

Let the Children March

Written by Monica Clark-Robinson; illustrated by Frank Morrison

This historical fiction text highlights the 1963 Children’s Crusade of Birmingham, Alabama, told from the perspective of a young girl who wanted to be part of the movement after hearing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak.

Possible Strategies for Instruction

Comprehension

- Set purpose for reading.
 - January 15: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday
 - February: Black History Month—The month designated to remember the contributions of people of the African diaspora; [Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action](#) (first week of February)—An action week centered on affirming the lives of Black students, teachers, and families through lessons about structural racism, intersectional Black identities, Black history, and anti-racist movements.
 - April: Celebrate Diversity Month—A monthlong opportunity to recognize and honor the diversity surrounding us all.
 - May 21: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development—A day set aside by the United Nations to deepen our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to learn together in harmony.

- Determine and analyze author’s purpose and support with text.
 - When readers identify why the author wrote a text and use specific examples from the text to support their inference, it prepares them for reading and deepens their comprehension.
 - During a conferring session, you might ask students the following:
 - Infer why you think the author wrote this text.
 - What clues helped you determine the author’s purpose for writing this text?

- Analyze how visual elements integrate and contribute to the meaning of text.
 - Readers interact with and respond to a text’s drawings and photos, which are an integral part of conveying meaning, tone, beauty, and understanding.
 - Conduct a picture walk before reading the text.
 - What is the purpose of the pictures in this story?
 - Based on the illustrations, what might the tone of the writing be?
 - Writing about reading
 - Draw and write to show how a text is organized: time order, or established sequences such as numbers, time of day, days of the week, or seasons.
 - Notice and make note of significant information from illustrations.
 - Write about the details found in illustrations.

Expand Vocabulary

- Tune in to interesting words.
 - You can pre-teach vocabulary to identified learners in various ways that highlight student engagement. This could include role playing, using gestures, showing real objects, pointing to pictures, drawing a picture, or using your students' native language as a tool to enhance vocabulary development.
 - A few words from the text to consider: *peaceful, protesters, freedom, march, burden, frightened, canine, courage, disperse, reassured, fierce, revolution, desegregation*

Writing

- The narrator is an unnamed girl, sharing her experiences from her point of view in 1963. She learned how effective the Children's Crusade was based on the outcomes and changes in her community. Write her a letter to share additional changes in our society promoting diverse unification that have happened since the march in 1963. What would you want her to know about today's America?

Additional Resources

- [“The Birmingham Children’s Crusade \(May 1963\)” \[Children’s Edition\]](#)
 - Detailed information for adults can be found [here](#).
- Songs mentioned in the text:
 - [“We Shall Overcome”](#)
 - [“Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around”](#)
 - [“Freedom Is Coming”](#)
- American Freedom Stories
 - S1 E2 [“Children’s Crusade of 1963”](#)