



I AM A CHILD Resources and Activities



Introduction:

This set of resources and activities is an examination of the meaning of protest, strategies of protest, and how activism is used in the past and present. It is also an exploration of human rights, which are guaranteed to all people, no matter their age, nationality, race, or socioeconomic status. These resources and activities encourage children to connect specific moments in Civil Rights history with ongoing contemporary human rights issues. Children will understand why people take a stand against something they think is wrong or does not match up with their beliefs. Additionally, students are introduced to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognizing that these rights are sometimes denied to certain groups or individuals, connecting to the specific issue of family separation. Together teachers and students or families can explore what it means to be an activist in their community today.

Suggested Materials:

- Any or all of the following books (see more information below): *All Are Welcome*, *We Are All Born Free*, *Marching to the Mountaintop*, *Let the Children March*, and *The Youngest Marcher*
- Photos of Birmingham Children’s March 1963, 1968 Sanitation Workers Strike and I AM A CHILD protests
- I AM A MAN protest sign, I AM A CHILD protest signs, other protest signs from the past or present
- Music: *Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round*, *We Shall Overcome*, or *This Little Light of Mine*
- Activity Materials for making protest signs:
 - Index Cards
 - Markers or Colored Pencils
 - Craft Sticks (popsicle sticks)
 - Tape or Glue
 - Images (either on screen, in a book, or printed photographs of people holding a variety of protest signs, and ideally a photo of Sanitation Workers in 1968 holding an “I AM A MAN” sign and children today holding “I AM A CHILD” signs)

Discussion Ideas and Photograph/Artifact Analysis:

Discuss what protest means and the various ways people protest (e.g. marches, boycotts, strikes, sit-ins, walk-outs, etc.). Show pictures of protests in various forms and activism, both in the past and present.

- Talk about moments in Civil Rights History when kids stood up for justice, like the 1963 Birmingham Children’s March (1963). Show pictures from the Children’s March and talk about the dangers the student activists faced (such as being sprayed by fire hoses and bitten by police dogs).

Read *The Youngest Marcher* or *Let the Children March* to go along with this discussion. Talk about what children see in the illustrations as well as what they think and how they feel after the reading.

- Show pictures from the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike and check out *Marching to the Mountaintop*. Talk about what the conditions were like for the sanitation workers and why they were so important to the community.

Talk about what happens in a community when someone with an important job like keeping a community clean, feels their rights are not being respected and therefore they stop work. (i.e. What happens in a community when the sanitation workers stop collecting the garbage? Remind children that we deserve to live in healthy clean communities, and if garbage isn't collected people get sick and disease can spread quickly. This means the role of the sanitation workers is as important to the health of a community as that of a doctor.

Discuss why the Strike was so important and why it brought Dr. King to Memphis. Watch a few oral histories from actual 1968 Sanitation Workers at TheRoot.com-1300 Men: Memphis Strike 1968.

- Read *All Are Welcome* and discuss the importance of appreciating people's differences and being respectful and inclusive of all people.
- Read *We Are All Born Free* and reflect on the meaning of each article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Check out the I AM A CHILD photos and learn about why the National Civil Rights Museum is featuring this exhibition civilrights museum.org-I AM A CHILD exhibition.

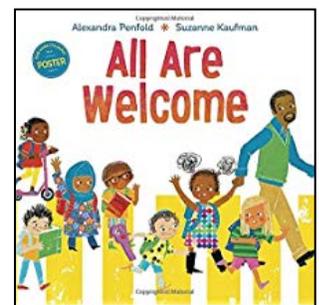
Recommended Readings:

All Are Welcome Here

By Alexandra Penfold

Ideal for children ages 3-8

Read the book and have students describe pictures. Discuss how the book is about diversity and students recognizing and appreciating each other's differences. Acknowledge the importance of diversity and learning about differences in foods, clothes, traditions and family makeup. Resist judging others based on their clothes, foods, family makeup or traditions. Click [this youtube.com link](#) for a reading of the story.

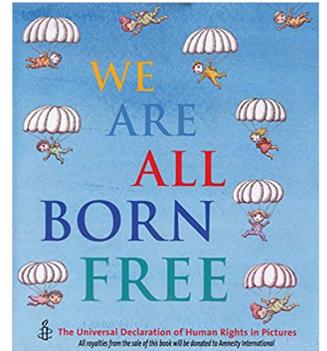


We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

By Amnesty International UK

Ideal for ages 6-9 years

This book is a great way to introduce children to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was signed on December 10, 1948. It was compiled after World War II, to declare and protect the rights of all people from all countries. This beautiful collection, celebrates each article with an illustration by internationally-renowned artists including: Peter Sis, Axel Scheffler, Satoshi Kitamura, Alan Lee, Polly Dunbar, Jackie Morris, Debi Gliori, Chris Riddell, Catherine and Laurence Anholt.



Visit [this Amnesty International link](https://www.amnesty.org/en/our-work/education/) for more information and visit

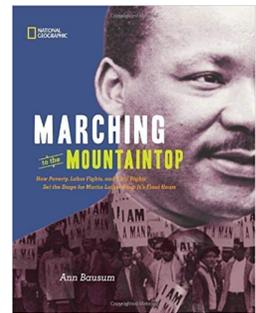
youthforhumanrights.org for unique tools that bring human rights to life for people of all ages.

Marching to the Mountaintop: How Poverty, Labor Fights and Civil Rights Set the Stage for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Final Hours

Ideal for ages 10-15 years

By Ann Bausum in association with National Geographic

This is a reference book and primary source on the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike, Dr. King's last trip to Memphis, and his work with the Poor People's Campaign.

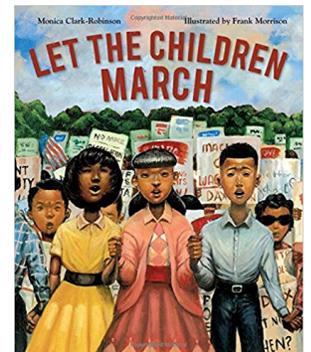


Let the Children March

By Monica Clark Robinson

Ideal for ages 5-9 years

In 1963 Birmingham, Alabama, thousands of African American children volunteered to march for their civil rights after hearing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak. They protested the laws that kept black people separate from white people. Facing fear, hate, and danger, these children used their voices to change the world. Frank Morrison's emotive oil-on-canvas paintings bring this historical event to life, while Monica Clark-Robinson's moving and poetic words document this remarkable time. Visit [this Youtube.com link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...) to hear a reading of this great book about young activists who stood up against segregation and triumphantly changed Birmingham, by forcing the end of segregation!



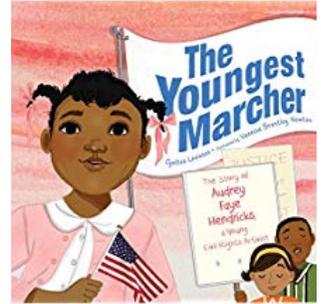
The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks

By Cynthia Levinson

Ideal for ages 3-10 years

Meet the youngest known child to be arrested for a civil rights protest in Birmingham, Alabama, 1963, in this moving picture book that proves you're never too little to make a difference.

At the age of 9, Audrey Faye Hendricks was confident and bold and brave as can be, and hers is the remarkable and inspiring story of one child's role in the Civil Rights Movement. Visit [this youtube.com link](#) for a reading.



Activity:

Ask group or each child "if they were to carry a protest sign for something, what would their sign say and where would they carry their sign?"

Children and families can make their own protest signs with words and pictures that express what they believe about all people having rights. After they draw or write on index cards or cardstock, tape or glue it to the popsicle stick and voila, you have a protest sign.

Have children (if they feel comfortable) stand up and hold their sign while they share with the group what their sign say. If they wish, they can elaborate by saying why they created that particular sign and why that issue or right is important to them. They could describe where they would carry their sign. Children can also share about a time when they witnessed someone being denied a human right and why they felt that was wrong.

Insert a photo with children holding protest signs perhaps the one below.

