

“Stony the Road We Trod...” Institute 2019  
Lesson Plan

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Group Concept: Leadership

Subject/Course: ELA/ Kindergarten

Lesson Plan Title: We Can All Be Leaders



Participants of the Children’s March in Birmingham, 1963. Photo Credit:  
<https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/film-kits/mighty-times-the-childrens-march>

The Civil Rights and Freedom Rights struggles in America tell a remarkable series of stories about leadership. When specifically considering the Civil Rights Movement of the fifties and sixties, a small few of its most charismatic leaders have become its icons, yet the leadership and activism of many individuals contributed to its ultimate success. The Movement is a testament to the power of many individuals employing their respective strengths and leadership styles toward one end. This lesson aims to teach students about key leaders in the Movement, while examining the essential role each played. The lesson will also give students an opportunity to take a personal inventory and consider the strengths that could help them become agents of change.

This lesson is part of a greater collection of lessons created under the theme of “Leadership”. In this collection, we explore ideas around what it means to be a leader, who can be a leader, and how leaders make change.

The lesson is a multi-day study introducing key figures in the Movement and their respective, unique leadership skills. Each day for the first four days the teacher will introduce these leaders through a picture book and video clips (to bring these figures to life for the students). The lesson will culminate on the fifth day with an activity that will allow students to consider the value of each of these types of leadership that were introduced, and the essential role that each played toward the success of the Movement. Students will play a game in which they try to determine which leader was the most important to the Movement. As students learn about these leaders over the course of the week, they will each create a “cube” on which they will draw the face of Civil Rights leaders on each face, finally including the faces of themselves and other leaders in their own community.

#### Guiding Questions:

- Why do we need more than one leader?
- What kinds of personal strengths can become styles of leadership?
- What makes a good leader in our community?
- What kind of leader are you?

#### Learning Objectives:

- Students will consider various Civil Rights leaders and their leadership styles
- Students will create a “Civil Rights Cube”
- Students will identify leaders in their own community
- Students will identify some of their own leadership skills, and will consider themselves as agents of change

#### Class Periods:

This lesson will be completed over the course of five, fifty minute sessions in the course of five consecutive days.

#### *Common Core Standards:*

##### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.3

With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

##### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.9

With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.10

Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

Preparation:

The class will engage in a discussion about fairness, which will contextualize this particular era of the Civil Rights Movement as a struggle to make our country “more fair”. The teacher will also define the Civil Rights struggle as ongoing, to make clear that the Movement of the fifties and sixties was crucial, and we also all still have work to do toward a more just and fair society. Finally, the class will define the word “leader” and discuss examples of leaders in their school and community. The teacher will explain that over the next few days the class will learn about leaders in the Civil Rights Movement of the fifties and sixties. Each child will receive a cube shaped box.

Lesson Plan:

1. Day One: The teacher will introduce Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by reading: Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., playing a video clip, and talking about his style of leading with his words. Students will draw a picture of Dr. King on one side of their cube, while listening to music from *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs 1960-1966* (Various Artists).
2. Day Two: The teacher will introduce Rosa Parks by reading Rosa, playing a video clip, and talking about her style of leading through action. Students will draw a picture of Rosa Parks on one side of their cube while listening to music from *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement*.
3. Day Three: The teacher will introduce Ella Baker by reading Lift as You Climb: The Story of Ella Baker, playing a video clip, and talking about her style of leading through organizing. Students will draw a picture of Ella Baker on one side of their cube while listening to music from *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement*.
4. Day Four: The teacher will introduce the children involved in the Children’s March by reading Let the Children March, playing a video clip, and talking about their style of leading with their energy. Students will draw a picture of the Children’s March on one side of their cube while listening to music from *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement*.
5. Day Five: The class will use their cubes to collectively build towers, and then take turns trying to remove one of the cubes without disrupting the tower. The class will talk about the way in which the tower was like this era of the Civil Rights Movement, with each leader being an essential part of the whole. Teacher will then ask students to think about leaders they know in their community who are working to make things more fair. The children will each draw one of those leaders on a face of their cube. Finally, the teacher will ask the students to consider and discuss the leadership strengths they each possess, and will ask them to draw themselves on the final face of their cube.

Assessment: Did students participate in group discussions and each create their own Civil Rights Cube?

#### Books:

Clark-Robinson, Monica, and Frank Morrison. *Let the Children March*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.

Giovanni, Nikki, and Bryan Collier. *Rosa*. Zaner-Bloser, 2013.

Powell, Patricia Hruby. *Lift As You Climb: the Story of Ella Baker*. Margaret McElderry Books, 2020.

Rappaport, Doreen, and Bryan Collier. *Martin's Big Words: the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Zaner-Bloser, 2013.

#### Videos

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vDWWy4CMhE>

Rosa Parks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqiOqM9nQ0U>

Ella Baker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t96fnyLMihA>

Children's March: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c113fq3vhQ>

#### Music

<https://folkways.si.edu/voices-of-the-civil-rights-movement-black-american-freedom-songs-1960-1966/african-american-music-documentary-struggle-protest/album/smithsonian>

<https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/99315652/songs-of-the-civil-rights-movement>

#### Extension:

Students can learn about other key figures in the movement, draw pictures of them, and place those pictures inside their "Civil Rights Cube".

Students can interview someone they know who they consider to be a leader, and report back to the class about what they learned.