



Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

About the Book of the Month: 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 educators, adult family members and other caregivers of children, reading the books listed on this site with your children and incorporating them into instruction are excellent ways to talk about these important concepts at home and in the classroom.

March: Book One

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

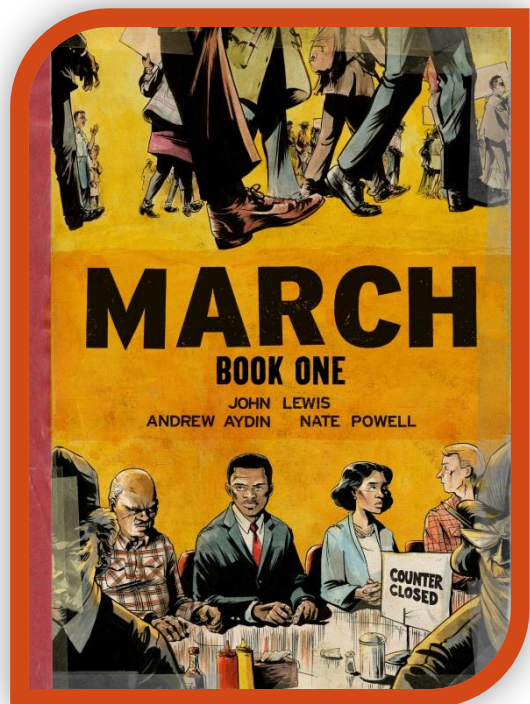
This graphic novel is a first-hand account of Congressman John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, taking him from an Alabama sharecropper's farm to the halls of Congress, from a segregated schoolroom to the 1963 March on Washington. This is the first of a trilogy series of books which 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.

ISBN: 978-1603093002

Publisher: Top Shelf Productions

Year Published: 2013

Age Range: 12 and up



Book Themes

Civil rights, Racism, Activism, Nonviolence

Key Words

Discuss and define these words with students prior to reading the book and remind them of the meanings as they come up in the book. See ADL's [Glossary of Education Terms](#).

- boycott
- civil disobedience
- "colored"
- constitution

- democracy
- desegregation
- eradicate
- inauguration
- liberated
- moratorium
- movement
- philosophy
- protest
- racism
- resistance
- sermonizing
- sit-in
- unlawful assembly

Discussion Questions

If the students read the book in small groups or as a whole class, ask discussion questions throughout their reading in order to check comprehension and engage them on a deeper level. Some of these questions can also be used as writing prompts. When students have finished the book, choose from these questions to guide a group discussion:

- What is the book about?
- Have you ever heard of John Lewis before reading the book? What do you know about him?
- What did you learn about John Lewis as you read the book? What can you tell about his character and personality by reading the book?
- What was John Lewis' childhood like?
- In his early days, why was John Lewis so attached to the chickens on his parents' farm? What did the chickens symbolize?
- What was it like when he took his first trip north with his Uncle Otis to Buffalo? What happened on the trip and what new experiences did he have?
- When John arrives home after the trip to Buffalo, why does he say, "After that trip, home never felt the same, and neither did I?"
- What did John experience in Alabama in terms of segregation and inequality?
- How did John Lewis feel when he first heard Martin Luther King, Jr. on the radio?
- What did you learn about the Montgomery Bus Boycott from John Lewis' perspective?
- How did John's parents feel about him wanting to try to attend Troy State College in order to desegregate it?
- How did the civil rights activists learn to use nonviolence? Do you think that was easy or difficult?
- Why do you think that nonviolence was such an important part of the Civil Rights Movement?
- How do you think you would feel if you wanted to eat at a restaurant or lunch counter and you weren't allowed because of your race or another aspect of your identity?
- What strategies did activists use to desegregate the lunch counters and what happened in the end?
- Why do you think this story was told as a graphic novel?
- Why do you think scenes about the inauguration of President Barack Obama were included in the book?
- How did you feel when the book ended?
- This book is the first in a trilogy: What do you think might happen in *March: Book Two*?
- What more do you want to know about John Lewis and the Civil Rights Movement?

Extension Activities

Below are activities that can be done with students in order to extend the learning from the book.

1. Reading Response Writing Activities

Interview Congressman John Lewis: Have students imagine that they are a news or blog reporter and have the opportunity to interview John Lewis for an article. Prior to the students' writing, as a class brainstorm a few questions they might ask him. Then, individually, students should construct a list of questions for the interview as well as the responses John Lewis might give to their questions. Students should base the responses on what they already know, what they learned by reading the book and what they might imagine to be his answers based on what they know. If they want to take it a step further, you can have them role play the interview by having one person play an interviewer/reporter and someone else playing John Lewis—then videotape the whole interview.

Create a Prezi or PowerPoint about the Book: Using a presentation format such as [Prezi](#) or PowerPoint, have students create a presentation about the book. They can use images from the book, ones that they find online or original images that they draw or take photos of. The presentation should include information from the book about Congressman John Lewis' life, his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, the book's format and other important aspects of the book that they want to share. They should share their presentations with the class and also consider sharing the presentation in an assembly with other members of the school community, as well as sharing through social media.

Book Review or Book Talk: Have students write a book review of *March: Book One*. The elements of a book review should include: (1) title, author, genre and theme; (2) personal reflections about the book—how it made you feel, what you learned and your thoughts about it; (3) plot summary—describe what happened without giving away spoilers; (4) people/characters you loved or disliked and (5) why it is worth reading or not. Consider sharing the reviews on a class blog, using [GoodReads](#) for online reviews. In addition, they can do a “book talk” with their class in which they discuss the elements of their book review based on the categories above or read it aloud and answer questions.

2. Learn about the Civil Rights Movement

Engage students in a discussion about the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Explain that the 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 including: the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Greensboro Woolworth Sit-Ins, desegregating the school system and the Selma to Montgomery March for Voting Rights. For more background and curriculum materials, use the resources on ADL's [Civil Rights Movement](#) Web page. You can have students do further reading and research aspects of the Movement and the discrimination and injustice that led to it. They can also investigate other elements of the Movement including film, music, art and literature as a way to deepen their understanding of that time period.

3. Activism

Ask students: *What is an activist? What examples of activism did you see in the book?* Ask students to define activist and elicit a definition as follows: Someone who gets involved in activities that are meant to achieve political or social change; this also includes being a member of an organization

which is working on change. Ask: *Is John Lewis an activist? How do you know? What made him want to get involved in activism?* Explain that there are many ways to be an activist as well as strategies to use when getting involved in political or social issues. Go over the article [10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism](#) and ask: *Which of these strategies were used in the book?* If time permits, brainstorm a list of current day civil rights issues that are important to students (e.g. school discipline policies, racial profiling, immigrants' rights, etc.). Engage students in a discussion about their interest and willingness to get more involved in activism around the issue. Discuss possible strategies they could employ using the handout for ideas. If appropriate, implement some of these ideas or connect to a local organization that works on an issue of interest and take steps to actively involve students.

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on race and racism, civil rights and activism.

Curriculum Resources

"Civil Rights Act of 1964: 7 Ways to Commemorate the Anniversary," *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/civil-rights-act-of-1964-7-ways-to-commemorate.html.

"The Selma to Montgomery March for Voting Rights," *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/selma-to-montgomery-march.html.

"10 Ideas for Teaching about Black History Month," *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/10-ideas-for-teaching-black-history.html.

"Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights: Relevancy for Today," *Curriculum Connections*, www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/martin-luther-king-jr-and-civil-rights.html.

"Voting Rights Then and Now," *Current Events Classroom*, www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/voting-rights-then-and-now.html.

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.

Anti-Bias Education

www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education

Provides training program offerings for pre-K through 12th grade school communities—educators, administrators, youth and families—which focus on the development of an inclusive culture and respectful school climate by addressing issues of bias and bullying.

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.

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.

Children's Books

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

Civil Rights Activism, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/social-justice-books.html?subsocial=civil-rights-books

People, Identity and Culture: Black, African-American and Caribbean-American People, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/people-books.html?subpeople=black-african-american-caribbean

Race and Racism, www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/race-racism.html

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