

Martin's Big Words

A RIF GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Themes: Black History, Civil Rights, Acceptance, Bravery

Grade Level: 1st to 3rd grade

Book Brief: This story of Martin Luther King, Jr., is told using his own "big words."

Author:
Doreen Rappaport

Illustrator:
Bryan Collier

Content Connections:
Social Studies, History



TIME TO READ!

BEFORE WE READ, LET'S LOOK AT...

The Cover: Have students make predictions about the text based on the front cover illustration and the title. Who is the man? Is he Martin? Why is the name of the book on the back cover instead of the front?

The Pictures: For younger students, take a brief picture walk. What do the pictures show? What do students notice about the style of the illustrations? Explain that the illustrations are collages and ask why they think the illustrator didn't just draw or paint the pictures.

Prior Knowledge: Ask students what they know about segregation and the Civil Rights movement.

Explain that not everyone in the United States always had equal rights. People like Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks had to fight for years to get equal rights for Black Americans. Look up the dates of the Civil Rights movement and write them on the board.

Vocabulary: citizens, protested, rights, segregation, strike

Purpose for Reading: Students can synthesize by setting the following purpose: "As we read today, think about how Martin's 'big words' relate to the rest of the story. How do these quotations reflect what was happening in his life?"

WHILE WE READ

MONITORING COMPREHENSION

- ◆ What does "WHITE ONLY" mean? Why are these signs in Martin's town?
- ◆ What does Martin mean by "big words"? Why does he want big words?
- ◆ Why didn't Martin want people to use violence?

- ◆ Who was Rosa Parks? Why wouldn't she change seats on the bus?
- ◆ Why did people want to stop Martin and the Civil Rights movement?
- ◆ Why didn't Martin stop when people threatened him? Why didn't he want to fight back?

LET'S THINK ABOUT

Our Purpose: Revisit the purpose: "What did Martin's big words have to do with what was happening in his life? What does the author mean at the end when she says that Martin's big words are 'alive' today?"

Extending Our Thinking: Ask students if anyone has ever judged them just because of the way they look or talk, or what they believe. How did that make them feel? Was it fair? Then ask them if they've ever judged or made an assumption about someone without getting to know them first.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.
- ◆ Vocabulary Scaffolding Sheet also available.

