

Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

February 2013: March on Washington

By Debbie Vilardi

Debbie Vilardi is an author of poetry, lesson plans and works of fiction. She is seeking an agent and publisher for her historical fiction chapter book, *Flood*, set during Hurricane Katrina.

Goal: To learn about role of the March on Washington for Freedom and Jobs in the civil rights movement and those people who made the march happen.

*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

Before Beginning:

Study the cover and read the placards shown. Review the Words to Know on page 5.

"A Long Struggle" by Alex Lichtenstein and Elizabeth Tenney (Pages 2-5)

Read the Editor's note on page 2.

Vocabulary: supremacists, Reconstruction, poll taxes

Comprehension:

1. What were the Black Codes?
2. Study the cartoon on page 3. Why is the Judge named Lynch? What is the significance of his hidden face and the can of fuel?
3. What were the provisions of the 14th Amendment?
4. What right did the 15th Amendment grant?
5. What effect did these amendments have?
6. How did removing federal troops from the south impact these improvements?
7. What tactics were used to prevent African Americans from voting?
8. How did Jim Crow laws impact southern society?
9. Why did many black Americans move north?

Writing Activity: Explain why the term Mountain of Despair was used in the monument to describe the history of African Americans in the United States.

Research Topics: Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial, Black Codes, Ku Klux Klan, 14th Amendment, 15th Amendment, Reconstruction, Jim Crow laws, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education*, 1963 March on Washington

"Big Six: A. Phillip Randolph" by Kate Tuttle (Pages 6-7)

"Big Six: John Lewis, James Farmer, Whitney M. Young, Jr, Roy Wilkins" by Marcia Amidon Lusted (Pages 16-20)

"Big Six: Martin Luther King, Jr." by Jim Haskins and Andrew Matthews (Pages 20-21)

"Behind the Scenes: Bayard Rustin" by Elizabeth Cazden (Page 12-14)

Comprehension: Answer these following questions for each person profiled.

1. How did he become involved in the civil rights movement?
2. How did his message spread?
3. What effect did his message have on others, both black and white? Site specific changes mentioned in the articles.
4. What punishment or danger, if any, did he face as part of his activism?
5. What influence, if any, did he have on elected officials?
6. What was his role, if any, in the March on Washington?
7. What honors, if any, did he receive?

Writing Activity: The articles quote the "Big Six". Select a quote and consider how it reflects the personal philosophy of the speaker and the general philosophy of the movement?

Dramatic Activity: The articles mention a variety of protest forms. In small groups, research one and write a skit detailing a single event of the protest. Prepare and perform your skits.

Research: A. Phillip Randolph; John Lewis; James Farmer; Whitney M. Young, Jr; Roy Wilkins; Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Greensboro, N.C. sit-in; Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; Freedom Riders; Freedom Summer; Selma-to-Montgomery marches; Congress of Racial Equality; Montgomery Bus Boycott; nonviolent resistance; National Urban League; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; Mohandas K. Gandhi

"The March that Made History" by Elizabeth Cazden (Page 8-10)

Comprehension:

1. What prompted President Kennedy to take action?
2. Whose idea was the march?
3. What concerns did some leaders express?
4. Why was August 28 selected?

5. What steps were taken to ensure the safety of the marchers and that the protest would remain nonviolent?
6. Why did the march start early?

Writing Activity: You are part of the march. Write a letter explaining why you marched, how you arrived, and what it was like to be part of this historic occasion.

Research: Bayard Rustin

"The Demands" (Page 11)

Vocabulary: filibuster, disfranchised, injunctive

"Rustin's Things to Do" (Page 14)

Comprehension:

1. Why might Rustin have wanted nurses on the buses and trains?
2. What arrangements were made for comfort and health at the march?
3. What accommodations were made for the needs of officials and the press?

Math Activities:

1. Assuming each drinking fountain received an equal amount of water, how much did each receive?
2. If every lunch sold, how much money would be earned?

"A Tribute" by Elizabeth Deatrick (Page 15)

"Did You Know?" (Pages 24-25)

Discussion: Considering general views of women at that time, do you believe the civil rights leaders should have allowed women to speak during the march?

Writing Activity: Select one of the women mentioned and write a brief biography of her involvement with the civil rights movement.

Research: Daisy Gatson Bates, Diane Nash Bevel, Myrlie Evers, Prince Lee, Rosa Parks, Gloria Richardson, Cambridge Movement, Little Rock Nine, Ruby Bridges, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer

"Beyond the Big Six" by Kevin Boyle (Pages 22-23)

Research: Walter Reuther, Rabbi Joaquim Prinz, Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, Matthew Ahmann

“Message for the People” by Eric Arnesen (Pages 26-27)

Discussion: Consider the drafts of Lewis’s speech. Do you agree with his decision to make the changes? Do you agree that the original would have jeopardized the cause?

Research: Speeches made during the march

“The Oval Office” by Kevin Boyle (Pages 28-30)

Vocabulary: radical

Comprehension:

1. Why didn’t Kennedy support civil rights causes early in his presidency?
2. What changed his mind?
3. What were his initial concerns about the march?
4. What were the results of the meeting?
5. How did Johnson differ from Kennedy?

Research: President John F. Kennedy, President Lyndon B. Johnson, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Voting Rights Act

“Oh, Freedom” by Cynthia Levinson (Pages 31-33)

Vocabulary: anthem

Comprehension:

1. Why were songs important for marchers?
2. How did the movement adapt songs?
3. How did “We Shall Overcome” become popular?
4. What were the roles of black and white musicians during the march and the presentations to the crowd?

Music Activity: These songs launched a style of music known as protest songs. Listen to some of the songs mentioned in the article. Does the song have a marching beat? Is it well known today? What features may have helped these songs to become popular?

Research: "We Shall Overcome"; Pete Seeger; Joan Baez; Peter, Paul and Mary; Bob Dylan; Marion Anderson; Odetta; the Albany Freedom Singers; Mahalia Jackson; Curtis Mayfield; Sam Cooke

"A High Point?" by Alex Lichtenstein (Pages 34-37)

Vocabulary: farce

Comprehension:

1. How well did the march seem to have worked initially?
2. How long did it take the Civil Rights Act to pass?
3. What violence occurred in the south?
4. How did the young people feel about Dr. King's popularity?
5. What were Malcolm X's beliefs?
6. Why did his views gain popularity?
7. How did these views and their following affect the support for equality?
8. What other concerns impacted this support?

Research: Malcolm X

"Memories of the March" by Norman and Velma Hill (Pages 40-41)

Vocabulary: centenary, galvanized

Social Studies Activity: Ask your family members if they have memories of the march. Did they participate or watch and listen through the media? What were their thoughts and feelings at the time?

Activity for the Entire Issue: Consider the demands listed on page 11. Have these demands been met? How long did it take for each? Are they still important?