do the right thing. In fact, sometimes it is easier to do nothing. Audrey inspires me to have courage to do more for my friends, my family and my fellow men and women.

After Reading & Writing/Activity #2

Have the students reflect in their journals. If students want more direction, ask them to reflect on the questions that are posed below:

1. Have you ever been determined to achieve a goal?
How was your experience like Audrey's experience? How was your experience different??
2. Have you ever known a person who was determined?
Have you ever known a character in a book that was determined?
What was the goal that person or character wanted to achieve and how did he/she go about achieving it?

Ask students to try and end their reflection with a question of their own.

After Reading & Writing/Activity #3

Following the journal reflection, students will be asked to share (if they wish) their reflections and/or questions with the class.

Remind the students again that writers often keep such journals and writer's notebooks and reflect not only on what they read but also on the world around them. This is where they keep a record of their writing ideas. Here they jot down their ideas for future books and stories. These notebooks are not unlike the journals in which the students just jotted down their own reflections and questions.

Use the rubric in attachment #2 to evaluate

After Reading & Writing/Activity #4

Close with a poem by Langston Hughes. Provide each child with a copy. Ask if they want to place it in their writer's notebook?

Extension Activity

Chose another book about a person who overcame their problems to be successful and even help others. Some examples of appropriate titles might be:

A Girl Named Helen Keller by Margo Lundell, Illustrated by Irene Trivas

A Picture Book of Sojourner Truth by David A. Adler, Illustrated by
Gershom Griffith

Do a comparative analysis using a Venn Diagram of interlocking circles or another comparison map. Following the completion of this map, have students meet in pairs to discuss their maps. They may wish to share their comparative analyses with the class.

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Attachment #1

1st Speaker

Narrator

Dr. Martin Luther King knew something had to change if segregation was to end.

He asked his people to conduct peaceful demonstrations. He asked Black people to sit at lunch counters and not to move even if they were told to leave. He asked them to ride buses and sit in the seats designated for white passengers. He knew they would go to jail. He wanted to fill the jails to overflowing so that the people had to pay attention and change the laws that kept Blacks and Whites separate.

If the parents marched peacefully in protest, they might lose their jobs.

But if the children marched and filled the jails, the parents could keep their jobs.

He thought a long time, but finally he asked the children to march from the 6th Street Baptist Church in downtown Birmingham, Alabama to the mayor's office to ask for an end to segregation. And that is what they did.

2nd Speaker

Audrey

My name is Audrey Faye Hendricks. It is May 2, 1963. I am 9 years old and I woke up with freedom on my mind. But before I can be free there is something important I have to do.

I told my mother, "I want to go to jail."

My mother and father thought it was a good idea. They helped me get ready. My father bought me a new game to entertain me if I got bored in jail.

My mother took me to my school, the Center Street Elementary School to tell my teacher, Mrs. Wills, that I would be absent.

Mrs. Wills cried, but I knew she was proud of me.

Today I am going to walk from my church to the mayor's office along with 1000 other children and teenagers to ask him to end having different schools and parks and stores for Black people.

I am a little scared.

3rd Speaker

Narrator

During the march all of the children were arrested and put in jail. Audrey was there for one week. Everyone in America heard about the brave children. Eventually, laws were changed and Audrey got to go to restaurants and parks and theaters she had never been to before.

Attachment #2

Rubric for Response to a Literary Work

IDEAS/ CONTENT	• States a compelling central idea that demonstrates an insightful understanding of a literary work	• States a central idea that demonstrates an understanding of a literary work	• Weak central idea that demonstrates a limited understanding of a literary work	Lacks central idea and/or demonstrates little to no understanding of a literary work
VOICE	• Writer's voice adds interest to the message	• Writer's voice is appropriate to the audience and purpose	• Writer's voice is mechanical and/or repetitive (e.g., series of facts/ideas)	• No sense of voice, purpose and/or audience

Adapted from San Diego Unified School District by S. O'Neal - Texas State University - so10@txstate.edu

Dreams

By Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.