

March: Book 2 Study Guide

March: Book 2 by Andrew Aydin, John Lewis, and Nate Powell

(c)2016 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

March: Book 2 Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Summary.....	3
Pages 1-21.....	4
Pages 22-45.....	8
Pages 46-70.....	12
Pages 71-110.....	16
Pages 111-143.....	20
Pages 143-Conclusion.....	23
Important People.....	26
Objects/Places.....	29
Themes.....	31
Styles.....	36
Quotes.....	38
Topics for Discussion.....	41

Summary

The following version of this book was used to create this study guide: Lewis, John; Aydin, Andrew. *March, Book One*; Top Shelf Productions, Marietta, Georgia, 2015. Kindle AZW file.

The book is presented in the form of a graphic novel, but it is a biography. The author, John Lewis, is a congressman when Barack Obama is sworn in as the first black president of the United States. That event serves as the backdrop for all the work Lewis and others do as protestors during the Civil Rights Movements during the 1960s. The book is the second of a three-part series but can be read as a stand-alone book.

This book covers two major events during the Civil Rights Movement – the Freedom Rides and the march on Washington, D.C. In most cases, the organizers of the Civil Rights Movement chose specific laws and rules they wanted to change, and then set out with a specific plan to change those. This is true in the case of the Freedom Rides. The courts had ruled that segregation on buses was illegal, but bus lines and drivers were still enforcing the rule that said blacks had to ride at the rear of the bus. The Freedom Rides were organized to force bus lines to obey the court's ruling.

Young men and women ride the buses, sitting without regard to the previous segregation rules. They are polite but firm in their refusal to segregate and for blacks to sit only at the back. Their protests gather supporters but also prompt opposition. Some of that opposition is violent and many are injured. Police are often at the heart of the problem, participating in the attacks or turning their backs when peaceful protestors are attacked.

The Freedom Rides turn especially violent when a bus is firebombed and others are jailed. Some moderate organizers want to put a stop to the Freedom Rides at that point, but others want to keep the momentum going, despite the risk. The rides continue, even when many face jail time or physical violence. Eventually, drivers refuse to work, fearing they will be injured in altercations. The process is long and arduous, but eventually prompts change.

The other major event – the march on Washington, D.C. – begins to gather interest though white politicians try to stop it. Lewis initially participates despite his fear that it will become a nonevent. Though there are some problems, including that the Big Six leaders wind up in the middle of the march instead of at the front of the crowd. There are no major problems and the march seems to be a success. However, just weeks later, a Birmingham church is firebombed during a youth rally, showing that racial prejudice is continuing, especially in the South.

Pages 1-21

Summary

The opening page of the book is a dedication to the “children” of the Civil Rights Movement. Page four shows a bus driving past a sign that reads “Montgomery City Limits.” The importance of that scene is shown in the coming pages. On page five, two men are shaking hands. One hand is light and one is dark. The date is January 20, 2009. There is a conversation bubble from the side of the page toward the white man. He greets “Brother John.”

There are five frames on page six. The first shows Representative John Lewis shaking hands with a man he calls Maurice. They are in the United States House of Representatives shortly before Barack Obama is to be sworn in as President. In the first frame of page seven, a woman urges Lewis to hurry, saying he should be “near the front,” but Lewis counters, saying he will wind up where he is supposed to be. The final frame of that page shows a wide view of the United States Capitol Building, crowds of people, and a security tent.

Page eight is the title page. The page is entirely black except for the writing and the people. At the top left, there is a jagged white box with black writing. Lewis's parents were mortified when they found out Lewis had been jailed during a protest. There is a very small outline of Lewis at the top right of the page, and the caption that indicates he lessened the number of visits home. There is a frame in the middle of the page that shows a closeup of Lewis. He says that he still goes home occasionally, but the people of Nashville and members of the Civil Rights Movement had become his true family. The bottom half of the page shows a group of people, including Lewis, and the title of the book.

Page nine is a single frame of a young man standing outside a Krystal hamburger restaurant. The inset explains the situation and the background. Protests had effectively ended segregation policies at lunch counters in downtown Nashville, Tennessee, and the protestors are now turning their attention to cafeterias and fast food places. On page ten, protestors are seated at the counter of the Krystal restaurant. An explanation appears at the top of the page, saying that the black protestors were making the prejudicial attitudes public by “respectfully insisting” that they be served. In the remaining frames, a waitress throws water and cleanser on the protestors. Lewis explains that he was a student at American Baptist but was devoting all the time he could to the Civil Rights Movement.

The top five frames of page 11 shows a waitress turning on a water hose and turning up an air conditioner. Lewis says the protestors were facing higher levels of violence. The final frame of the page shows an empty phone booth outside a building. The first frame of page 12 shows a desk phone ringing. The caller alerts Lewis of the problems the protestors at Krystal have faced. In the final frame, Lewis and another man hold the



door open as wet protestors leave the building, shivering. In the first frame of page 13, Lewis and the other man take the vacated seats at the Krystal counter. A Krystal employee says they will have to leave but the men remain seated as an employee mops, locks the door, and turns off the lights. In the final two frames of the page, the two men sit in the dark while one Krystal employee tells others to go home, using the back entrance.

Pages 14 and 15 are solid black with white outlines and words. The remaining frames of page 14 show a fumigator filling the building with some poisonous fog used “for killing pests” (14). Page 15 shows Lewis and the other man in a fog. The top frames of page 16 show someone banging on the door, then firefighters rush in and drag the two men from the building. The middle frame of the page shows fog rolling out of the Krystal building while people move about on the street outside. Lewis says they did not die, but that would not be his only close call. The final two frames of that page show a man talking to the Krystal employee, who is holding a ring of keys.

The first frame of page 17 opens outside a movie theater in February of 1961. Lewis says that members of the Civil Rights Movement began trying to buy tickets at segregated movie theaters. When they are denied, they step away and get back in line to try again. The final frame of the page shows several boys marching, making fun of the protestors. In the first two frames of page 18, a boy spits at the protestors. In the third through fifth frames, someone throws a rock and strikes a young black woman in the head. In the final frame of page 18, a man takes a picture. In the first frame of page 19, a well-dressed white couple makes derogatory remarks about the blacks. The black man is denied a ticket and gets back in line.

The first frame of page 20 shows a close-up of a boot marching in the snow, making crunching sounds. The caption above frames one and two say that protestors are in danger from police. In frames three through six, a police officer is yelling at a black man, calling him “boy” and ordering him away from the theater. In the first frame on page 21, the black man says that he has the money to pay for a ticket and the police officer attacks him. In frame four, the officer strikes another black man in the head. The final frame of page 21 fills more than a third of the page. The scene is outside the movie theater with two men on the ground and the police officer standing nearby. A man with a camera takes a photo.

Analysis

The cover of the book features a picture of a burning bus and of Lewis addressing a crowd of people in Washington, D.C. Both are important scenes from the book and are described in great detail. Like the first book of the series, the book is dedicated “To the past and future children of the movement.”

The title page of the book uses one of the first examples of graphic style. The page is mostly black but there is a jagged white box at the top left. That jagged box leads into the book from the ending of the previous book, in which Lewis was arrested. The



remaining top part of the page shows a very small outline of Lewis, indicating that he feels small because of his family's reaction to his work in the Civil Rights Movement. Lewis's parents were worried about his involvement. They had grown up in a time when blacks were safe only if they remained unobtrusive. They were not cowards, but were products of generations of teaching. Their attitudes were typical of people of their age and background, which is very different from the attitudes of Lewis and others involved in the Civil Rights Movement. These differences were one of the main themes of the first book, and are seen again in this book.

The scene in the Krystal hamburger restaurant shows that the protestors are no longer able to protest without repercussions. In the previous book, Lewis showed demonstrations that were met mainly by passive resistance. Employees simply turned off the lights and closed the lunch counters rather than serving the protestors. Others have learned about the situation at this point, including that the end result of that kind of resistance was mandates to integrate lunch counters. It seems clear that the Krystal employees had planned a serious, violent response to the demonstration by locking Lewis and another protestor in the building with a fumigator pumping poisonous gas in. There is a powerful graphic seen on that page when a Krystal employee is holding a ring of keys. He is jingling the keys in an apparent show of power – that he has the keys and the ability to lock the men inside a dangerous situation.

The final frame of page 19 shows a man taking a picture. The sound of the camera is depicted as “pfash,” followed by an exclamation point. That same spelling is used on page 21. The artist uses phonetic spellings occasionally to enhance sounds and to help the reader better understand what is happening. In this case, the sound is almost sinister. On page 21, the sound of a police officer striking a protestor is depicted as “krak” and “splatt.” The purpose is to make the reader understand how the attack sounded. While some readers may find these incorrect spellings distracting, they give the scenes greater impact.

The photographer is not identified but it seems to be a sign that other people are beginning to notice the protestors. Some might feel the attention is a good thing, but that is addressed later when the protestors are warned not to let their demonstrations become media spectacles.

The artist depends heavily on atypical framing in this book. Most graphic books of this size would include three lines of frames with two frames in each line. While many of the pages have six frames, many of the frames are irregular in size and shape. Page 21 is an example of that. The first frame is small and shows a closeup of the protestor asking why he is not allowed to buy a ticket for the movie. The second shows the officer kicking the man. The officer's club stretches out past the bottom of the frame, clearly at the end of striking the man. The third frame sits partly on top of the fourth, and is not squared off. The bottom scene of the page does not include an outlined frame. The edges are blurred to give the impression of an indeterminate period of time.

Vocabulary

district, seniority, ceremony, bracing, devastated, humiliation, strategy, general, organizing, segregation, campaign, fumigator, worship, unleashed, dignity, aggressive

Pages 22-45

Summary

On page 22, the Central Committee, including Lewis, meet to talk about the increase in violence. Reverend Will Campbell, a white man, is afraid that someone will be killed. Lewis respects Campbell, but insists the protests had to continue. In the first frame of page 23, Campbell is angry, accusing Lewis of letting his pride get in the way, but Lewis says they will continue to protest. The first frame of page 24 shows a huge line of people outside the movie theater. The caption says that Lewis was leading the protestors. In the third frame, a white man locks the door of the theater from the inside. In the fourth frame, the protestors lock arms and stand, shoulder-to-shoulder. The fifth frame shows the closeup of a protestor as, in the sixth frame, police arrive. The first frame on page 25 shows a man's hands in handcuffs with a caption indicating that 26 people were arrested. Lewis had been scheduled to give his senior sermon the following day but the protestors again refuse to post bail. The final frame shows two small windows with wire over them, and the caption that says Lewis spent his 21st birthday in jail.

Page 26 reverts to the U.S. Capitol on January 20, 2009, with people walking toward a common destination. The first frame of page 27 shows a large crowd in front of Lewis and others who are stepping out for Obama's inauguration. The bottom third of the page is white with a framed closeup of Lewis on the right. Page 28 reverts back to April 29, 1961. Lewis is the backseat of a car. There are two black men in the front, possibly Jim Lawson and Bernard Lafayette, but they are identified only by first names. The first frame of page 29 shows the Murfreesboro, Tennessee, city limits. The second frame shows Lewis getting out of the car. The third frame shows only the feet of two men, with one urging Lewis to "be careful" (29). In the fourth and fifth frames, the men tell Lewis to remember that things are different in Washington, D.C. than in Tennessee.

The final frame of page 29 shows Lewis at a bus stop. The first frame on page 30 shows Lewis getting on a bus and handing a driver his ticket. The caption indicates that the Congress of Racial Equality – or CORE – had advertised for volunteers to test the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation on buses. The initiative was titled "Freedom Ride 1961." As Lewis boards the bus, the driver instructs him to move to the back. Lewis and Bernard had proposed a similar effort in Birmingham, but Civil Rights officials refused because of the danger. In the final frame, the bus is pulling away as Lewis outlines his application to join the Freedom Ride. He wrote that dignity is vital for all humans, and that he was willing to give up anything – including his life – to promote full integration in the deep South.

The first frame of page 31 shows the bus arriving in Washington, D.C. Lewis says his first view of the city was "magical" (31). He arrives at the Fellowship House, which was run by Quakers. In the first frame of page 32, a man invites Lewis inside. There are nine frames on page 33. Each has a picture of one or two men or women and identifies the



people and their roles. Jim Peck was a member of the first Freedom Ride in 1947, and had been jailed. Elton Cox is a minister. Dr. Walter Bergman and his wife, Frances are present. He is a University of Michigan professor. Jimmy McDonald is a singer from New York. Charles Person is a physics student from Morehouse College and Hank Thomas is a senior at Howard University. Albert Bigelow is a pacifist who had been arrested for a protest against atomic weapons. There are two CORE staff members, Ed Blanekheim and Genevieve Hughes.

On page 34, Lewis and other members of the group work out details of their plan, including their reactions and the laws involved. The final frame of the page shows a meal on a table at a Chinese restaurant. Lewis has never before dined at a restaurant unless he was there as a protestor. On page 35, Farmer reminds them that they are not obligated to join him on the Freedom Ride, and that they are undoubtedly in danger. Lewis knows it is true, evidenced by the fact that they had each made wills over the course of the previous week.

The final frame of page 35 is set at the Trailways Bus Station in Washington, D.C. Members of the group are buying bus tickets. On page 26, Farmer answers questions from reporters, saying the members of the group will not fight against being arrested and will not resort to violence, even if attacked. Page 37 is a single scene that covers the entire page. A bus is pulling out of the bus station. Wording at the top of the page indicates that Farmer set letters to several officials, including Attorney General Robert Kennedy and presidents of the Trailways and Greyhound bus companies. No one responded.

On page 38, Freedom Riders are at restroom doors. The words "white" and "colored" can be faintly seen above the word "men" on each door, but the race notations had apparently been removed. Lewis's group arrives in Rock Hill, South Carolina. In the final frame of the page, there are several white men standing in a room with a sign that reads, "Whites." Lewis takes it as a sign of trouble to come. The six frames on page 39 show a white man confronting a black man who is apparently John Lewis, saying Lewis cannot enter the white waiting room. Lewis says he has the right to enter and a white man hits him. On page 40, the attack continues. A white member of the Freedom Riders steps between the attackers and Lewis, who is on the floor. On page 41, the attack continues while a police officer stands passively by. In the final frame, the officer urges the attackers to go home. In the first frame of page 42, the officer asks two of the Freedom Riders if they want to press charges. Both say they do not.

In the third frame of page 42, Lewis receives a telegram from the Quakers with an offer to join a program in India. In the first frame of page 43, Lewis returns to Philadelphia with plans to reconnect with Freedom Riders in Birmingham. More than half of page 42 is a large, dark image. There is smoke roiling upward and the tops of flames can be seen at the bottom of the page. Words on the page says that Lewis's group "never made it to Birmingham" (43). The following page shows a commercial bus with flames billowing out of the windows.

Analysis

The layout of page 25 is another irregular choice, aimed at making an impact on the reader. The entire page is really one large frame, with three frames inset in the top half of the page. The first is square on the top left. The next is a rectangle covering the remaining top. A larger rectangle appears below that. The bottom of the page shows the background graphic. The graphic is mainly black with two small windows and a sentence in white. The black fades into white around the middle of the page, in a ragged, concave shape. The author uses this technique repeatedly and it seems to hint at the slow passage of time. Lewis's dedication to the cause is evident by the fact that he went to jail and remained there on February 21, 1961, despite the fact that it was his birthday and he was supposed to be delivering his senior sermon that day.

There are two important graphic elements on page 26 and 27. The first frame of page 26 is brilliant white, especially compared to the previous page showing Lewis's arrest in 1961. There is a very rough outline of a podium that some people might not immediately recognize as a podium. The picture shows rays of light coming off the podium, as if it is a jewel. That podium represents the final prize for the years of work Lewis and others did for black rights. The election of a black president would not have been possible without the work of those who sought equal rights. The second important graphic element is seen in the large frame on page 27. Lewis and others are walking onto the stage in front of the podium where Obama will make his inaugural address. The edges of the frame are solid black and jagged toward the center of the frame. Lewis and others are about to step out of a dim area into the light of day where the inauguration will take place. That is symbolic of stepping out of the darkness of racial inequality and into an enlightened era of racial acceptance.

Many young readers will not remember the struggles of the Civil Rights Era, and those people will typically take one of two attitudes. They will either take racial equality for granted or will believe they are living in a time of racial injustice without understanding the level of injustice that existed a half century ago.

The authors have a tendency to insert people into the action without any formal introduction. Students of the Civil Rights Movement will sometimes have an idea of who these people are, but only those who are intimately familiar with Lewis and the other main people of the Movement will instantly recognize these people. However, some people are at given at least cursory introductions, such as Reverend Will Campbell. There is no explanation for this tactic.

The artist sometimes makes entire frames or series of frames about seemingly insignificant events. For example, on page 31, Lewis arrives at the Fellowship House. It seems reasonable that he would knock on the door and no one would really expect anything else. The artist devotes three frames to that moment of arrival. He knocks on the door, straightens his tie, then looks ahead as the door opens and someone inside welcomes him in. The point is that this is a new chapter in Lewis's life. The opening of



the door is insignificant in itself, but it is significant that he is joining a new venture to further the cause of the Civil Rights Movement.

The image of the burning bus is graphically powerful, mainly because it gives the impression of movement. There is a man rushing away from the bus with a suitcase in his hand. There is a woman seated on the grass near to the bus and she is looking over her shoulder. There are men arriving from the opposite direction, still on the opposite side of the bus but obviously headed toward the Freedom Riders pictured outside the bus. The reader who cares to use his imagination just a little will be able to picture the smoke rolling up from the bus and the flames leaping out of the bus windows. The graphic artist has deftly created the impression of movement.

Vocabulary

escalating, demonstration, stubbornness, sermon, capitol, aggravate, warrant, publication, supreme, integrated, situation, application, dignity, necessary, pacifist, recrimination, disobedience, commerce



Pages 46-70

Summary

The first frame on page 46 is set in Nashville, Tennessee, on May 14, 1961. Several people attend a picnic to celebrate the desegregation of theaters. In the second and third frames, a newscaster announces over the radio about the bus on fire near Anniston, Alabama. In frame four, Lewis says that was the bus he was on. The report continues as Lewis and others go to First Baptist Church for an immediate meeting.

The first frame of page 47 shows someone dialing a rotary telephone. Diane Nash learns that James Farmer is in Washington, D.C. A frame in the middle of page 47 shows chaos as people talk to each other as news reports continues. A newscaster says Freedom Riders who arrived in Birmingham, Alabama, were also attacked. In the bottom two frames of the page, the newscaster says that one of the Freedom Riders was brutally beaten by a dozen attackers. The final frame shows that Nash has dropped the telephone receiver on the table.

On page 48, Lewis and others watch a television report about the situation in Birmingham. A reporter is interviewing Birmingham Chief of Police Eugene "Bull" Connor. In the first three frames of page 48, the reporter asks Connor why there were no police present when the Freedom Riders were attacked. A frame lower on the page shows an angry man with a club about to strike someone. The next frame shows Connor saying that they had allowed most of the police officers the day off because it was Mother's Day. The final frame shows a dark background with Connor's face framed inside the darkness. A black strip appears across Connor's eyes. In white words, Lewis says the group later discovered that Connor had told the Ku Klux Klan the police would not appear to break up the attack for at least 15 minutes.

On page 49, Farmer decides to stop the Freedom Rides. By this time, U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy is heavily involved. His aide, John Seigenthaler, makes arrangements for a plane to fly the Freedom Riders out of Alabama. Nash says the Nashville Student Movement wants to continue, and they want Farmer's formal support. He warns that they might be killed. In the first frame of page 50, Nash says the protests have to continue.

A loudspeaker is in the bottom left corner of page 50 with the words, "Ladies and Gentlemen" in large, dark letters. (50) The top one-third of page 51 shows the loudspeaker again with the words, "The President-Elect of the United States, Barack H. Obama" (51). In the next frame, Obama's head turns. In the third frame, he greets Lewis who congratulates Obama. On the bottom of the page, Obama and Lewis embrace. Obama requests that Lewis pray for him, and Lewis assures him he will.

Page 52 reverts to May 17, 1961, in Birmingham. Lewis and nine others pick up where the previous Freedom Riders left off but police stop them before they get all the way into



Birmingham. Two of the Freedom Riders – a black man and white man – are arrested. In the first frame of page 53, a police officer examines tickets, notes that they are traveling from Nashville to Birmingham, and identifies them as Freedom Riders. He allows them to continue their trip. The final frame shows the bus continuing to drive down a road with the police car behind it.

The first frame of page 54 shows the bus pulling into the terminal. None of the Freedom Riders with tickets from Nashville to Birmingham are allowed off the bus, but one woman, Salynn McCollum, has a different ticket and she gets off, alerting Nash about the situation. When one of the remaining Freedom Riders objects, a police officer hits him. The frames on page 55 are dark with unidentified noises, including slaps, continuing. The darkness continues on page 56. The caption indicates three hours have passed. The bus door squeaks as it opens with indistinct words in the background. In the bottom frame of the page, an officer appears at the door of the bus and orders everyone off. In the opening frames of page 57, there are angry people outside the bus as the Freedom Riders disembark. In the middle frame of the page, the Freedom Riders walk through a room in the terminal as officers hold whites back. In the bottom frame of the page, Lewis greets Salynn and a man he calls Fred (apparently Fred Shuttlesworth), who says they have to get the Freedom Riders to safety.

In the first frame of page 58, Police Chief Conner arrives and says they are all under arrest “for your own protection” (58). When someone objects, Conner orders him arrested as well. Page 59 has a solid black background with white outlines. The date is May 18, 1961. The scenes are set inside a jail. Connor arrives and announces that the Freedom Riders are all being sent back to Nashville, and that he will personally provide an escort. The dark background continues on page 60. In the first frame, the Freedom Riders are being loaded into a police van. The images appear through the wire separating the front from the back of the van in the next frames. One of the Freedom Riders invites Connor to join them for breakfast in Nashville. Connor says that “would be my pleasure” (60). The bottom image of the page has no frame. The image is completely black with the headlights from three vehicles casting enough light to see the outlines of the police van. That image is recreated from the side in the top frame of page 61. In the fourth frame, the car in the lead pulls over just across the Tennessee state line.

In the first frame of page 62, Connor orders the group out of the vehicle, and tells them to stay on the Tennessee side of the state line. He leaves them on the side of the road, saying they might be able to catch a train or bus as the police vehicles leave. In a small frame inset at the top of page 63, a woman says they are in “Klan country.” In the remaining frames, the group walks until they see lights in a house. One of them knocks and an older black man appears at the door.. They identify themselves and say they are in trouble. A man and woman allow them inside where they use the phone to tell Diane Nash about their situation. A caption indicates that Lewis knows how much courage it took for the couple to help the Freedom Riders.

The top frames on page 65 show Nash and Lewis talking. She says 11 additional “packages” are on the way to Birmingham, apparently meaning Freedom Riders. She



asks where additional riders should go. Lewis says they should all go to Birmingham. Nash says a car will be sent to pick up Lewis and his group. In the remaining frames, the Freedom Riders give the couple some money in exchange for a meal, then a young man named Leo Lilliard arrives from Nashville. On page 66, they listen to the radio and are horrified when the radio announcer reports that the group is apparently on the road back to Nashville. Fearing they might be attacked, they leave the main roads. In the final frame of the page, they arrive safely in Nashville, have a meal with other students, then head back to the bus station to catch another bus.

On page 67, bus routes are being canceled because no one was willing to drive the buses. On page 68, the group spends the night in the “white waiting room.” On page 69, Lewis says they are unable to sleep and are hungry, but they look outside to see Ku Klux Klan gathered. Police are facing the Klansmen, who are looking toward the terminal.

On page 70, someone announces that there is a bus available. When Lewis and others get outside, they see a man arguing, saying that he is not willing to die for the CORE or the NAACP. Lewis says he is amazed that this man knows about CORE, and puts that down as an indication that their message is getting out. Several people arrive, including Connor and representatives from Greyhound and the bus drivers' union. The date is May 20, and the Freedom Rides pick back up.

Analysis

The third frame of page 46 takes up the entire one-third of the page. There is no frame around the graphic, meaning it seems to take up even more of the page. The image is an old-fashioned radio surrounded by a black, jagged cloud. The edge of the radio containing the speaker is also jagged, indicating the words coming from that side of the radio. The entire image is meant to convey the importance of the news coming from the radio, and the tragedy of that news. The jagged edges are symbolic of the jagged emotions that surround the announcement. A similar graphic appears when Lewis announces that the bus on fire is the same bus he was riding before he left the Freedom Riders. His voice would have been loud and ragged, indicated by the shape of the speech bubble and the bold font used on his words.

There is an important image on page 47. Diane Nash is on the telephone, hoping to talk to James Farmer, when the group learns about the attack on Freedom Riders in Birmingham, Alabama. In the final frame of the page, Nash is no longer holding the telephone receiver. It is lying on the table. That part of the image indicates that she dropped it or put it down once she heard the horrible news about the attack. The top of the table is an important graphic image. The edges of the round table are shaded into a typical color and image. However, there is an irregular discoloration in the middle of the table, stretching from the old-fashioned telephone body past the receiver. It seems to be a puddle with jagged edges, and it is almost completely black. It could symbolize the poisonous actions against the protestors. It could also represent despair as Nash and the others learn about the attack.



The final frame of page 48 is graphically powerful. The bottom one-third of the page is black with a jagged edge turning to white at the top of that segment. There is a framed image of Bull Connor, Birmingham Chief of Police, inset into that black. There is a black strip that covers Connor's eyes, explaining that Connor had promised the Ku Klux Klan would have 15 minutes to attack the Freedom Riders before police arrived. The fact that the words are across Connor's eyes is symbolic of his decision to turn a blind eye to the attack. He is the police chief, but is obviously a racial bigot who is more willing to allow the Klan the time to attack than in enforcing the laws handed down by the Supreme Court.

There is an important image on page 58 when Birmingham Police Chief Bull Connor arrives at the Birmingham bus terminal. The previous two frames of the page are to the left of the page, one stacks on top of the other. The frame that shows Connor is as tall as the two frames to the left. Connor appears slightly distorted, with his outline becoming larger in the frame toward the top of his body. That puts the reader in the perspective of the Freedom Riders, who are seated on the floor when Connor arrives in the room. That perspective is important throughout the book, making the reader see things as the protestors see them.

Vocabulary

rejoin, corridors, assailants, pulp, involved, massacred, brutally, terminal, paralyze, sustained, protective, custody, pleasure, bulletin, ecstatic, mood, solution



Pages 71-110

Summary

Page 71 is a full page showing the bus traveling in the left lane of a divided highway, surrounded by police cars with lights on. On page 72, the bus arrives at the Montgomery city limits, then at the terminal. In the third frame, Lewis says that it seems something is wrong. In the fourth frame, there are reporters and cameramen waiting on the sidewalk. In the fifth frame, Lewis is first off the bus and a reporter addresses him. On page 73, people rush to attack the Freedom Riders. The attackers are carrying clubs and shouting racial slurs. On page 74, the attackers brutalize everyone, including reporters, as they continue to shout racial slurs. On page 75, the attack continues. In the bottom frame, some of those being attacked pile into a car. The driver, who is black, refuses to drive, citing the state law that blacks and whites cannot ride in the same car. On page 76, he demands the two whites get out of his car and they do, as the mob rushes toward them. The remaining frames on page 76 show the fight continuing.

On page 77, a woman is slammed into a car on the street. A man jumps out identifies himself as John Seigenthaler, a federal agent. In the middle of his statement, a man strikes him in the back of the head with a club. On page 78, they continue to beat Seigenthaler and others until the sound of a gunshot stops the attack. In the first frame of page 79, Lewis says that Floyd Mann fired the shot and pledged to shoot the next man to throw a punch. Mann, Alabama's Safety Director, is a white man wearing street clothes, but he gets the mob's attention and stops the attack.

The bottom two-thirds of the page shows the street outside the Greyhound bus terminal. There are several bodies on the street and obvious damage to the building. A large banner stretches across the bottom of the page with the words "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and several music notes. The next two pages revert to 2009 and contain an oversized image of the inauguration. Aretha Franklin is standing at a podium with the Capitol building in the background. There are several small insets, each showing various scenes from the Civil Rights Movement. Page 82 is solid black, a stark contrast to the previous page. There is a white banner across the top of the page with the words "Let freedom ring." A hand and arm are seen to the left of the page and a bottle is flying across the page, emitting flames and smoke. The remainder of the page is all black with slight smudges of dark gray.

On page 83, Civil Rights supporters gather at the First Baptist Church in Montgomery while angry whites gather outside. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is present. The Alabama governor swore out arrest warrants for the Freedom Riders. On page 84, Fred Shuttlesworth and James Farmer arrive at the church. King is at the pulpit, and introduces Farmer and Lewis joins them on the stage. The crowd sings songs of freedom while noises of the attackers continue outside. There are two small frames at the bottom of the page. One shows an angry white man yelling and the other shows King leaving the sanctuary for a phone call with Kennedy. The frames on page 85 show



the conversation between King and Kennedy. Kennedy promises that U.S. Marshals are on the way and asks King to consider a “cooling off period.” King says there are 1,000 people in the church and predicts bloodshed unless the marshals arrive quickly. On page 86, King presents Kennedy's request, saying the Freedom Riders have made their point and should consider it. Nash and Lewis refuse. In the final frame of the page, King goes to the phone to relay the decision to Kennedy.

On page 87, Lewis and others return to the sanctuary. A brick flies through a window, striking a woman. The marshals have trouble controlling the mob. On page 88, the Alabama National Guard arrives as the Alabama Governor declares “qualified martial law” in effect (88). Speakers inside the church address the situation, placing most of the blame on Alabama's governor, John Patterson. On page 89, the meeting ends but those inside the church find that the National Guardsmen, led by General Henry Graham, will not allow them to leave. On page 90, Graham takes the pulpit and reads a government decree that addresses the “outside agitators” who have disobeyed the state's “laws and customs” (90). They are allowed to leave early the next morning and met again to continue to organize. When someone asks King to join the Freedom Riders, he refuses because he is still on probation from a previous arrest in Alabama. That angers many in the same situation. On page 91, some walk away in disgust. On May 23, King reads a public statement, saying the Freedom Rides would continue though the participants knew there will be no police protection and that they could die.

On page 92, the group arrives at the bus station under National Guard protection. Several board the bus, including James Farmer, though he seems reluctant. In the third frame of page 93, the riders arrive at Jackson, Mississippi, on May 24 and learn that everyone on the previous bus was immediately arrested. In the bottom three frames of the page, an officer points to the “colored waiting” area, but the Freedom Riders ignore him, moving to the lunch counter and to the restroom designated for whites. On page 94, a white man shoves a black away from a urinal, then the black man and others are walked out in handcuffs.

On page 95, King and Kennedy are on the phone together. Kennedy says the Freedom Riders' decision to remain in jail rather than posting bail has no effect on the government's stand. King says it might if there are thousands of Freedom Riders arrested. Kennedy sees the words as a threat, and reminds King that America belongs to blacks and whites. King responds that blacks are fighting oppression. On page 96, King says he believes the government is headed in the right direction, but not quickly enough. Kennedy says only governmental action can change things for blacks.

The bottom three frames on page 96 show the jail in Mississippi. The comment says that the level of prejudice was ramped up from what they had seen in Alabama. On page 97, Lewis says the violence was even more intense inside the jail. The 27 arrested Freedom Riders are sentenced to \$200 but most choose not to pay, opting for the 60 days in jail instead. On page 98, the Freedom Riders, wearing striped prison uniforms, are taken to the overcrowded Hinds County Jail. They soon learn that many other blacks are riding buses to Jackson in protest, and those protestors begin arriving at the jail. Page 99 is a full-page image of a bus arriving at the Mississippi State Penitentiary,



also known as Parchman Farm, on June 15. The caption indicates it is 21,000 acres and that conditions are horrible.

On page 100, prison superintendent Fred Jones says the Freedom Riders will face danger from other prisoners, especially the blacks. He taunts them. On page 101, the Freedom Riders refuse to cooperate and one man is dragged. On page 102, the men are ordered to remove their clothes, shower, and shave in an effort to dehumanize them. One man, Jim Bevel, points out that Gandhi barely covered himself, and he “brought down the whole British Empire” (102). The frames on page 103 are set in the prison. Behind bars, the prisoners fought to hold onto their dignity and basic rights. They have very thin mattresses and, on page 104, the guards take away those mattresses as punishment for the singing. On page 105, the prisoners continue to sing and the guards spray them with water.

On page 106, prisoners are allowed to write only one letter a week. Lewis writes to his school to explain his absence and to the Quakers to withdraw from the India program. On page 107, the guards threaten to take away the prisoners' toothbrushes if they continue to sing. On page 108, anyone charged with breach of the peace in Mississippi had to post bond within 40 days or lose the right to appeal. More than a month after their arrest, someone posts bond for them and they are released.

Page 109 is a full page scene showing those released from prison walking away. Captions indicate that the Federal Government fully enforced desegregation on buses that September, after many more blacks staged Freedom Rides. Page 110 is another full page graphic. The page is starkly white with a ballot box at the bottom of the page and a black hand inserting a folded piece of paper.

Analysis

At one point during the attack on the Freedom Riders in Montgomery, a young boy is seen in the attack. An older person is urging the youngster on, calling him by name and pushing him to deeper violence. This is one example of the high level of prejudice in the South, and the fact that this prejudice is passed from one generation to another as a fact of life.

There is an interesting bit of symbolism on page 82. The page is a single scene, showing a hand that has just thrown a burning bottle bomb. At the top of the page, there is a banner with the words “Let freedom ring,” which is a carryover from the previous page in which Aretha Franklin is singing at the Presidential inauguration. That symbolism is obviously pointing to the fight that was waged during the Civil Rights Movement as blacks sought the freedom to have their rights. The bottom of the page has a splotch of gray. The image has the appearance of having been painted with a paint brush, and of having one small section missed, so that the black paint did not cover the entire page. That image could have several meanings, but it seems likely that it indicates the very small strides being made by the Civil Rights Movement. The protestors have begun breaking through the blackness to have their rights, but there is



still a lot of work. The obvious violence at the top of the page, including the bottle bomb, is evidence of the danger those people faced as they fought for the rights the laws promised.

The scenes inside the prison are dark. The artist is showing that the situation is dark and serious for the inmates. As soon as they arrive, the prison superintendent warns that they will be in danger from other inmates. The guards take steps to dehumanize the prisoners, forcing them to shave off their facial hair and later taking their mattresses as punishment for singing. While the threats are there and the graphics are very dark, the scenes themselves seem to be filled with hope and optimism. The prisoners are sometimes dismayed by their situation, including the threat to take away their toothbrushes, but they remain upbeat. That could make the reader question the truth of the situation and could bring into question Lewis's perspective. He may present the information in a less threatening way because he is remembering the situation from years later, or he may be presenting the situation accurately. It is left to the reader to decide.

Vocabulary

federal, public, mass, pews, congregation, overcome, situation, desperate, solution, confrontation, clobbered, overwhelmed, defiance, irresponsible, atmosphere, estate, injunction, slightest



Pages 111-143

Summary

The first frame of page 111 shows people on a busy city street. Lewis and the Nashville group turn their attention to the unfair hiring practices. The program is dubbed “Operation Open City.” Protestors stand in hiring lines. Lewis says “Thugs were hired to harass us” (111). The fourth frame of this page shows a young man spraying black paint on a white member of the protestors. The man grits his teeth, but thanks the attacker. At the bottom of the page, Lewis says he believes their dedication to nonviolence is an important part of their success.

On page 112, Lewis says he can see some protestors who are not dedicated to the nonviolence. One of those is Stokely Carmichael, who is passing through with the Freedom Riders. Jim Lawson is the one who tells Carmichael that the Central Committee requested that Carmichael leave.

On page 113, Robert Kennedy tries to get the blacks to shift their focus to registering black voters. Lewis hates the idea because he feels their protests are having an effect, but King endorses the plan. Lewis's group is split on the idea and divides, with some members focusing on voter registration while others continue their other programs. Most blacks in Mississippi are below the poverty line and are not registered to vote. Bob Moses, a young man from Harlem is assigned to begin registering blacks to vote. On page 115, a farmer named Herbert Lee begins to help Moses. A white murders Lee but claims self-defense and is exonerated. A group protests the verdict and is beaten and jailed.

On page 116, Lewis enrolls at Fisk University but finds most are uncaring about the Civil Rights Movement. On page 117, the Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee – or SNCC – meets for their second anniversary in 1961. Many of the organizers are gone, leaving people like Stokely Carmichael in charge. The organization shows marked changes in attitudes, including the right to hit back when struck. The original SNCC charter appears on page 118 but Jim Lawson, who wrote it, is not invited to the meeting. Lewis is elected to the group's executive committee.

Pages 119 through 123 show protests, prayers, and increased violence as blacks register to vote and the first black begins classes at the University of Mississippi. The SNCC members struggle within themselves. Many of the expanding membership lack discipline to protest peacefully and honorably. Some blacks believe whites should not be allowed to join the protests.

On page 124 and 125, George Corley Wallace, Jr., is elected as Alabama's governor and he pledges to fight the “tyranny” of the black protestors while supporting segregation. Page 126 shows protestors in Birmingham. Lewis says the situation in Birmingham has changed little since the Freedom Riders were in town two years earlier.



Page 127 shows Bull Conner, still Birmingham's Police Chief, harassing protestors. On page 128, King gathers supporters to lead a march in Birmingham, protesting the situation. On page 129, he is arrested and some moderate white leaders criticize him for invoking more protests. Page 130 is a full-page frame. The scene is black with King silhouetted against prison bars. There is a paragraph from his famous "Letter from the Birmingham Jail," in which he talks about the honor of accepting jail time for unjust laws.

On page 131, Jim Bevel, formerly with the SNCC, organizes children in Birmingham to join the protests. Page 132 is set on May 2, 1962. Radio stations make coded announcements about the protest place and other frames show youngsters and police. On page 133, police begin making arrests as more and more children stream into the park to join the protest. On page 134, a police officer bends down to look a little girl in the face. She is holding a protest sign and looks back calmly. Police arrest almost 1,000 children. On page 135, that officer gets on one knee to at eye level with the little girl, showing just how small she is. He asks what she wants and she answers "freedom," indicating that she is so young she cannot properly pronounce the word. The caption at the bottom of the page says the arrests were "an embarrassment to the city" (135).

Pages 136 through 138 show Bill Connor the following day. Instead of making more arrests as the children again take to the streets, he turns firehoses and dogs on them. The second frame of page 138 shows an old-fashioned television set showing scenes from the protest. Lewis used the scenes to increase participation in the protests in Nashville. In the final frame, Lewis says that Birmingham officials gave in a week later, pledging to desegregate the city and bringing an end to the protests.

On pages 139 and 140, protestors are shaken when an NAACP field secretary named Medgar Evers is shot by a sniper. In the final frame of 140, President John Kennedy speaks on television, declaring that it is time for protests and "token moves" toward equality to end. In the first frame of page 141, Kennedy said that the government and people have to embrace the coming changes. Meanwhile, King makes an announcement for a march on Washington, D.C. On page 142, a previous SNCC chairman resigns and Lewis takes his place.

Analysis

Lewis is a firm believer in nonviolence, and he makes that belief clear every time he can. However, the newer members of the SNCC and other Civil Rights groups are not so forgiving. By 1961, many are willing to strike back if someone hits them, and are no longer committed to the idea of nonviolence. That marks an important change in the Civil Rights Movement. Lewis continues to argue against violence but his words carry little meaning because Lewis has been beaten and jailed repeatedly. The other members see what happened to Lewis while he was practicing his nonviolence attitude. They are probably afraid of facing the same things that Lewis has faced and they want to avoid that. Lewis firmly believes that the nonviolent reactions are making a bigger impact than violence would, but his words are overshadowed by fear. Many modern-day



readers will not be able to put themselves in this position to fully understand what these protestors are facing.

One of the frames on page 132 shows a close up of a young black man's face with sweat on his forehead and fear in his eyes. Another shows a close up of a white police officer and another shows a close up of an officer's gun. The meaning is clearly to make the young man's fear and the police officer's threat obvious to the reader. The fact that the artist alternates between the officer and the teenager is a way to make the reader remain conscious of the fear and the threat.

The modern reader may have trouble understanding the problem with registering black voters. Not only are the registrars all white, they have an inordinate amount of power over who is allowed to register. That registrar may choose to have the applicant fill out a form and approve the registration, or he may choose to have the applicant take a test. The test is meant to be difficult, meaning the registrar - who also grades the test - can simply refuse to pass anyone he chooses. The requirements are ridiculous by modern standards, but they are a reality during the 1960s.

Vocabulary

facilities, discipline, erode, spiritual, reclamation, racist, registering, compromise, eligible, poverty, legislature, sole, observe, incredible, drastically, conference, democratic, methods



Pages 143-Conclusion

Summary

Page 143 reverts to Obama's inauguration as he is sworn in. Page 144 reverts to June of 1963. Lewis moves to Atlanta where he takes over as SNCC Chairman for a salary of \$10 a week. On page 145, Lewis explains attitudes about King's plan to march on Washington, D.C., and Kennedy's proposed Civil Rights Bill. Most believe that King's march will be of little consequence and Lewis pledges not to support Kennedy's bill because it required that blacks be able to read in order to vote. On page 146, Lewis describes A. Philip Randolph, who was organizing the march on Washington. Randolph had organized a similar march in 1941 but then President Roosevelt signed a law ending discrimination in defense industry hiring and Randolph canceled the march.

On pages 147 and 148, Lewis is part of a meeting at the White House in June of 1963. Government officials urge the blacks to cancel the march but black leaders refuse. Lewis does not speak at all. Page 149 is a full page image of Malcolm X, who is not invited to the meeting. Lewis does not support Malcolm X's attitude that accepted violence, but he does understand why Malcolm X appeals to his followers.

On page 150, Lewis and others meet in New York to discuss the march. Six men are allowed in the meeting. King, Lewis, A Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins representing the NAACP, Jim Farmer representing CORE, and Whitney Young representing the Urban League. They become known as "The Big Six." On page 151, they pose for a photograph. They discuss who should organize the march. Bayard Rustin's name is put up for consideration. Some criticize because he is a conscientious objector, linked to the Communist Party, and gay. On page 152, Robert Kennedy tells Lewis that the SNCC's actions have changed his perspective about Civil Rights, which impresses Lewis. The first frame on page 153 shows a man named Strom Thurmond denouncing the planned march and announcing that Rustin is gay. In the final frame of the page, Rustin continues to work on the organization as the march garners support.

On page 154, Lewis works on his speech with input from others. On page 155, Washington is on alert as the time for the march approaches. Lewis arrives and is surprised to see Malcolm X giving an interview. On page 156, Rustin summons Lewis to a meeting about Lewis's speech. On page 157, Lewis agrees to some changes and Rustin warns that there might be more changes when others read his speech. Lewis promises to consider other changes.

Page 158 is a full page of white with the U.S. Capitol covering the bottom one-third of the page. The date is August 28, 1963. On page 159, Lewis and the other members of the Big Six breakfast together and discover that the march has already begun. On page 160, the men arrive outside and see the streets filled with people, some with picket signs. On page 161, Lewis and the other leaders discover they are nowhere near the front of the line but the march goes on. On page 162, performers open the program



while Lewis and other leaders meet in a tent, arguing about Lewis's speech. On pages 163 through 164, Lewis and others talk about his speech, including the use of the words "masses," which some said sounded like communism. Lewis objects but Randolph pleads with him and Lewis agrees. Reading over the revised version, he realizes that his message remains the same.

On page 166, Lewis is introduced as the sixth speaker. Of all the speakers, Lewis is the only one "still around" when the book is written. Pages 166 through 171 are scenes from the march and Lewis's speech. He says the proposed Civil Rights Bill does not address many important issues. He says blacks need freedom to stage peaceful protests without facing police dogs, fire hoses, and jail time. He ends by saying the people "cannot be patient" while waiting for change (171). Pages 172 and 173 are a double page of King's famous "I have a dream" speech. King was the final speaker of the day and Lewis says the message was a call for a "better" United States with love as a coveted virtue (173). On page 174, Lewis is among those who go to the White House where they meet with President John Kennedy. Lewis says, "It was the last time I saw President Kennedy alive" (174). On page 175, Rustin ensures that everything is cleaned up before leaving Washington.

Pages 176 and 177 are a double page frame. On 176, Obama is giving his speech during his inauguration. He says he knows about the sacrifices that brought him to this point. Page 177 reverts to September 15, 1963, designated as Youth Sunday. A man is standing at a phone booth. On page 178, the man puts a coin in the pay phone outside the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham just as a massive explosion happens. On page 178, flames and smoke obliterate most of the scene, but it is obviously inside the church. Sirens are heard as police cars begin to arrive. The final frame of the page shows a hole through a stained glass window portraying Jesus as someone in the auditorium calls out for Denise and Addie. This frame is the official end of the book, but the next page shows the receiver from the telephone booth. The frame is completely white except for the receiver. The next page is a grayed out image of the Alabama state line sign.

Analysis

Lewis has put a lot of time and energy into his speech only to have it torn apart, but it is interesting to see that one of the objections is Lewis's comment about patience. In his speech, Lewis says that patience has become a "nasty word" for blacks, because they have been forced to be patient for the centuries (157). The man who objects to the wording shouts at Lewis. Rustin explains that the comment is an affront to the Catholics. Lewis says he will remove it and Rustin warns that there might be other changes once others have read Lewis's speech. Lewis promises that he will listen, but refuses to promise to rework the speech again. The conversation makes it clear that Lewis and others were being monitored and that people were at least attempting to make them act in certain ways. Lewis's willingness to give in when it does not change the meaning of this speech is an example of his nonviolent attitude. His willingness to stand up for himself when it matters is an example of his ultimate desire for change.



Lewis is willing to stand up for himself regarding his speech and he argues vehemently when a priest argues later about some specific words, including some he said sounds like communism. Lewis argues back, refusing to make the changes. Then A. Philip Randolph steps in and asks for time alone with Lewis. He points out to Lewis that he has been waiting decades to be involved in this march and pleads with Lewis to make the changes. He says that he does not believe the wording sounds like Lewis at all, which may indicate that Lewis took a lot of advice from those who helped him draft the original version of his speech. In the end, Lewis finds that he cannot refuse Randolph's request, and he makes the changes. He admits, looking at the original version and the revised version, that the message remains the same. This haggling over wording seems to indicate that the priest – who is white – wants to exert some control over the situation while Lewis adamantly refuses to allow that to happen. In the end, it is Randolph who recognizes what is truly important and who urges Lewis not to lose sight of that goal. This resembles Lewis's previous teachings about nonviolent reactions. When he and others were protesting segregated lunch counters and movie theaters, Lewis wanted the protestors to always be polite to their attacker, but he meets the priest's objections angrily, shouting back at the man.

The artist makes an interesting choice on page 163 by using a stark white background for the full-page frame. The U.S. Capitol is across the bottom one-third of the page. These kinds of graphics have been reserved in the past mainly for scenes related to Barack Obama's inauguration. This time, however, the scene is set in 1963. The use of the white background seems to convey hope that things are changing because of the Civil Rights Movement.

There is a dramatic change is what is happening at the march in Washington, D.C., and what is happening in Alabama less than a month later. The graphics mimic these changes. The scenes at the march are mainly white backgrounds. There are a few scenes within those pages that are tense and dark, but most are light and show a high level of hope. The feelings at the march are obviously hopeful and the graphics demonstrate that. However, less than a month later, the scene at Birmingham is very different. The pages showing the explosion are dark, filled with black images, and the scenes are hidden by smoke and flames. The transition between the two scenes is equally dramatic. There is a double page scene in which Obama is giving his inauguration speech on the left-hand page. His words stretch across to the right-hand page where the man is standing in the phone booth. Obama's words indicate he is thankful for those who made sacrifices that brought the nation to this point. On that left-hand page, the man is standing in the phone booth. He will be a victim of the attack on the church, making him one of those who sacrifices his life.

Vocabulary

oath, ability, preserve, responsibilities, guarantee, literate, residence, statesman, baritone, executive, economy, mobilizing, dramatizing, massive, capacity, provocative, tactics



Important People

John Robert Lewis

Lewis is a Congressman from Georgia when Barack Obama is sworn in as a United States President, but he has a history with the Civil Rights Movement. Lewis is active in the Civil Rights Movement in several capacities during the early 1960s. As depicted in this book, he works on peaceful protests that result in restaurants and movie theaters desegregating their services. He also joins the Freedom Riders and the March on Washington that includes influential protestors such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Through all these activities, Lewis remains steadfast in his dedication to the cause, but determined to speak the truth as he sees it. When he presents his speech at the March, other leaders demand that he change some of the wording. He does, but only when he feels that it does not change his overall message – demands for equal rights for blacks.

Lewis can accurately be called a humanist. While he wants equal rights for blacks, he does not believe that blacks should kill or wage war to get them. He believes in absolute equality and hates seeing the prejudiced people of the South refusing to obey the laws regarding desegregation. An important part of his philosophy is that he accepts being arrested and does not pay fines to get out of jail. He and others feel that their arrests for staging peaceful demonstrations is illegal, and that they will not support those illegal arrests by paying bail.

As Obama is being inaugurated, Lewis feels pride for his role in the Civil Rights Movement, and that the election of a black president is an indication that the years of work toward equality was successful.

Robert Kennedy

Kennedy is the United States Attorney General during the early 1960s, when the Civil Rights action of this book is examined. He has a meeting with members of the Civil Rights Movement, including Lewis and King. Kennedy plays an important role in the government's attitude and reaction to the Civil Rights Movement.

Kennedy talks to Lewis and others during the height of the Movement, saying that his personal attitudes have changed because of the actions of the various groups. Lewis is impressed that Kennedy changed his attitude, and that he was willing to say so.

John Seigenthaler

Seigenthaler is an aide to Robert Kennedy, who is the Attorney General of the United States during the early 1960s. Kennedy plays an important role in the Federal Government's reactions to the Civil Rights Movement, and he meets with officials of the Movement, including Lewis and King. Seigenthaler seems to feel compassion toward



the members of the Movement. He tries to step in to save a young woman during the riots following the Freedom Riders' arrival in Montgomery, Alabama, but he is hit in the head. The book is dedicated to Seigenthal, who died a few months before publication.

A. Philip Randolph

Randolph is an older black man who is instrumental in organizing the march on Washington, D.C. Randolph is serious about the goals and is the one who urges Lewis to stop worrying about specific words in his speech and to focus on the overall message. Randolph is a long-time member of the Civil Rights Movement, including having worked on a similar march in the 1940s. In that case, he canceled the march because the government ordered defense industry businesses to begin fair hiring practices regardless of race.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

King is a well-known historical figure involved in the Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 1960s. In this book, he appears as a guide for many of Lewis's actions. King is seen in several scenes of this book, including as a participant in marches. He is also present for the meeting with Robert Kennedy in Washington, D.C., and later for the meeting with President John Kennedy.

Diane Nash

Nash is a young black woman who is part of the protestors fighting for equal rights for blacks, especially in the deep South. She holds a position of authority in the Congress of Racial Equality, known as CORE, and she is present in Nashville, Tennessee, when Lewis and others learn about the attacks on the Freedom Riders.

James Farmer

Farmer is the man who has a main role in organizing the Freedom Rides. He is the first person Lewis and Diane Nash turn to when they learn that the buses have been attacked. Farmer actually appears only in a few scenes of the book, but his role as an organizer makes him important to the Freedom Riders, including Lewis.

Floyd Mann

Floyd Mann is the Alabama Safety Director in 1961 when the Freedom Riders are attacked in Montgomery. He fires his gun and forces an end to the mob's attack on the Freedom Riders.



Bayard Rustin

Rustin is a brilliant organizer who oversees the work for the march on Washington, D.C. He is attacked because he is gay, but refuses to give in and works throughout the planning, execution, and cleanup of the march.

Eugene "Bull" Connor

Connor is the police chief in Birmingham during the early 1960s when the Civil Rights movement is at his height. He is a racial bigot and uses his authority to attack the blacks who stage peaceful demonstrations in Birmingham.



Objects/Places

Barack Obama's Inauguration

This is the event that is happening on January 20, 2009, in Washington, D.C. The event is an important step in history because Obama is the first black man elected to the nation's highest office. During his inaugural speech, Obama acknowledges those who fought for Civil Rights. The speech and other events of the inauguration prompt Lewis to think back on his work in the 1960s Civil Rights Movement.

The Freedom Riders

The Freedom Riders are a group of protestors who fight against prejudice by staging a ride across the deep South during the early 1960s. They stand on a court case that declares equal rights for blacks riding buses, and the Freedom Riders demand those same rights. They are often attacked, including one instance in which someone firebombs the bus. Lewis is among the Freedom Riders.

Krystal Hamburgers

This is the fast food restaurant where employees douse protestors with water and turn the air conditioning up to a freeze-out level. Lewis and another man take the place of the cold, wet protestors, but are met with an even higher level of violence when employees turn on fumigators and lock the men inside. Firefighters rescue the two men.

Police

The police, who are supposed to protect people, are often seen as attackers in this book. The blacks of the time faced racial violence and injustice, including from police and authorities. While the police should represent fairness and safety, they were often a menacing presence for the protestors.

Movie Theaters

There are many movie theaters during this period that are still segregated. The protestors target a specific theater in Nashville where the movie called The Ten Commandments is showing. The protestors stand in line, ask to buy a ticket, and when they are refused, they simply move to the end of the line to ask again. Their presence slows down the purchasing of tickets and angers some white customers, but it also brings the segregation to the public attention.



Anniston, Alabama

The Freedom Riders are just outside Anniston, Alabama, when someone attacks their bus and sets it on fire. Lewis is in Tennessee when he learned about the attack. The prejudice of the Deep South continues to be a problem for those seeking equal rights for blacks, which is why the attack occurs and why the Freedom Riders know the protests are dangerous.

The Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee/SNCC

This is the committee that Lewis helps leads during the early 1960s. The committee is responsible, during the early months of existence, with forcing social and business changes. The committee's attitudes and actions change dramatically over the second year of its existence as leadership changed.

Birmingham, Alabama

Birmingham is in the South where racial prejudice is rampant. Connor, as the city's police chief, leads the charge with violence against the blacks who protest. The city is the center of violence, including bombings.

The March on Washington, D.C.

The march is designed to bring attention to the Civil Rights Movement. White political leaders object to the march, but black Civil Rights leaders say their followers are insisting on action. Some, including Lewis, fears that the march will be a non-event, but it turns out to be a huge event. Lewis and several others speak, including King's famous "I have a dream" speech.

The Big Six

These are six important leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. They are Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., John Lewis, A Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins representing the NAACP, Jim Farmer representing CORE, and Whitney Young representing the Urban League.

Themes

Hatred and Prejudice

Many people during the 1960s are naïve in their attitudes and actions, but hate, ignorance, fear, and prejudice drive many of them to levels of violence they would not otherwise consider. Many blacks are attacked, injured, and killed while they are peacefully protesting or just acting on their Constitutional rights as American citizens. The attackers are usually driven by their prejudice and those injured seldom receive justice for their actions.

One of the main examples of this theme is seen as protestors gather to oppose unfair policies, often by businesses. Many restaurants during this era refuse to serve blacks. Members of the Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee and similar groups organize peaceful protests to object to the illegal discrimination policies, but they are often met with racial slurs, intimidation, and violence. When a group of protestors take seats at the Krystal hamburger place, employees douse them with water and turn the air conditioner to a freeze-out temperature. Lewis and another man take the place of those cold, wet protestors, but employees turn on fumigators and lock the protestors inside the building, leaving them to die. The employees are exhibiting the hatred and prejudice that is too common during this time period. They do not consider blacks as their equals, or even as human beings.

Another example is seen when the children march in Birmingham. Police Chief Eugene “Bull” Connor is so angry and filled with hate that he turns fire hoses on and then releases dogs, uncaring that the protestors include small children who could literally be killed. There are other officials who act out of hatred and prejudice.

The Ku Klux Klan is very active during this time, especially in the Southern states. When Lewis and others set out on Freedom Rides, members of the Klan stand outside the bus terminal, clearly set on intimidation. While the Freedom Riders set out knowing that they could be in danger, they are undoubtedly afraid for their safety and their lives as they face the hatred and violence of attackers, police, and Klansmen. The fact that courts have ruled that segregation is not legal has not changed attitudes and practices in many places. When the Freedom Riders arrive in Birmingham, they see a “whites only” waiting room and restroom.

Another important element of this theme is seen in the attacks. When the Freedom Riders arrive in Birmingham, they are attacked by a large group of whites. In one scene, someone is urging a young boy to a higher level of violence. Adults are passing on their prejudice and hatred to the next generation, making it even more difficult for the Civil Rights Movement to make meaningful changes in attitudes.

The laws being enforced remain unfairly on the side of segregation, even though the courts have ruled against these laws. When the fight is going on in Birmingham, a black



man is afraid to drive his car away from the attack because there are white Freedom Riders in the car. He cites the law saying it is illegal for blacks and white to ride in the same car, and he is more afraid of breaking that law than of the fight going on in the street. That indicates the level of fear that officials have prompted in the black citizens.

The Roles of Young People

While there are many older adults working on the Civil Rights Movement, there were also young people. At one point, Lewis writes that the young people were willing to do whatever they can to advance the Civil Rights Movement. In some cases, the passion of these young people make an impact greater than that of the older adults.

When the Big Six meets in Washington, D.C., prior to the famous march, a reporter asks Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., about the involvement of young people. King points out Lewis's presence as an indication that young people are involved in the movement. Even more important is a scene between U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy and John Lewis. Kennedy says that the young people involved with the Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee changed his attitude about the Civil Rights Movement. Kennedy's change is significant. The fact that he tells Lewis about his change is even more so.

The opening dedication is an important example of this theme. The dedication reads, "To the past and future children of the movement." There are literally children involved in one of the protests described in this book, and that is an indication that even young people can make a difference.

When the situation grows tense in Birmingham, organizers put together groups of children who are anxious to do their part. This group includes very young children but the police meet them with the same attitudes they uses on the adults. They arrest hundreds of children that first day of the protests. It seems unbelievable that police would put children in jail for such a minor infraction. The children return for a second day of protests, and meet with a violent reaction. The police, under Birmingham Police Chief Eugene "Bull" Connor, turns fire hoses on the protestors, ignoring the fact that many are children who could be seriously injured or even killed by the fierce blast of water. Connor then turns dogs loose on the protestors, putting the children in even greater danger. Lewis talks about their bravery during his speech at the march on Washington, D.C.

Another example of the roles of children in the Civil Rights Movement is seen as the book comes to a close. There is a youth rally going on in a Birmingham church when the church is bombed. The details of that event is covered in the final book of the series where four children are killed.



The Roles of Civil Rights Leaders

The organizers of the Civil Rights Movement face hurdles that sometimes seem too daunting to overcome. From organizing the people who will sit at a lunch counter to arranging for hundreds who will ride buses through the South, the leaders have to fine-tune every detail. The end result is that their protests are well-organized events that prompt thought and change.

Organizing events is one of the big challenges. Some of the events are on a large scale, and organizers are required to keep people in place while providing for their basic needs. That is seen when Bayard Rustin is on the phone arguing with someone about his demand for more portable toilets during the march on Washington, D.C. Rustin knew that he could not let people urinate on the streets. Even the smallest events require thought and planning. Lewis and others have to be sure that protestors are available to take seats at the restaurants where protests are being staged. That includes spotters to report back to the organizers if there are problems. These kinds of details keep organizers busy.

Another major side of the work is the need to keep people working toward common goals. An example of this is seen when Lewis urges people to follow the mandates of his group by avoiding violence and behaving honorably, keeping their eye on the ultimate goal of equality. He is on the opposite side of this issue during the march on Washington, D.C. He is furious that others are pushing him to change wording in his speech and seems to be on the verge of refusing. Then A. Philip Randolph, one of the organizers, points out that the words do not seem to be his own. Randolph says he began working on this event with Lewis, and that he wants them to finish the event together. That makes Lewis realize that he could reword his speech, avoiding the conflicting words, without changing his meaning.

There are some people who do not believe in nonviolence. Lewis points at Malcolm X as one of those people. While they are both fighting for equal rights, Lewis believes fully in for protests to be peaceful and for protestors to always comport themselves with honor and kindness. Those who join Lewis's groups are asked to conform. Anyone who does not conform, is simply asked to leave. Keeping that integrity is vital to Lewis and he believes he needs followers who feel the same. There are also arguments within the group, including some who believe that whites should not join the black protest groups.

Yet another challenge facing the organizers is the responsibility for the safety and well-being of so many people. When the Freedom Riders are attacked outside Anniston, James Farmer calls for an end to the Freedom Rides. He knows that the young people who participate could be injured, jailed, or killed. While he believes in equal rights, he is bound to feel responsible for the young people who look to him for guidance. Diane Nash calls Farmer, pleading with him to give them his formal support to continue the rides. Farmer does so, but he is again faced with the idea that he could literally be calling on some of these young people to give their lives for equal rights.



Abuse of Power

There are many people in positions of power who have the ability to change how people act and react, but many of those people abuse that power. These people do not care that blacks are being treated unfairly and only want to preserve their segregated, prejudicial way of life.

One of the main examples of this theme is seen in the actions of Eugene “Bull” Connor. Connor is the Birmingham Chief of Police during the early 1960s when the Civil Rights Movement is at a peak in the South. He is in charge of the police department when the Freedom Riders are slated to arrive in Birmingham, and he fails to prevent attacks as the protestors arrive in Birmingham. Connor says that the police department is short staffed because many officers are spending Mother's Day at home with their families. Lewis says that is not true, and that Connor actually makes arrangements to allow members of the Ku Klux Klan a short time in which to attack Freedom Riders without police interference.

In addition, Connor is furious with a group of Freedom Riders who refuse to post bail. He says he will take them back to Nashville, but actually leaves them in a rural area at the Tennessee state line with instructions to never return to Alabama. The blacks are in serious danger from the KKK, but Connor leaves them without protection and probably provides newscasters with information about the students' whereabouts.

Connor is also the officer in charge when children participate in a march in Birmingham. The first day of the protest, he orders the children jailed. Officers arrest almost 1,000 children that day. When the protest picks up again the next day, Connor orders his officers to turn on the fire hoses, spraying the children with the brutal force of the water. He then turns police dogs loose on the crowd. His willingness to use violence against children is a brutal misuse of his authority.

Another example of this theme is seen in the opening scene of the book at the Krystal hamburger restaurant. A group of protestors take seats at the counter. Several people abuse their authority as employees of the restaurant to brutalize the protestors. They spray the protestors with water and turn the air conditioning setting to freeze them out. In a dangerous turn of events, they turn on a fumigator and lock the final two men in the restaurant, apparently leaving them to die there.

Another example is seen in the attitudes of people who attack the protestors. These attackers include young people, families, and members of the KKK. Each seems to feel that the color of his skin gives him the right to attack the protestors. The attackers in these cases see their skin tone as the authority over blacks. These people attack and abuse blacks, treating them as something less than human.



Human Dignity

John Lewis writes about human dignity when he is applying for a role in the Freedom Riders movement. In that application, he says that “human dignity is the most important thing in my life” (30). His attitude seems to be similar to that of many other people on both sides of the Civil Rights Movement. While the Freedom Riders and others fighting for equal rights are fighting for their dignity as human beings, those opposing them believe that stripping the protestors of their human dignity is an important way to fight against them.

There are many examples of this theme seen throughout the book, and an important element is seen in Lewis's attempts to keep protestors acting and reacting honorably. He cautions protestors against lashing out in anger, which has been his mantra since the beginning of his work in the Civil Rights Movement. In one scene, a white man is marching with the protestors when someone attacks him with a can of black spray paint. The attacker paints the white protestor's face. Though the protestor is obviously furious, he thanks the man for the black paint and does not retaliate. The attacker is trying to strip the man of his human dignity and the protestor refuses to allow that to happen. This reaction is difficult for some, and Lewis's group dismisses anyone who cannot embrace the ideology.

Another example of this theme is seen when protestors are arrested. They are publicly handcuffed and taken away in police vans. In many cases, police beat the protestors, pretending they are battling to keep order even though the protests are completely peaceful. Once in jail, the police harass the protestors, now held as prisoners, berating them and punishing them for any perceived infraction. While Lewis and others are held in a Mississippi State Penitentiary, the guards take away their mattresses because the prisoners are singing. When Birmingham Police Chief Eugene “Bull” Connor arrests a group, he takes them to the Tennessee state line and forces them out of the police cars in a rural, wooded area. He is trying to intimidate them, but also is showing his authority over them. The entire situation is designed to strip them of their power and dignity.

Styles

Structure

The book is a graphic biography is presented in the traditional style of a comic book. Each page is made up of a series of frames that depict events. These include the people involved and the actions that are important to the story line. In some cases, the frames are used to show the passage of time or the importance of specific events. For example, there are multiple pages dedicated to Eugene “Bull” Conner's action of forcing the the Freedom Riders out of Alabama. He pledged to take them to Nashville, but dropped them in the woods at the Tennessee state line.

In the first book of this series, Lewis cites a book about Dr. Martin Luther King that had a similar graphic structure, which may have contributed to the use of this structure for this series. The book about King had an impact on a generation of people, including children, which may have influenced Lewis's decision to use this format.

The cover of the book shows a bus that is on fire with people running from the flames. This is one of the most important scenes of the book. The Freedom Riders ride buses throughout the South and one of those is firebombed. This is one of many examples of violence against the blacks who participate in demonstrations aimed at bringing the Civil Rights Movement to the public attention.

Another important scene in the book is Lewis's address in Washington, D.C. The graphic section of this book includes comments from that address, and the full text of his original speech is included at the back of the book. The purpose is to make the reader understand the changes that Lewis made based on arguments from others present that day.

The book also includes information about the three authors: Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell. Aydin is a member of Lewis's Washington, D.C. Staff and Powell is a graphic artist. Following the final graphic scene of the book, the reader will find a dedication to John Seigenthaler. Seigenthaler was an assistant to Robert Kennedy when Kennedy was Attorney General. He was also sent to work on the Civil Rights issues in Alabama and was beaten when he tried to help one of the Freedom Riders escape from attackers.

Perspective

The book is presented in first person from the perspective of John Lewis, who is one of the book's authors. The book is structured like a comic book and depends heavily on graphics. The drawings and the words are from Lewis's perspective. The perspective is limited to Lewis. The limited perspective is appropriate to the story.



Other people that appear in the book are seen only through Lewis's memories. He relates what happens to some of the other people, but does not address their feelings or thoughts except through their actions and their comments. For example, Lewis talks about A. Philip Randolph asking him to change his speech during the march on Washington. Others had demanded that Lewis change the wording, but Lewis resisted. However, Randolph says that he has waited decades to see this march take place, which moves Lewis. Lewis does not talk about Randolph's personal feelings about the march, but he must have felt a level of accomplishment and pride at how the event had come together. The reader has to deduce feelings and thoughts of the various individuals, based on the words and graphics.

Lewis is at the heart of the Civil Rights Movement for years and his perspective reflects the importance he places on the work. He is disdainful of the young men at college who are participating in typical college silliness, pointing out that so many other young men their age were fighting in wars and fighting in the Civil Rights Movement.

Tone

The overall tone of the book is one of hope and perseverance, with violence, racial prejudice, and hatred as undertones throughout the book. The modern-day reader may not feel the fear as intensely as the participants in the Civil Rights Movement felt it, simply because they are looking back at the events from more than a half century later and because the Civil Rights Movement was ultimately successful at prompting real change. This makes the hope and perseverance seem stronger than the fear and violence. The graphic form of the book may also make the violence seem more like a novel, or comic book, than history, which may also lessen the impact.

The book depends heavily on graphics but there are conversations, including Lewis's speech during the march on Washington. There are also conversations between the various people in the book, including those who are angry at the Civil Rights protestors. In many cases, these people hurl hateful words and racial slurs toward Lewis and other protestors. These include the word "nigger," but do not contain curse words, which is apparently an attempt to truthfully present the action while toning down the language for younger readers.

The book is set in a dual time. Most readers will consider the earlier setting to be the main focus on the book. In that earlier time, Lewis is an active member of the black effort for equal rights. The Civil Rights Movement is in full swing during this era and Lewis holding a significant role in the action.



Quotes

I'll end up where I need to be.

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame three)

Importance: Lewis and others are preparing for Obama's inauguration and someone has just urged him to move to the front of the line, where he is expected to be. Lewis's attitude, that he will end up in the correct place, is symbolic of his fight for equal rights that brought him to this day in history – the day when the first black man is sworn in to the nation's highest office.

I spent February 21, 1961 – my twenty-first birthday – in jail.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame four)

Importance: Lewis and others are in jail for protesting the segregated theaters. It is significant that Lewis is willing to spend time in jail rather than pay his bail, even though it means he misses his birthday and his senior sermon. That is symbolic of his dedication to the Civil Rights Movement.

I know that an education is important and I hope to get one, but human dignity is the most important thing in my life. This is the most important decision in my life – to give up all if necessary for the Freedom Ride, that justice and freedom might come to the deep South.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame six)

Importance: Lewis is talking about what he wrote on the application he turned in to become part of the Freedom Riders. His words are evidence of his dedication to the Civil Rights Movement.

At this time, a Greyhound bus carrying Freedom Riders is reported to be in flames outside of Anniston, Alabama.”

-- Newscaster (chapter 1 paragraph Frame three)

Importance: This is the radio broadcast that alerts Lewis to the news that the bus had been attacked. He was a passenger on this bus when it set out, but had left his group to consider an offer to join a group headed overseas. Everyone is worried about the Freedom Riders and the attack is just one more piece of evidence regarding the escalating violence.

I'm putting you people under protective custody, and sending you all the way back to Nashville where you belong. And just to make sure you get there, I'm gonna ride along.”

-- Eugene "Bull" Connor (chapter 1 paragraph Frame six)

Importance: Connor is talking to Lewis and others arrested as they arrived in Birmingham, Alabama. Connor's words make it seem that he is going to be certain the



Freedom Riders are safe, but he actually drops them off in a wooded area where the Ku Klux Klan is known to be, putting their lives in desperate danger.

It may sound strange, but at the time I was more shocked that this white bus driver knew enough about us to reference CORE by name.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame three)

Importance: Lewis and others are hoping to resume the Freedom Ride but there are no bus drivers willing to put themselves at risk. One driver, a white man, makes it clear that he knows about CORE and the Freedom Rides, which makes Lewis realize that the message has begun to take hold in the minds of ordinary people.

Mister Kennedy, if the Marshals don't get here immediately, we're going to have a bloody confrontation.”

-- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (chapter 1 paragraph Frame five)

Importance: King is talking to U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy about the situation at King's church. King and other protestors are inside the church and an angry mob of whites are outside. Everyone knows the situation could become violent at any moment. The situation is resolved, to a degree, when the National Guard shows up, but those men literally keep the protestors captive inside the church for hours, refusing to let any of them leave.

Within two weeks of our arrival in Hinds County, the growing number of Freedom Riders being housed within its walls forced the local sheriff to transfer us to another prison.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame five)

Importance: Lewis and others are serving 60 days in jail because they have refused to pay the fine of an unjust law. But soon, the number of people joining the Freedom Rides are growing, and many are being arrested. They strain the resources of the local jails, which prompts the sheriff to move some of them to Parchman Farm, the Mississippi State Penitentiary.

I deeply believe that our discipline paved the road to our success.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame five)

Importance: There have been many new volunteers joining the ranks of the Civil Rights Movement, but many of them are rude and undisciplined. Lewis does not tolerate those attitudes, and believes firmly that those in his group cannot show anger or strike out, and that they have to behave honorably at all times.

Segregation today, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever.”

-- Alabama Governor George Corey Wallace, Jr. (chapter 1 paragraph Frame one)

Importance: This is part of Wallace's inauguration speech and is an example of the political powers that refuse to obey the nation's law regarding integration. The fact that



political powers are still speaking in this manner shows the deep-rooted prejudice in the South, and the lack of human compassion for an oppressed people.

Nearly a thousand of Birmingham's black children were arrested that day."
-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame three)

Importance: This is Lewis's comment about the first day of children protesting in Birmingham. They are arrested, but many return the following day, and that's when Bull Connor turns fire hoses and dogs on them, prompting a national outcry and many new volunteers to the movement.

You, the young people of the SNCC, have educated me. You have changed me.
-- Attorney General Robert Kennedy (chapter 1 paragraph Frame three)

Importance: Kennedy's statement is important because it shows that the Civil Rights Movement is making changes in attitudes, not just forcing changes in laws. Lewis says that Kennedy's words prompt a new level of respect, both because Kennedy changed his attitude and because he told Lewis about the change.

For those who have said, 'Be patient and wait,' we have long said that we cannot be patient. We do not want our freedom gradually, but we want to be free now."
-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame four)

Importance: Lewis is addressing the crowd during the march on Washington, D.C. He is making it clear that the blacks have the right to have their freedoms and rights granted now rather than accepting promises that change is going to happen at some future date.



Topics for Discussion

Describe John Lewis's role in the Civil Rights Movement.

Lewis is a leader who believes in nonviolence. The reader should talk about his attitudes and dedication, including his determination that the demonstrations should be peaceful and that protestors should not strike out, even if they are attacked.

Who is Eugene "Bull" Connor and what is his role in the Civil Rights Movement?

Connor is the Birmingham Chief of Police during the early 1960s when the Civil Rights Movement is working to change laws and attitudes in the South. Connor is prejudiced and meets the protests with violence. The reader should talk about how Connor misuses his power and his decision to turn dogs and fire hoses on the group of children who march for equality.

Describe Lewis's attitude about the plan to march on Washington, D.C. Why do you believe he feels this way?

While Lewis does not talk about his feelings, he does make some observations. He expects the march to become a nonevent, meaning he expects few people to show up and that the march will not have an impact. The reader should explore Lewis's actions and attitudes prior to this event. He has always been busy in the fields, riding with the Freedom Riders and sitting at lunch counters. This is a very different kind of protest than he is typically part of, which may impact his expectations.

Describe the scene at the Krystal hamburger restaurant when Lewis and others protest their segregation policy.

A group of protestors are hosed down and the air conditioner turned on, forcing them out of the restaurant. Lewis and another man take their place. The reader should talk about the staff's action, including that they turned a fumigator on while Lewis was locked inside.



Why are there protests at movie theaters? How are these protests staged?

The protests are staged because many theaters continue to have segregation policies. The reader should describe the fact that protestors wait in line, are denied tickets, and simply move to the back of the line to ask again. The reader should also talk about the protestors linking arms in front of a theater when management locks the door, refusing to let anyone inside.

Why do some of the protestors refuse to pay bail? What was the effect of their arrests?

The protestors often refuse to pay bail or fines, saying that would be giving financial support to unjust laws. Lewis, King, and others talk about the need to obey the just laws of the land and their right to protest the unjust laws. The reader should talk about the many arrests for civil disobedience, and what those arrests cost the protestors. For example, Lewis's family was disappointed and embarrassed, and he stopped going home as often.

Who is A. Philip Randolph and what is his role in the Civil Rights Movement?

Randolph is one of the Big Six and a driving force behind the march on Washington, D.C. By the time of that march, Randolph has been active for decades, working toward Civil Rights. He worked to organize a similar march years earlier but it was canceled when the government called for an official end to the racially-biased hiring practices in the defense industry. The reader should talk about Randolph's impact on Lewis, including the fact that Lewis changes his speech based on Randolph's pleas.

Describe at least two scenes of the book that include Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

King is very much a presence at the march on Washington, D.C. The reader should talk about his role in that march, including that this was the site of his famous "I have a dream" speech. There are several other scenes that could be used for this answer, including his appearance in Birmingham, and his meetings with U.S. political leaders.



What are some of the problems the Civil Rights activists face while trying to maintain control of the protests and protestors?

The reader should talk about the problem of organizing such large scale events while keeping people working toward common goals. There are some people who do not believe in nonviolence and some who believe that whites should not join the black protest groups. The reader can also talk about the dangers facing protestors and the fact that organizers are literally sending people into situations that could result in death or jail time.

Who is Robert Kennedy and what is his authority? What is his attitude toward the Civil Rights Movement?

Kennedy is the Attorney General of the United States during the early 1960s and the height of the Civil Rights Movement. He has the authority to enforce laws and he sends one of his aides to Birmingham, ultimately helping get Freedom Riders out of the city and to safety. His personal attitudes are never revealed except for the scene in which he admits that his mindset has changed because of the actions of the Civil Rights groups.