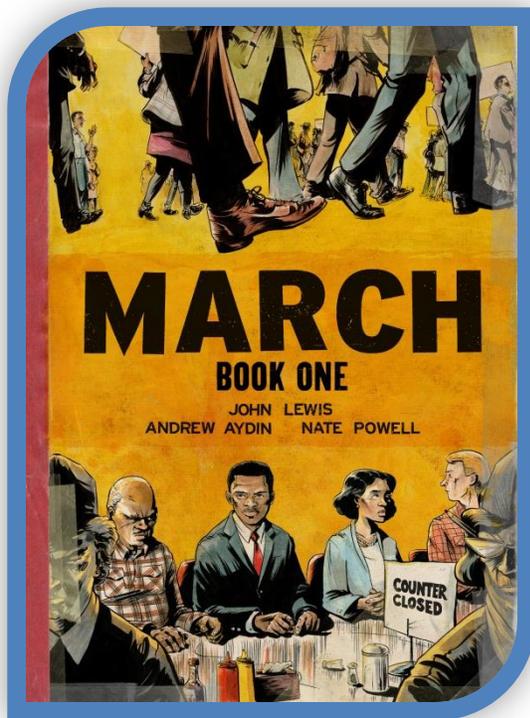




Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

About the Book of the Month Parent/Family Discussion Guide: This collection of featured books is from Books Matter: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in education programs of [A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. For parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



March: Book One

John Lewis and Andrew Aydin (Author),
Nate Powell (Illustrator)

ISBN: 978-1603093002

Publisher: Top Shelf Productions

Year Published: 2013

Age Range: 12 and up

Book Themes

Civil rights, Racism, Activism, Nonviolence

About the Book

This graphic novel is a first-hand account of Congressman John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, taking him from an Alabama sharecropper's farm to the halls of Congress, from a segregated schoolroom to the 1963 March on Washington. This is the first of a trilogy series of books which spans his youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.

Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book aloud or young people read it on their own and you discuss it later, use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remember not to judge their responses and to listen thoughtfully and engage in a give-and-take that helps them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

- What is the book about?
- What was John Lewis like and how did he change and grow throughout the book?
- Did you learn anything new about civil rights activism and if so, what?
- Why do you think John Lewis felt so connected to the chickens? Have you ever felt that way about an animal?
- How do you think the trip to Buffalo changed John Lewis? Have you ever had an experience that changed your perspective in some big way?
- What was it like for John Lewis to hear Martin Luther King, Jr. for the first time and eventually meet him? If you could meet Martin Luther King, Jr., what would you ask him?
- Why do you think that nonviolence was such a big part of the Civil Rights Movement?
- What do you think it would be like to sit at those lunch counters and deal with the hostility the activists faced?
- What civil or social justice issues are important to you and why?
- Why do you think John Lewis and his co-author decided to make his story a graphic novel?

Talking Points

Below are some important considerations to highlight in order to make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

1. Discrimination and Racism

Bias and discrimination, specifically racism, are central aspects of the book and fruitful discussion points for you and your child/teenager. It may seem inconceivable to some young people that African American and White people were segregated and that African American people were discriminated against in the way that they were during that time period. Others may not be surprised at all and may feel like things haven't changed or are worse today. You can help your child understand the differences between bias, stereotypes, discrimination and implicit bias by discussing the [language of bias](#). Talk with your child about the kinds of discrimination and racism that took place during the 1950s and 1960s and stress how activism led to changes—both on an interpersonal level and in our laws. Ask them how they think things are different today compared to that period and how things are the same. Share examples of racism that take place in current day society and solicit their thoughts and ideas as well.

2. The Civil Rights Movement

Talk with your child about the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Find out what they know and don't know and share some [background information](#) with them. Explain that the Civil Rights Movement came about out of the need and desire for equality and freedom for African Americans and other people of color. Nearly one hundred years after slavery was abolished, there

was widespread segregation, discrimination, disenfranchisement and racially motivated violence in all personal and structural aspects of life for black people. During this period of time, there was a great deal of activism taking place to reverse this discrimination and injustice. Activists worked together and used non-violent protest to bring about change at the personal, institutional and legislative levels. If you or other family members remember that time, you can share those personal reflections because that often resonates in a different way. Together, you can learn more about that time period by visiting [Websites](#), watching films, reading [books](#), looking at photos, listening to music, etc.

3. Activism

Have a conversation with your child/teenager about activism. If they don't know what an activist is, explain that an activist is someone who gets involved in activities that are meant to achieve political or social change. Talk together about the ways in which John Lewis was an activist that can be gleaned from the book. Convey the idea that throughout history, activism has brought about social change in a variety of ways and activism also provides an opportunity for people to feel like they can do something and are not powerless in the face of injustice. If you participated in activist activities in your life, share those stories and experiences. And if your child/teenager has been involved in activism (from writing a letter to attending a demonstration), elicit why they did it and what the experience meant to them. Discuss what social/civil rights issues concern them and identify ways they can get involved if possible.

Other Books You May Like

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/brown-girl-dreaming.html

John Lewis in the Lead: A Story of the Civil Rights Movement by Jim Haskins, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/john-lewis-in-the-lead-a-story-of-the-civil-rights-movement.html

March: Book Two by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/march-book-two.html

When Thunder Comes: Poems for Civil Rights Leaders by J. Patrick Lewis, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/when-thunder-comes.html

ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on racism, activism and the Civil Rights Movement.

Print Material

Glossary of Education Terms

www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/glossary-of-education-terms.pdf

Terms and definitions often associated with and provide a common, working language for ADL's anti-bias programs and resources.

Websites

10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism

www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in.html

A list of ideas for bringing social activism into the classroom and outside of the school walls. These strategies can be acted upon individually, organized together as a group and young people can join with

a larger effort that is taking place locally or nationally.

Civil Rights Movement

www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/civil-rights-movement.html

Provides historical background information, resources and pictures about the Civil Rights Movement.

Parent, Family and Caregiver Resources

www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/parent-family-and-caregivers.html

Strategies, tips, guiding principles and resources to help parents, family members and caregivers impart values and principles to the children in their lives.

Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism

www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/race-talk.html

Suggestions and strategies for having classroom conversations with young people about race and racism.

Teaching about Ferguson and Beyond

www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/teaching-about-ferguson-and.html

Lessons, related curricula and additional anti-bias resources and strategies to help educators discuss with students emotions, conversations, protest and actions surrounding the lack of indictments against police officers who were involved in the deaths of Mike Brown in Ferguson, MO and Eric Garner in New York City and many others.

Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/table-talk-family-conversations.html

Table Talk provides parents and family members with the tools they need to engage their families in conversations about important news stories and other timely discussions about societal and world events. Each guide includes a topic summary, questions to start the conversation and dig deeper, ideas for taking action and additional resources.

Children's Books

Below are links to lists of recommended anti-bias and multicultural books for the indicated category.

Social Justice, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/social-justice.html