

March: Book One Study Guide

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

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Summary

Lewis, John; Aydin, Andrew. March, Book One; Top Shelf Productions, Marietta, Georgia, 2013. Kindle AZW file.

The book is presented in the form of a graphic memoir of John Lewis's life. The traditional graphic book frames depict the various aspects of Lewis's early life and his early role in the Civil Rights Movement, set against his role in 2009 as a Congressman when Barack Obama was about to be sworn in as the United States President.

Lewis grows up on a farm with conservative parents. One of his jobs is to tend the chickens. Imagining that he might grow up to be a minister, he practices preaching to the birds under his care. He feels compassion for the chickens and buries all the birds that die, including the babies. He learns to manipulate the setting hens to get the most from them, but also learns that it is possible to overextend the hens. He is always upset when the family eats one of the chickens for a special dinner.

When Lewis is a teenager, he spends time with a relative in Ohio. There, he discovers that he does not mind eating chicken when he has not played a part in raising it. He also begins to realize there are other ideas about the major issues of life.

As a youngster, Lewis is serious about his education. His family sometimes needs him to stay home and work on the farm, but Lewis often hides and manages to catch the bus to school. At the end of the day, his father scolds him but seems to know that Lewis will take the same action again the next time he has the opportunity. Lewis notices that the white children have better buses and better school facilities. When the courts rule that "separate but equal" is no longer acceptable, Lewis expects to see changes. He applies to a college that has traditionally been white, but the school officials do not respond.

Leaders in the black community, including Martin Luther King, Jr., offer to help Lewis sue the state of Alabama for admission to the college. They promise to raise the money for the lawsuit, but Lewis's family refuses to support him and he drops the idea. However, as a college student, he joins a group of protestors who begin a program aimed at forcing the local department stores to serve blacks at their lunch counters. They are beaten, arrested, and threatened, but they continue to work their program. Over the coming weeks, officials make and break promises, and make threats in the hope that the protests will stop. The protestors never waver and even manage to get a boycott on several downtown businesses that refuse to serve blacks at their lunch counters.

When someone throws dynamite into the home of Z. Alexander Looby, the attorney who represents the protestors after the first round of arrests, the protestors march on Nashville City Hall where they confront Mayor Ben West. West has a progressive outlook and, facing pressure from thousands of protestors, urges the downtown businesses to stop their segregation policies. The following day, blacks eat at the lunch counter for the first time and Martin Luther King, Jr. speaks in Nashville. He says the



protestors have inspired him, but reminds them that they will have to be willing to keep fighting for their rights. While blacks are being served at the lunch counters, two black men enter a small hamburger restaurant and face angry white workers, all while hearing King's words echo in their minds.

Pages 1-20

Summary

There is a single frame on page four, which is the first page of the graphics. The image depicts a river through a bridge railing. An unidentified person asks John Lewis if he can swim.

Frame one on page five is a larger view of that question. There are protestors on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Frame two is a closeup of Lewis and the man who questioned him. Lewis answers that he cannot swim. In frame three, the man says he cannot swim either. Frame four is from a distant perspective, showing the two men leading a large group of protestors. The man says they may be forced into the water. The fifth and final frame on that page shows police; some are loading or carrying weapons - one has a bullhorn.

Frame one on page six shows that police have the bridge blocked off. There are quiet instructions to prepare. Frame two shows police wearing gas masks, and frame three shows snarling dogs with exaggeratedly sharp teeth. In frames four and five, an officer shouts through the bullhorn, telling the protestors to leave.

Frames one through three on page seven show a conversation between the unidentified protestors and the officer with the bullhorn. A protestor asks to talk to “the Major” but the officer refuses. In frame four, Lewis addresses the unidentified protestor, calling him Hosea and suggesting they pray. In frame five, the protestors tell each other to kneel. In frame six, Hosea and Lewis are on their knees with murmured prayers from the people behind them. An inset in frame six shows an officer calling for the police to move forward.

Frames one through four on page eight show the officers pushing forward, striking some of the protestors and urging each other to attack. A small inset shows a tear gas canister, and the final frame shows the gas beginning to flow out as protestors cough.

The first frame on page nine shows an officer and sounds of attack. The second frame is a close-up of Lewis's hands trying to hold onto the pavement as he is dragged. The shadow of an officer indicates Lewis is about to be struck. The final frame is solid black. The three frames of this page are shown against a backdrop of a black bottom jaggedly changing to white at the top.

Page 11 is the title page for March, Book One. The frame depicts an unidentified scene with a brilliant light in the distance.

The first frame on page 12 sets the time and place for the coming scenes: Washington, D.C., January 20, 2009. The second, third, and fourth frames show the interior of a home.



The first frame of page 13 shows an alarm clock, which goes off and begins a news cast in frame two. In frame three, Lewis opens his eyes and he turns off the alarm in frame four. In frame five, he dons his slippers.

In frame one of page 14, Lewis turns on the television and a newscaster talks about the event set for later in the day. In frames two and three, the newscaster says that Barack Obama is being inaugurated as Lewis heads to the bathroom. In frames four through six, Lewis sings about freedom as he showers and brushes his teeth.

In frames one and two of page 15, Lewis stands in front of the mirror, continuing to sing. In frames three through six, he picks up his cell phone and sees that he has a missed call and a voice mail from a “private number.”

Page 16 is a large frame of the Cannon House Office Building with five frames set on the lower three-quarters of the page. In the first four frames, people are moving around in the building with indistinct conversations taking place. In frame five, Lewis enters his office to hear someone talking. The speaker is talking about something from her past and someone who hid while waiting for the school bus.

In frames one and two of page 17, the speaker is identified as Rosa, Lewis's sister. She immediately begins to ask him why he is not wearing a hat and scarf. Lewis urges his sister and the man with her to be ready to take their seats. Then there is a knock on the door. In frame five, a woman enters with two young boys. She says they are from Atlanta, are in town for Obama's inauguration, and that she wanted them to see Lewis's office.

In frame one of page 18, Lewis invites the woman and her sons, Jacob and Esau, into his office. In frame two, she is surprised to realize that Lewis is greeting them in person. In the remaining three frames on the page, the woman says she wants her sons to understand this piece of black history.

There are five frames on page 19. Lewis shows his guests his office, including a wall covered in photographs. He takes a boat paddle from the wall and begins pointing out specific photos, including one with President John Kennedy and another of the march during which Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his famous speech, “I Have a Dream.” In frame one of page 20, Lewis says he was among the speakers day, and that he is the only one who is still alive. In frames two through four, the boys are looking around the office and one asks why Lewis has so many chickens. Lewis laughs and begins to tell the story of his childhood.

Analysis

As a graphic book, the authors and illustrators depend heavily on traditional methods to make points. For example, the words shouted by the police officers through the bullhorns are in jagged dialogue boxes while the words spoken by the protestors are presented in smoother boxes. The jagged edges of the boxes are used to depict the harsh shouts. When Lewis enters his office, he can hear a voice, but the words are

indistinct. The authors show a dialogue box filled with squiggled lines to make that clear to the reader.

The characters are introduced in an erratic way, meaning the reader has to have at least a basic grasp of the characters and situation to fully understand the dialogue and the situation. For example, Rosa calls Lewis “Bob,” which was a family nickname for his middle name, Robert. John refers to Rosa by first name, but says nothing else to further identify her. Rosa refers to John as her “baby brother,” which is how the reader identifies her as John's sister (17). The man named Hosea in the opening scene is never further identified. He is probably another activist, Hosea Williams.

The perspective is limited to Lewis, in his roles as protestor and narrator. This is seen in the dialogue but is also seen in the graphics. A prime example of the perspective is in the opening scene on the bridge. In frame three of page six, there are two police dogs with highly exaggerated teeth. Though it is clear to the reader that the dogs do not have teeth like that, the protestors are afraid of the dogs, as they should be, and see them as a horrible threat.

Another example of the perspective is seen in the second frame of page nine. There is an image of Lewis's hands. He is trying to hold on as he is being dragged away and there is a shadow with a club raised above Lewis's head. That is exactly what he sees. While the illustrators might have chosen to give a full view of the scene, including the police officer who is dragging Lewis and is about to strike him, seeing the scene from Lewis's perspective makes a larger impact on the reader.

The woman who arrives with her sons, Jacob and Esau, says she wants them to know more about their history, including how far the black race has come over the preceding decades. Lewis is an important part of that history, as the woman knows. The boys are reasonably well behaved, though one makes a comment when Lewis apologizes that his office is in disarray and the woman has to prompt them to thank Lewis for his time. The boys seem more interested in the decorations in the office, including the number of chickens, than in the pictures of Lewis with the famous leaders, Kennedy and King. This is one of several examples of the generational gap, which is one of the themes of the book.

Vocabulary

unlawful, conducive, public, disperse, kneel, troopers, advance, uniquely, reaffirm, commitment, democracy, transfer, oath, dignity, whirring, inauguration, disturbed



Pages 20-35

Summary

In the sixth frame of page 20, Lewis begins telling the story of his childhood and the graphics change to the family farm and the story's setting and time changes.

As a young boy, Lewis is responsible for caring for the chickens on his family's farm. That frame on page 20 shows a young Lewis shelling corn for chicken feed. An inset on page 21 shows a closeup of that process. The remainder of page 21 is a large frame with fields, a few trees, and a house and a barn. Lewis says his father paid \$300 in cash for the 110-acre farm in Pike County, Alabama, in 1940.

In the first three frames on page 22, Lewis says that \$300 was all the money his father had saved from working as a sharecropper. The fourth frame stretches across the page and shows Lewis in the doorway of the barn. He is attached to the chickens, though he never cares about any of the other farm animals. In the final two frames of the page, he talks to the chickens each day.

In the seven frames on page 23, Lewis knows the different breeds of chickens and names some. One chicken falls into a well and stays there for days before they lower a basket of feed into the well. She climbs into the basket and they rescue her.

On page 24, Lewis's favorite chicken is a hen he calls Lil' Pullet. He learns to manipulate the eggs among the chickens to get more chickens to set longer with the hope of hatching more baby chicks. But that is difficult for the chickens so he builds a makeshift incubator though he has always hoped he would someday be able to buy an incubator from Sears.

In the first frame on page 26, Lewis never gets that incubator, though he longs for it the way some other youngsters wish for toys. In frame three, Back in Washington, D.C., one of the boys asks Lewis why he did not become a chicken farmer. In frames four and five, Lewis says he has never forgotten his mother reading to him from Genesis in the Bible, and that he wanted to become a minister.

In the first frame on page 27, Lewis says he could read the Bible by himself by the time he was five years old, though he did not always understand what he was reading. In the remaining frames on that page, Lewis is a young boy back on the farm. Lewis practices preaching to the chickens. The birds seem to respond, "But they would never quite say amen" (27).

Page 28 has a large frame with two smaller frames overlaid on the top portion. The insets show Lewis as he shouts out his sermon. The larger frame is a night scene of the house and barn, with Lewis's voice coming from the barn and a single light on in the house. There are three frames on page 29. Lewis's family sometimes eats chicken, and



it always upsets him. He knows he should not make the chickens into pets, but he is powerless to stop.

There are six frames on page 30. Lewis hold funerals for the chickens that die of natural causes, and his parents do not understand. He feels genuine grief over the losses. On page 31, Lewis talks about his decision to baptize some of the chickens. He drowns one of the young birds and is horrified. In the first frame of page 32, Lewis puts the bird in the sun, hoping that it will recover. The second frame shows a closeup of the sun, which is intense. The third frame shows a young Lewis with tears in his eyes. In the fifth frame, the bird opens its eyes and begin to peep. In the sixth. In the final frame, the bird is walking around but its recovery does not eliminate Lewis's guilt.

Page 33 is one large frame. At the top, one set of hands passes a box to another set. In the main body of the frame, the young Lewis, obviously angry, watches his parents trade chickens for the necessities. Lewis says it is “one of MY chickens” (33).

In the second frame of page 34, Lewis says that trading chickens is not nearly as horrible as when his father kills one. The remaining frames on the page show an ax, a chicken being held down, and Lewis's father holding an ax up as he is ready to strike. Lewis says they sometimes wring the chicken's neck and sometimes chop its head off. In the first two frames of page 35, they drain the blood and scald the chicken to make it easier to remove the feathers, and Lewis never attends those meals.

In the remaining three frames of page 35, Lewis is back in the Washington office with Jacob, Esau, and their mother. The boys ask if he stopped caring about the chickens because he hated seeing them killed. Lewis says that is just a reality of life on the farm. He says he eventually stopped paying so much attention to the chickens and spent more time on his school work as he began to learn about the word. One of the boys asks if he had trouble in school. Lewis says that he was an average student, but that school was the catalyst that involved him in the Civil Rights Movement.

Analysis

Frame six on page 25 is an interesting picture that most young people will not understand. Lewis is seated and is looking through the Sears-Roebuck catalog. First, he talks about the fact that the family refers to the catalog as their “wish book.” That catalog is a large book, similar to a sale paper, but with the thousands of items available through the Sears company, which was then called Sears-Roebuck. It is a staple in most homes of the time period, especially in rural communities where mail-order was a common means of purchasing items.

The second important aspect of that frame is that Lewis is seated, his pants are lowered, and there are rolls of toilet tissue on the floor. That indicates that he is in an outhouse. The outdated catalogs might have been kept there and used instead of toilet tissue to save money. The reader has to remember the circumstances of Lewis's childhood. He is growing up in rural Alabama in the 1940s and 1950s. He is black and



poor. His family faces hardships that are difficult for modern readers to even imagine, let alone understand.

The illustrator uses another powerful image technique in the first frame on page 27. The frame is large and shows a man reading a book, presumably the Bible. The man's image is totally black but the book is white with indecipherable black writing. There are white words on the man's image. The words are a Bible verse relating to the Lamb of God's ability to remove the world's sins.

Vocabulary

tenant, sharecropper, bantam, darned, pullet, penciled, incubator, makeshift, model, catalog, comprehend, merciful, meek, peacemakers, persecuted, righteousness, painstakingly, precise, barter

Pages 36-54

Summary

The first frame on page 36 reverts to Lewis's childhood. His parents have the attitude that they should never speak out or do anything to incur the anger of whites. But other members of the family are more progressive with regard to wanting equal rights. Otis Carter is Lewis's maternal uncle. He is an educator and he plans to take Lewis to visit relatives in the North. On page 37, Lewis says his Uncle Otis pays attention to Lewis because of his dedication to school work and because of his actions as a whole. Lewis often wears a tie. The grownups laugh about it, but Otis sees the man Lewis could become. In the summer of 1951, Otis and Lewis set out. The final frame of page 37 shows picnic baskets in the back of a car.

In the first frame of page 38, Lewis says they carry food with them because there will be no restaurants willing to serve them until they are out of the southern states. Otis plans their route carefully to be certain they stop for fuel and restrooms only in places where Otis is certain they will be safe. The fourth frame on page 38 shows two white men who are obviously hostile, and Lewis says Otis knows the places they should avoid. The frames on page 39 show the two continuing their trip and that they are cautious as they make their way through the southern states of Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

On page 40, some blacks are traveling from the North to the southern states, and they face additional hostility. Their northern license plates make them "visible targets" (40). The fourth frame shows men on a porch, calling hateful words to a black traveler. In frame five, the traveler is standing by the door of his car and Lewis says the blacks are sometimes treated even more harshly.

In frame one of page 41, Lewis and Otis cross the river into Ohio. In the next frames, Lewis says that Otis is obviously more comfortable, which Lewis finds comforting. Page 42 is a full-page frame of a big city. There are two smaller frames at the top, showing the young Lewis staring excitedly out the car window as they turn toward Buffalo.

There is a vertical frame on page 43 showing the busy city street. In the other three frames on this page, Lewis recalls his amazement at discovering that white people live next door to his aunt and uncle.

On page 44, Lewis remembers a trip to a department store. His aunts, Leola and Mae Charles take him to the store and he is excited about the opportunity to ride an escalator for the first time. He purchases candy at the candy counter. The final frame of that page shows the young Lewis holding a bag of candy, and remembering that he made the candy last.

On page 45, Lewis goes with his Aunt Leola to purchase a chicken. She chooses a live chicken and the butcher kills and cleans it for her. He sees the vast difference between



this lifestyle and his life on the family farm. He discovers that he eats this chicken without any qualms. The fourth frame of page 45 shows the young Lewis seated at the table, holding his stomach, obviously full from their chicken dinner. In frame one on page 46, summer comes to an end and Lewis is ready to go home. In frames two through five, they make the trip. In frame six, they arrive at the family farm and Lewis thanks his uncle.

Page 47 is a single, full-page frame. Lewis is standing beside the family mailbox with two other children. One is presumably his sister, Rosa. Lewis knows that he would have been happy to go to school if he had not been so aware that segregation meant the white children had better schools than the blacks.

On page 48, Lewis talks about some of those differences. The roads in the black communities are never paved unless white travelers also use them. The white children have a better bus, better school, and playground equipment – a far cry from the bare field where the black students play.

In the first frame on page 49, Lewis notes that the men on the prison work crews are black and the workers in the fields are black. In frame two, the bus arrives at the school with a loud squeaking sound. Lewis is always happy to be at school. He loves the library, operated under the watchful eye of librarian Coreen Harvey, who urges the children to read. There, he reads the first black periodicals.

The first frame on page 50 shows an adult plowing with a horse. Lewis says the “reality” of life on the farm is that the children are sometimes needed for work at home. Lewis begs to be allowed to go to school, pointing out that he will miss out on school work.

In frame one on page 51, Lewis gets up with the family and eats breakfast, but hides when everyone else goes to the fields to work. In the final frame of page 51, Lewis is hiding under the porch when he hears the sound of the school bus. In the first frame of page 52, the bus is seen on the road. In the second frame, Lewis is running for the road. In frame three, he rushes onto the bus. In frame four, the bus is disappearing down the road toward school.

In frame one of page 53, Lewis's father is angry when he gets home. In the next frames, he chastises Lewis, but they both seem to recognize that Lewis is determined to attend school.

In the final two frames of page 53, Lewis is a freshman in high school when he reads the newspaper story announcing that the Supreme Court had ruled in the Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education case. The first frame on page 54 shows that headline which rules that “separate but equal” is no longer legal. There are three frames across the middle of the page. Lewis expects immediate changes and that he will attend a fully-integrated school by the following term. His mother warns him to avoid conflict. In the bottom two frames, Lewis is upset by his parents' attitude but is more upset when their preacher does not even mention the ruling. Lewis notices that their preacher drives a good car.

Analysis

There are many ways illustrators use frames to portray actions, events, and thoughts. One example is seen on page 45. There are six frames on the page but they are not square and do not share equal space on the page. The first frame on the left is a typical size, as are the final two frames at the bottom of the page. The second and third frames are smaller and positioned on the top right of the page. The fourth frame stretches across the width of the page, between the top three frames and the bottom two frames. The interesting point of this placement is seen in Lewis's body in frame four. He is standing with his aunt at the butcher counter. Her head is not visible at all and Lewis's head is only visible from the mouth down, with the focus on the chicken they are buying. However, the top of Lewis's head is in frame three and is positioned so that it matches up with the lower part of Lewis's head. The middle of his face is missing because of the space between the frames. Frame three includes Lewis's assessment that things are different in the city. Frame four includes his realization that he does not feel sad for the chicken they are buying for their dinner. The division is an indication that Lewis is already beginning to see the differences between his life on the farm and the life that is possible.

The author uses the word “nigger” repeatedly throughout the book. One of those is seen on page 40 when Lewis talks about the racial slurs that northern travelers might have faced on their way through the south. Many readers will find the word offensive but the author chooses to include it, apparently in an effort to provide an honest look at the prejudice that was common during this time in history.

The first frame on page 49 shows prisoners working on the side of the road and field hands working at a harvest. Lewis points out that the workers in both instances are black. The illustrator uses another graphic technique to make a point in this frame. The prisoners are on the left side of the frame and the field workers are on the right. The frame seems to be ripped in half, with a jagged space separating the two halves. The point is that these are lives that are ripped apart, at least partly by the prejudice that keeps many blacks from having decent jobs and a penal system that convicts blacks with less evidence than the law should allow.

Lewis's parents are cautious, which is not surprising considering their upbringing. They were raised in a time when lynchings were common and blacks felt they had no way to fight the white-dominated system without endangering their very lives and the lives of their family and friends. His parents continue this attitude throughout this book, despite the fact that Lewis becomes an integral part of the Civil Rights Movement. The reader may be ready to criticize them for their failure to want change, but there are other social and legal changes taking place that play a big role in the next generation's desire for equality, and their willingness and ability to fight for those rights. This is one of several examples of the generational gaps that prompt social changes.

Lewis does not explain his comment about the preacher always driving a “very nice automobile” (54). In previous frames, he expresses his disappointment that the minister



never addresses the prejudice the blacks face, nor mention the legal changes that are occurring. That could be explained by the separation of church and state law, and the preacher may have felt it would be a misuse of the pulpit to talk about those things. However, the final frame of that scene, in which Lewis mentions the preacher's car, leads the reader to believe that the preacher is actually happy with things as they are.

Vocabulary

desegregation, furious, doctrine, integrated, injustices, reality, displaced, escalator, otherworldly, frantic, earnest, journey, rural, devotion



Pages 55-63

Summary

On page 55, Lewis hears a broadcast one Sunday morning and learns that the speaker is Martin Luther King, Jr. In the first four frames on page 56, Lewis is deeply affected by King's message. The combining of Biblical principles with the social issues of the day is called "Social Gospel." Lewis looks for information about King in the library, but finds little. In frame five on page 56, a white man is angrily pointing and yelling. Lewis says white elected officials are swearing they will defy the court regarding integration. The final frame of the page is a woman bending over a casket. The background is starkly white and the woman and casket are shaded dark. Lewis says the issue is becoming violent.

On page 57, Lewis talks about the murder of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old who is killed after he calls out "bye, baby" to a white store clerk. A black man saw white men drag Emmett from his family's home, but the all-white jury found the men not guilty of the murder. After the trial, the two men told journalists that they had murdered the boy.

Lewis's family lives 50 miles from Montgomery. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refuses to move to the back seat of a public bus in Montgomery. The first three frames of page 58 show that story, including Parks' arrest. While the family does not know Parks, they know lots of people from Montgomery.

On page 59, Lewis listens to accounts of the situation, including the bus boycott. He listens to King and realizes that King is speaking out the way Lewis's pastor is not. Lewis realizes that pastors do have power. In the first frame on page 60, Lewis is almost 16 years old when he preaches for the first time. He admits to being fearful at first, but he and the congregation "warmed up" together (60).

On page 61, a reporter takes Lewis's photograph for a newspaper article about the young preacher. Page 62 is white with a bus driving across in the middle of the page, transitioning from the previous scenes back to Lewis's office in Washington, D.C.

Frames one and two on Page 63 shows Jacob and Esau's mother telling Lewis that the boys are good, but spend too much time playing video games. In frame three, someone enters, reminding Lewis that he has to leave in five minutes. In the final frame of the page, the mother offers to leave, but Lewis encourages her to finish what she was saying.

On page 64, the mother asks Lewis how he got his college education. He says his mother found an article about American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, a Baptist sponsored school for blacks planning a career in the ministry. The graphics revert to that time in Lewis's life. In the final frame of page 64, Lewis's mother brings him the information so that he can apply. On page 65, Lewis begins attending there,



working in the cafeteria, which means he meets almost everyone at the college. He continues to discover new ideals but always thinks about King's Social Gospel. The final frame on page 65 is short, wide, and solid black except for the dark image of Lewis's forehead and eyes. He says he feels guilty because he is not doing anything to further black rights. That knowledge makes him “restless” (65).

In the first frame of page 66, Lewis applies to the all-white college, Troy State, just a few miles from his parents' farm. They never respond. In the third frame, Lewis writes a letter to King, knowing that King will understand how he feels. That letter begins a correspondence with activist Reverend Ralph Abernathy and the attorney Fred Gray, who had represented Rosa Parks. In the fifth frame of page 66, Lewis reads a letter from Abernathy and Gray saying that King wants to meet Lewis.

In the first frame on page 67, Lewis's father drives him to the bus station where he catches a bus to Montgomery. The two men do not speak during the ride. Lewis arrives, meets Gray, and they go to a nearby church. Page 68 includes six frames, each showing another step on their journey. That continues on page 69 as they walk down a hallway. The final frame of page 69 shows King standing to greet Lewis and Gray.

There are six frames on page 70. King and the others question Lewis, asking if he is determined to attend Troy State and asking about his life. Frame one of page 71 shows King telling Lewis how they can get him into Troy State. King says they will sue the state of Alabama. Over the next four frames, King says Lewis is not old enough to file a lawsuit without his parents' approval. He warns that some people might retaliate for Lewis's action, against Lewis and his family. He pledges to help raise money for the legal battle, if Lewis decides to proceed.

On page 72, Lewis travels home. His father picks him up at the bus station and they drive home in silence. In frame three, Lewis and his parents talk about the situation the following morning and they refuse to give him permission. He realizes that fear drives their decision and in the final frame, he begins his letter to tell King the news.

On page 73, Lewis mails the letter. He is disappointed, but looking back, is able to say that he met people at the university in Nashville that led him toward what would become his life-long attitude of nonviolence. Lewis's narrative is interrupted by a knock on his office door in Washington, D.C.

Analysis

There is another graphic technique utilized on page 61. The page is very black. At the top of the page, there is a lighter colored scene with the young Lewis posing for a photograph for a newspaper article. The bottom half of the page shows a torn newspaper with Lewis's picture and the headline, “Boy Preacher.” None of the other words are visible, but are represented by squiggled lines. The interesting part of this page is in the middle. There is an inset with a closeup of Lewis's eyes. The caption under the eyes indicates this is the first time a newspaper writes about him. The closeup



of the eyes helps the reader understand how Lewis sees the situation and the article. He is bound to feel powerful at this point, and to consider that he might make a difference. That attitude had begun to bloom as he listened to King over the previous weeks, and this is Lewis's sign that he can also affect the lives of other people.

The bus on page 62 is a stark contrast to the many dark pages in the book. The page is starkly white except for the image of a bus driving across the middle of the page. The bus is relatively small, considering the space available. The purpose of the white color is to again bring emphasis to the issues of race. The secondary purpose of the page is to bring a transition from the story of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott.

There is more than an entire page, a total of eight frames, dedicated to the trip from Gray's office to King's office. These are images only with no words in any of the frames except words to show that their shoes were squeaking on a floor in one hallway. The page is powerful because it shows Lewis's understanding that this is an important part of his personal journey.

Lewis would have been in for a difficult time if he had been the first black student at Troy University. He realizes that on a basic level, but it is probably only years later that he fully understands. He would have certainly faced violence if he had sued the state and begun as a student at Troy, which would have likely changed his attitudes and shaped his values later in life. His parents refuse to support his desire to attend there, which is disappointing at first, but Lewis is able to look back from years later and realize that what he learns in Nashville stays with him and shapes the rest of his life.

Vocabulary

philosophy, supportive, presume, represented, glamorous, theological, seminary, convention, published, missionaries, inspired, boycott, testify, confessed, defiance



Pages 74-94

Summary

In frame one on page 74, the mother thanks Lewis for spending time with them. In frame two, she thumps both boys on the back of the head, prompting them to thank him in frame three. In frame four, there are muted conversations around the room as everyone prepares to leave for the inauguration.

In the first frames of page 75, Lewis again greets his sister, Rosa. A man steps into the picture and gives Lewis a message from Jim Lawson, which prompts Lewis to remember the past.

Frame four reverts to March 26, 1958. Lewis is attending the First Baptist Church in Nashville where a fellow student says that Jim Lawson will be speaking that evening on nonviolence. On page 76, there are only a few who attend and Lewis is the only student from his school. Diane Nash, a student at Frisk University, is there. Lawson, the speaker, is a graduate student at Vanderbilt and a representative of F.O.R., the Fellowship of Reconciliation. That group had published a comic book about King and his efforts at nonviolent integration. On page 77, Lawson talks about the history of nonviolent change.

Page 78 is a full black page with only a few words and the outline of Lewis's face and torso in sharp white. He realizes that this is the answer to how he will do his part for the Civil Rights Movement. On page 79, Lewis recruits fellow students for the next nonviolence workshop. On page 79 and 80, they begin role playing, taking turns being protestors and attackers. The purpose is to help protestors learn to take all kinds of abuse without reacting with violence. They push each other and, as seen on page 81, some cannot take it.

Page 82 is solid black with figures and words in white. Lawson gives additional lessons, teaching the protestors how to protect the most vulnerable parts of their bodies and how to gather in a group for protection. Lewis says the most difficult lesson is to always react with love.

Frame one of page 83 shows a young black woman helping a white man to his feet during one of the classes. The group names themselves the Nashville Student Movement. To avoid all sense of corrupted leadership, they would take turns in leadership roles. Their first goal is to address the practice of segregation at stores in downtown Nashville. The department stores have lunch counters where customers can purchase light meals, but they do not serve blacks.

On November 28, 1959, members of the movement plan some "tests" at the stores. They purchase something at the store so they show they are "legitimate customers," then take a seat at the lunch counter (84). Frame one of page 85 spans the top of the



page and shows several black people seated at the counter. In frame two, the waitress arrives. In frame four, she announces that she will not serve them but the students ask to speak to the manager. In frame five, the waitress talks to the manager who walks to the counter in frame six.

On page 86, the manager says the store policy prohibits blacks at the counter. He also refuses to serve the white students who are with the protestors. The students leave without incident. People from around the nation offer encouragement for the student initiative.

On page 87, students run a second test. This time, the waitress immediately says they will not be served and the manager says it is store policy. Again, they leave without incident. After the Christmas break, more students join the movement. Similar groups stage similar protests in other areas of the South. In the third frame of page 88, Douglas Moore calls Lawson, offering encouragement for the Nashville group. In the final frame of page 88, students line up at a department store, waiting for a turn at the lunch counter.

On page 89, the book reverts to Washington, D.C., on January 20, 2009. Lewis and the others prepare to go out for the inauguration. Rosa fusses, worrying that Lewis has no hat or scarf. An unidentified man in the office gives Lewis his scarf. In the first three frames of page 90, Lewis agrees to take the scarf, but says there is really no need. He remembers that there was snow on the ground the day he joined the protestors at the department store lunch counter.

The final frame of page 90 reverts to 11 a.m. on February 7, 1960. The main frame shows people in a lengthy line, standing in the snow. A small inset shows Lewis looking up at the falling snow. On page 91, the line stretches around the block from Woolworth's and down the street. The fourth frame shows an empty lunch counter and the fifth frame shows a distressed waitress. In frame six, young people are seated all along the lunch counter.

On page 92, the waitresses make racial slurs and refuses service. Another customer leaves, obviously upset. In the final frame of the page, a waitress puts a closed sign on the counter. Page 93 is a single frame. The closed sign is clearly visible but there is the sound of a light switch clicking off, leaving the counter in near darkness as the protestors continue to sit there.

On page 94, the protestors remain at the counter, in the near dark, for several hours. At one point, some young men arrive and taunt the protestors but they bore relatively quickly when the protestors refuse to respond. About 6 p.m., they leave peacefully.

Analysis

Another graphic technique is seen on page 74. The fourth frame of that page shows the various people who are in Lewis's office, including Rosa and a man accompanying her, the young mother with her sons, and an unidentified man who is apparently Lewis's



aide. The illustrator shows that several people are involved in quiet conversations. There are dialogue bubbles from the young mother, one of her sons, Rosa, and the aide. The words in the dialogue boxes are written in tiny script and most readers will pick out only a few random words. This indicates almost whispered dialogue, the exact opposite of the shouted words from the police officer with the bullhorn in the opening pages. The dialogue boxes in that scene were large and ragged, and the words were written in large, bold letters.

The group that protests the practice of lunch counter discrimination does a couple of test runs aimed at testing the practices of the establishment and at helping the protestors prepare for the real sit-in, which could become more intense than the tests. One important issue is that the waitresses and managers refuse to serve whites who are part of the protest group. If a white person is associating with the black protestors, they are refused service. Historically speaking, there were whites who stood with the blacks, but they often faced an even higher degree of persecution and anger. Whites saw them as traitors to their race.

There is a reference to a comic book about King, which was printed by the Fellowship for Reconciliation. That book may have been at least part of the reason Lewis chose to present his story in graphic book form.

There is an unidentified man in Lewis's office in several scenes. It seems likely that this man is Andrew Aydin, Lewis's communications professional and one of the authors of the book.

Vocabulary

literally, conducting, congregation, divinity, reconciliation, passive, eradicate, poverty, dehumanize, humiliating, centralized, policies, interracial, legitimate



Pages 95-110

Summary

On page 95, the various groups reunite at the church. All consider their days' work a success. They recount incidents that happened, including a lady who ran away when she discovered there were blacks in the restroom.

Frame one on page 96 shows students headed for another day of protest on February 18. Some 200 protestors join. Frame two shows the sign on the front of one of the stores, W.T. Grant. The manager again closes the lunch counter and protestors sit at the counter for hours without incident. On February 20, they arrive again. Frames five and six of page 96 show whites beginning to be angry, shouting racial slurs, and complaining.

In frame one of page 97, Lawson announces that the store owners have asked students to stop their protests to give them time to come up with a solution. The students agree but days pass with no word. In frames two and three, the protestors come up with a list of guidelines for those who have not had training. The last frame on page 97 is that list, which includes directives on how protestors should act and what they should do. The final instruction is to “remember the teachings of Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King” (97).

In the first frame of page 98, Lewis remembers a meeting in which Will Campbell speaks. Campbell had been forced out of Oxford, Mississippi, because he played ping-pong with a black man. In the remaining frames on page 98, Campbell says whites are planning to attack the protestors and the police plan to let that attack take place before they begin arresting the protestors. He predicts that protestors will be beaten but the protestors are determined to continue.

On page 99, Lewis is with a group that sits in at the Woolworth's lunch counter, which is upstairs. As soon as a group is seated at the counter, whites attack those waiting downstairs for their turn. The group upstairs rushes down. In the first frame on page 100, the whites begin attacking. The attack continues on the second through sixth frames. Lewis says that their passive response halts the attack. In the first frame on page 101, he explains that the attackers are disappointed that their rage did not provoke the blacks into fighting back. In the second frame, the attack trickles to a stop. Frame three shows an attacker pouring a condiment on the top of a protestor's head, but the protestor remains stoic. In frames four and five, a white protestor is stomped. In frame six, the attack comes to an end and the police show up, ordering the protestors to leave.

Page 102 is a full-page frame with two smaller frames inset near that top. The smaller frames show arrests and Lewis does not show fear. The larger panel shows the large number of protestors being taken from Woolworth's to the waiting police vans and the crowd gathered to watch the event. On page 102, the protestors sing about their

freedom and Lewis remembers that they want to make changes in their country. The final frames on page 102 are dark with the protestors outlined in white. Lewis says that was the first time he was arrested.

On page 104, the protestors begin arriving at the jail. They are “surrounded” by other protestors. The protestors continue to arrive. At the lunch counters, new protestors move in to take the place of any person the police arrest, making a steady stream of people being arrested and jailed. In the final frame of page 104, the protestors sing.

In the first frame of page 105, police reduce the bail for each person to \$5, hoping everyone will pay the bail and leave. No one does. When officials realize the situation, all the protestors are sent away without paying anything.

In the first frame on page 106, Dr. Stephen J. Wright is pictured speaking to 1,000 students. Wright is the president of Fisk University. He pledges support for the protestors, the first to do so. In frame three, all the protestors show up for their court date. The fourth and fifth frames depict three lawyers with Z. Alexander Looby as the lead attorney for the protestors.

In the first frame on page 107, the judge declares that students will be tried in groups. Looby objects but is overruled. In the remaining frames on the page, Looby argues his point but the judge turns away and reads until Looby admits defeat. In the first three frames on page 108, the judge finds all the protestors guilty and sentences each to a month in the jail, which the judge calls the workhouse. In frame four, a young woman stands and says they will not “support the injustices” by paying the fine (108). The other protestors begin yelling, “Jail, no bail” (108).

The first frame on page 109 shows the protestors working in the jail. Lewis remembers messages of support from people, including Eleanor Roosevelt. In the second frame, a young man is being arrested and Lewis says the protests continued. The third frame shows a picture of Nashville Mayor Ben West seated at his desk. He is a progressive man but is unwilling to go so far as to publicly support the protestors. Still, after only a few days in jail, West orders the protestors released. The final frame of page 109 shows an open jail cell. West creates a biracial committee to consider problems of segregation in Nashville and the protestors agree to halt their actions for a time. While the students are being released, officials from Vanderbilt are ordering Jim Lawson's dismissal.

In the first two frames on page 110, faculty and staff members at Vanderbilt are lined up, all pledging to resign in a show of support for Lawson. Weeks pass and the protestors march in front of nine downtown businesses. In frame four, Tennessee Governor Buford Ellington speaks to a reporter, saying the Columbia Broadcast System is behind the protests. In the final frame, protestors call on the black community to boycott the downtown businesses.



Analysis

Lewis makes the point that he is arrested for the first time at the Woolworth's lunch counter, but that there are “many” more in the coming years (103). While he does not give details of any of his other arrests in this book, his choice of words – the “first” arrest – make it clear that this was not his last.

The attorneys who represent the protestors volunteer for the task and they are not paid for their work. Looby makes a remark about the fact that the protestors will not get a fair trial. While he is obviously correct (the judge turns away while Looby is talking and is writing as Looby is arguing for separate trials for each defendant), it is a small miracle that the judge tolerated the comment. The judge might have declared Looby in contempt or imposed some sentence on him.

The protestors are sentenced to a month in jail, but the jail is referred to as the “workhouse.” This is evidence of the penal system at the time. The inmates are not treated as modern-day prisoners are treated. They are forced to work and treated poorly. The sentence is harsh, especially considering many of the protestors are young people.

The final two frames on page 103 are black with protestors outlined in white. The illustrator is making it clear that the protestors are in the back of a police van. The imagery is obvious and it seems that the protestors might be afraid if they were not standing together for a united cause. That unity makes it difficult for the police to take real action against them. That unity is also seen in the jail as they join together in song and jointly refuse to pay the \$5 it would take to be released.

Tennessee Governor Buford Ellington speaks to a reporter, saying that he believes the Columbia Broadcast System is responsible for “staging” the protests (110). Lewis does not explain but it seems likely that Ellington is saying the protestors are getting help from the media. The attitude is believable and is probably a slam against the intelligence of the black protestors. Ellington may believe that blacks are unable to organize, stand together, and accomplish the kind of reaction that he is seeing.

Vocabulary

moratorium, courteous, campaign, selective, irate, convenience, instigated, reputation, progressive, outrage, injustices, immoral, motions, compliant, euphoric



Pages 111-122

Summary

In frame one of page 111, a minister shouts “hallelujah” from the pulpit. In frame two, a reporter interviews a man who says there are few customers at the downtown businesses. The third frame of page 111 fills the middle half of the page. The scene is downtown. The mayor has come up with a plan for “partial integration” but the protestors see that it is merely another form of “partial segregation” (111) Despite the fact that protestors hate the mayor's plan, it gains support from various officials, including Wright, the Fisk president who pledged solidarity. In frame four, Thurgood Marshall talks from the pulpit at Fisk. He says that a protestor who has been arrested has “made your point,” and that he should then “get out” of the situation (111). Lewis is convinced that the protestors are fighting the white-dominated social structure, but that they are also fighting the black leaders.

In frame one of page 112, the protestors again take seats at the lunch counters. In frame two, Lawson is the speaker at a gathering in Raleigh. His message includes criticism of the conservative attitudes of the NAACP. By the end of the conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee is formed to oversee the protests.

Frame one of page 113 resumes in Lewis's office in Washington, D.C. In frame two, Lewis and Rosa part ways, each headed for their seats for the inauguration. Frame three shows an empty hallway, focused on the door of Lewis's office. A phone is ringing inside. In the final frame of the page, the phone rings louder.

Page 114 is a full-page frame. The page is solid black except for the words and a gray telephone hanging on a wall. The phone is ringing. The caption indicates the story has again reverted back in time. The date is April 19, 1960. Page 115 has four frames, each the width of the page. Lewis answers the phone, which is on the wall in a hallway, possibly in a dorm room. He listens for a moment before dropping the phone and banging on a door while shouting for a man named Bernard.

In the first frame of page 116, Bernard comes to the door and Lewis announces that someone has thrown dynamite into the home of the attorney, Mr. Looby. In frames two through five, Lewis and others discuss the situation, including the news that no one was hurt though the blast was significant. They agree that they have to stage a march to protest the bombing and to show they will not stop protesting. They plan to march to talk to Mayor West.

The frames on page 117 show protestors gathering for the march, which takes place just a few hours later that same day. In the final frame, there are thousands at the mayor's office, asking to talk to him.



The first frame on page 118 shows West talking to a spokesperson referred to as Mr. Vivian. In the next frames, Vivian shouts that it is time for officials to take a stand. West points out that the protestors have power and insists he is working on the issues. He suggests they “pray together” but someone in the crowd shouts that they should be able to “eat together” (118). A woman addresses West, saying he has power to stop the segregation. West says he took that stand regarding the services at the airport, and that there was never any trouble there.

In frame one on page 119, the woman calls on West to make the same recommendation regarding the lunch counters in the city's stores. He agrees, but says the store managers still have the right to do as they please.

The first frame of page 120 shows a newspaper with the announcement that mayor has said lunch counters should be integrated. In frame two, Lewis says the first blacks eat at the city's lunch counters the following day. King arrives in Nashville and says he is inspired by recent events. The third frame shows blacks and whites, men and women, seated at a lunch counter. The fourth frame shows feet as people walk. The final frame shows two men walking toward a fast food restaurant.

In the first frame on page 121, King urges the protestors to stay the course. In frame two, the two men enter the hamburger restaurant. In frame three, they are met by angry white workers. A small bubble in that frame repeats King's words, that they cannot become tired of working for Civil Rights. Frame five shows the outside the the restaurant, which is just a small building with a sign identifying it as “Burger Junction.”

The final page of the book is a single frame. The page is solid white except for a small flip phone at the lower right-hand corner. The phone is vibrating and the words “incoming call” can be seen on the screen.

Analysis

There is an interesting frame on page 111. The second frame of the page is in a box that is rounded at the corners to look like an old-fashioned television screen. The frame shows a man being interviewed about the downtown boycott and the rounded frame makes it clear that viewers are seeing that interview on television.

Mayor West makes an important point when he says that he supports integration, but that the store managers have the right to make their own policies. Historically, privately owned companies were able to set their own policies for many years, until the courts stepped in and made discrimination a punishable offense. However, public opinion carries almost as much weight as court rulings in many cases. When a large part of the population got behind the protestors in any given area, the private businesses were forced to capitulate. This show of public unity is enviable in modern times when there are few united groups of any size willing and able to take a stand to make a difference.

There are a few additional pages in the book, including the author's acknowledgments and information about the three men responsible for the book – John Lewis, Andrew



Aydin, and Nate Powell. Aydin is a telecommunication specialist for Congressman Lewis. Powell is a graphic artist.

There are unanswered questions, including who is calling on the cell phone. The reader should remember that this is one of three books in the series.

The final page of framed graphics on page 121 includes an interesting dialogue bubble. In a previous frame, King urges the protestors to stay the course. In frame three on page 121, there is a dialogue bubble with the words "Don't get weary." The bubble is not attributed to any of the people in that frame and the words are obviously meant to reflect King's earlier comments. The image of that thought echoing in the minds of the people in that frame is a reminder that they have won only a small victory, and that they will have to continue to fight for their rights.

Vocabulary

despair, weary, inspiration, recommend, prestige, appeal, bigotry, outraged, dramatize, resource, implement



Important People

John Robert Lewis

Lewis is a Congressman from Georgia in modern times but has a history with the Civil Rights Movement.

Lewis is born in a rural area in Alabama, about 50 miles from Montgomery. As a child, his entire world is focused on the family farm, especially the chickens that are one of Lewis's main responsibilities. When he is still young, his uncle takes him on a trip to visit relatives in the North. There, Lewis is exposed to new ideas and a different way of life. Most notably, his black relatives live next door to whites without any problems.

When Lewis returns to the family farm, he is suddenly aware of the discrimination his family faces on a daily basis. He feels that his education is the most important thing he has, and he literally sneaks away from the farm to attend class. He attends Troy University but feels he is not doing much for the Civil Rights Movement. He has brief contact with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and considers filing a lawsuit to gain entrance to all all-white university, but his parents refuse to support him. He drops the idea and later realizes that he became a better man for the time he spends in Nashville.

Lewis becomes active with protestors who set out to change business policies that ban blacks from their lunch counters. The protestors are peaceful, even when faced with violence, and Lewis is one of many jailed for their continued protests.

As the book comes to a close, Lewis leaves his office to watch the inauguration of Barack Obama, but he is fully aware of the steps blacks have taken to come to this point in history.

Ben West

West is the head of the Nashville city government during the early 1960s when Lewis and other protestors are staging sit-ins at local lunch counters. West has a more progressive mindset than many middle-aged white men of the time. He is open to the idea of integration. However, he is also a politician and he knows that taking a public stand in favor of integration will make him unpopular with white voters, putting his job in jeopardy. With that in mind, West does not try to convince the store manager to open the lunch counters to the protestors when the sit-ins begin to occur. Instead, he forms a committee to look into the city's biracial issues with the hope of coming to a peaceful conclusion. His main problem is that he cannot please both sides of this issue, and as a politician, his first instinct is to find a solution that will allow him to stand for desegregation without angering the whites.

West is a strong leader, evidenced by the fact that he orders the release of all the protestors who are sentenced to a month in jail. He had integrated the local airport as



one of his early actions in office. When the blacks confront him directly on the steps of city hall, West is unable to ignore his conscience on the issue of segregation. He says that he believes the lunch counters should be integrated, but he also realizes that the government has a limited say in store policies. Still, with his influence, blacks are served meals at the lunch counters the following day.

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 mentor to Lewis and he offers to help Lewis file a lawsuit to be the first black student at Troy University. King is a strong character in the book, because readers will instantly know his name and will know that he is eventually murdered because of his beliefs.

Z. Alexander Looby

Looby is a lawyer who steps in as defense attorney for the dozens of protestors arrested by Nashville police. He refuses to take any money for his work and is obviously furious with the judge's attitude and actions during the trial. His arguments for the protestors are sound – that they have not broken any laws and that they each deserve a separate trial. Later, someone throws dynamite into the Looby house. No one is injured but that act motivates the protestors to march on Nashville City Hall, urging Mayor Ben West to call for an end to the violence.

Esau and Jacob

Esau and Jacob are two young boys who arrive at Lewis's Congressional office at the Cannon House Office Building on the day of Obama's inauguration. The boys' mother hopes to help them get a better understanding for the history of blacks by learning more about Lewis and his role in the Civil Rights Movement.

Otis Carter

Otis is Lewis's maternal uncle. He is an educator and arranges for Lewis to travel north one summer to visit relatives. As Otis drives north, Lewis understands that his uncle is worried that they could encounter problems. Lewis is aware of the moment when, crossing into Ohio, Otis begins to relax. Otis opens Lewis's eyes to the possibility of a different kind of life, with whites and blacks living in the same neighborhood and shopping at the same stores. Lewis is never the same and has a new view of the injustices blacks face in the South.



Lewis's Parents

Lewis's parents are conservative blacks who grew up in a highly prejudiced era in the South. They want to be safe and they are afraid to speak out about injustices. They are tolerant to a point, as seen by Lewis's father's attitude when Lewis sneaks away from the farm work to attend school. Despite that attitude and their overall desire to support his dreams, they refuse to let him become involved in a lawsuit against the state for admission to the all-white school, Troy University.

Jim Lawson

Lawson is an activist who teaches protestors about nonviolent means of protest. He inspires Lewis to a role in this movement. Lawson is graduate student at Vanderbilt when he is speaking to protestors, and Vanderbilt officials make the decision to dismiss Lawson but Vanderbilt staff and faculty announce plans for a mass resignation in support of Lawson.

Emmett Till

Emmett Till is a 14-year-old black boy who is murdered by white men because he said the word "baby" to a white clerk in a store. The men who murder him are acquitted by an all-white jury, despite a black witness who saw the men dragging Till away. The men then tell a reporter that they are guilty of the murder.

Thurgood Marshall

Marshall is a well-known activist but he has a conservative side. He tells protestors that they have "made their point" once they are arrested, and they should then leave the situation, implying that he believes the students should have paid their bail to get out of jail. Lewis and others feel that Marshall's attitude is weak, and that he does not understand the social situation that young protestors face.



Objects/Places

Social Gospel

This is the program founded by King that combines Biblical principles with the social issues of the generation. Lewis recognizes it as a means of making a real impact on the Civil Rights Movement.

Canon House Office Building

This is where Lewis has his offices as Congressman, and where all the action occurs that includes Lewis's sister, and the young mother with her sons, Esau and Jacob.

Chickens

Lewis is responsible for the family's chickens when he is young, and he becomes incredibly attached to many of them. He is heartbroken when a chicken dies and horrified when his family eats one or barter one for necessities. As an adult, Lewis has nicknacks in the shape of chickens in his office, which prompts Jacob and Esau to ask about chickens, leading Lewis to talk about his early life on the farm.

The Edmund Pettus Bridge

This is where the opening scene of the book takes place. There are protestors on the bridge and they are met by police. The full story of this event is not included in the book.

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. The event and some guests prompt Lewis to think back on his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Troy State University

This university is an all-white school near the Lewis Farm. After segregation is ruled illegal, Lewis applies for admission there but does not get a response. King offers to help Lewis fight the state for the right to attend Troy, but Lewis's parents refuse to let him file the lawsuit because they are fearful of retaliation.



Store Lunch Counters

The department stores of the period have lunch counters that serve light meals to customers, but the stores routinely refuse to serve blacks. The protestors in Nashville and around the nation target these counters as a means of forcing equal rights for blacks. In Nashville, many protestors are arrested but the protestors win when Mayor Ben West urges the stores to open the counters to blacks. The blacks consider the issue as a win when the first blacks are served.

Nashville

Nashville is where Lewis attends college and where he joins with others to protest the lunch counter policies in downtown stores. The Nashville Mayor, Ben West, plays a role in urging stores to stop the segregation practices. The city is the setting for much of Lewis's early adulthood.

American Baptist Theological Seminary at Nashville

This is a college in Nashville that helps black men and women prepare for careers in the ministry. This is where Lewis attends college. Though he wants to go to Troy State, he later realizes that his time in Nashville shaped him into the man he becomes.

Bail

The protestors who are jailed after the sit-in at the lunch counters are supposed to post bail in order to be released, but they refuse, even when the bail is reduced to five dollars each. Their refusal wins out and the jail officials, overrun with protestors, finally sends them away without bail. The protestors' refusal to pay is symbolic of their refusal to submit to the continued injustices of the legal system.

Themes

Integration and Segregation

Blacks were freed from slavery a century before the Civil Rights Movement, and had theoretically been granted equal rights in all aspects of life for many years - but the theoretical aspect and the real-world aspect were vastly different. By the time John Lewis becomes active in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, many black people are tired of living in fear and are ready to fight for the real-world application of equal rights. One of the main aspects of equality is based on the idea of segregation and integration.

Lewis is thrilled when he learns that the Supreme Court has thrown out the accepted practice of “separate but equal.” Until then, school districts and businesses could provide a separate facility for blacks. School districts are the most common place this is seen during this time. The district effectively segregates the black students by providing them their own teachers, busing, and campus. The problem is, those facilities are not equal, as required by law. Lewis is fully aware that the white children have better buses and facilities than the black children of the same district. Even the black children's school books are handed down from the whites. The case of *Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education* brings the practice to a stop from a legal standpoint, but the reality is that segregation continues.

Lewis wants to enroll in Troy State, a university near his parents' farm. The school has traditionally been for whites only but the court ruling means that blacks can now attend Troy. Lewis's request for consideration is ignored by the university, but Martin Luther King, Jr., offers to support Lewis's petition for admission by filing a lawsuit against the state-run facility. Ultimately, Lewis's parents refuse to support the lawsuit and Lewis returns to the black college in Nashville, leaving it to someone else to become the first black student at Troy.

Another example of the theme is seen in the situation at the lunch counters in the Nashville businesses. The counters are technically open to anyone, but the practice has been that staff members refuse to serve blacks. The protestors soon have the attention necessary to prompt some changes. The Nashville Mayor forms a biracial committee to look for solutions to the problem and the committee eventually submits a proposal for “partial” integration. Lewis and the other protestors immediately see that the proposal will also keep the lunch counters partially segregated. While the details of the proposal are not revealed in this book, the protestors reject the offer as a token proposal rather than a true attempt to address the problem of segregation.

There are other examples of segregation seen in the book. Lewis and his uncle travel through the prejudiced southern states knowing that they have to find restrooms designated for blacks to use. Most businesses refuse to let blacks use restrooms that whites use. Some businesses refuse to serve blacks at all, especially restaurants. Lewis



also talks about a church that blacks stopped attending because they were relegated to the balcony seats.

Injustices against Blacks

While there were prejudicial rules and attitudes against blacks during the Civil Rights era and at other times in history, the injustice heaped upon them as a race are a different matter. These injustices changed lives forever, and meant that blacks were often afraid to stand up for what was right.

An important example of this theme is seen when the protestors from the lunch counters have their day in court. They are represented by a seasoned attorney, Z. Alexander Looby. The book is written from the perspective of John Lewis, one of the protestors, so the reader does not know Looby's mindset or have any idea what he expects will happen during the court hearing, but the injustices in the judicial system are rampant, meaning Looby probably does not expect a fair trial. Looby argues that the protestors have the right to be tried individually so that the guilt or innocence of each can be determined, but the judge rules against him. In an overt display of prejudice, the judge turns away from Looby while Looby is presenting his case. The attitude of indifference and disdain would be cause for reprimand in the modern-day judicial system, but this judge is ruling during a time when prejudicial injustice is common. With little information, no interest in listening to Looby or the arrested protestors, the judge hands down a mass sentence for everyone to serve jail time. Whether the sentence is fair or warranted, the judge's attitude makes the entire court proceeding an example of injustice.

This theme is also seen in the case of Emmett Till. Emmett is a teenager who says the word "baby" to a white store clerk. Some men drag Emmett out of his home and murder him in cold blood. A black man witnesses the men carrying Emmett away and testifies against the two white men, but the case is stacked against justice from the beginning. Many people have the attitude that black men are looking for an opportunity to disrespect or even attack white women, which means any black man who makes a minor infraction is met with violence and vigilante attacks. Emmett, by saying the word "baby," prompt the white men to act on their hatred of blacks in general. What makes the case against Emmett's murders fit this theme is that the men are tried in a white-dominated justice system. All the jurors are white. They do not care about the truth, and dismiss the black witness's statement. They probably make a judgment based on the idea that the white men are justified in the attack. What is more disturbing about the case is that the men confess to a reporter that they did murder Emmett Till. Having already been tried, they are free to admit the truth and know that they literally got away with murder.

Another example of this theme is seen as Lewis is riding the bus to school and sees the prison work crews. The men are all black. While some could argue that there are more black criminals, it is impossible that there are no white men incarcerated. Just as

happens in the case of Emmett Till's murderers, whites are routinely set free or at least are given fair trials while blacks are sentenced with very little interest in the truth.

Fear and Violence

There is a great deal of fear in the time of the book, especially as blacks interact in a white-dominated world where blacks are sometimes treated brutally. That fear influences how some people act and react to everyday situations, and how they make decisions.

Lewis's parents are from an era where southern blacks survived by avoiding white people, acting with deference, and being quiet about any injustice. They try to instill that into Lewis. In several frames of the book, his mother urges him to avoid trouble. When Lewis has a meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., Lewis's parents decide they will not allow Lewis to file a lawsuit to gain admittance to Troy University. They want to support Lewis in his hopes and dreams, but they are fearful of retaliation.

Violence is often a part of the fear. When Lewis and other protestors begin to plan for their sit-ins at the area lunch counters, they prepare for violent confrontations. They push, humiliate, and taunt each other as practice, knowing they will face similar actions from the whites once they actually stage sit-ins. They are correct. During the one of the first sit-ins, the protestors remain still and silent, refusing to be drawn into any arguments or physical violence. The attackers, met with stoic, passive resistance, do not know what to do, so they just give up. A later attack becomes more physical with the whites beating up protestors. The whites expect the blacks to fight back, mainly because most people who are afraid will instinctively lash out. The protestors do not, mainly because they are secure in their understanding that they are in a long-term fight for their rights.

In the opening scene of the book, Lewis and a group of protestors are walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. This scene takes place long after the lunch counter sit-ins that are the main focus of this book, which is the first in the series. The reader does not know the outcome of this scene but the police action makes the situation clear. The protestors are near the middle of the bridge and the police have the end of the bridge blockaded. The officers have teargas, weapons, and vicious dogs. Their objective is to frighten the protestors into leaving the bridge. To add to the fear, two of the protestors have a brief discussion about the water below with both saying they do not know how to swim. The level of the police force is an obvious show of force with the hope that they will scare the protestors away, but they quickly prove they are willing to resort to violence and they attack the protestors with teargas and clubs.

While Lewis does not address it directly, there is another kind of fear depicted in the images of the book. Whites are often afraid of blacks on various levels. In some cases, it is pure hatred of the race in general, but in other cases the whites display typical fears of the unknown. The stereotypical image of a black man as a violent, sexually-depraved person is at the heart of some of this fear. None of the images show a single white



person confronting a black person. In these images, the whites depend on their numbers as a show of strength.

Coming of Age

John Lewis grows up in rural Alabama, the son of a farming family. He is the kind of child who wants to grow and learn, and he has ideas about his future from a young age. His attitudes about education and life are stilted by his circumstances as a young man, but his experiences allow him to mature into a leader in the Civil Rights Movement and a Congressman.

As a child, Lewis is responsible for the family's chickens. He might have tended them in a short amount of time each day, but he spends a lot of time and thought on their care. He learns the breeds of each and the personalities of some. He learns about life and death through seeing eggs hatch in the spring and watching as some birds die of natural causes. He also learns about the realities of life on the farm when his family sometimes trades a chicken for necessities or kills a chicken for a meal. While he does not like those situations, he learns from them. One day, he "baptizes" a young bird and almost drowns it. The bird seems to be lifeless, but revives. Lewis learns that day about guilt.

When he is still very young, his uncle, Otis Carter, takes Lewis to visit relatives in the north. During the trip, Lewis learns about the dangers of travel. Otis knows which places welcome black customers and which places are inhospitable or dangerous. Even with that knowledge, he remains tense until they are safely out of the southern states. The most important lesson Lewis learns during that summer trip is that there are places where blacks and whites live together in harmony. There are whites living next door to Lewis's black relatives. His aunts take him to a large department store where Lewis buys candy. He also goes with an aunt to purchase a chicken for their dinner table. All these experiences make Lewis realize that there are people who live far different lives from the poor, black families of the rural South. This information helps him mature in ways that nothing else could, and he sees his life through different eyes when he returns home.

Another important example of this theme is seen in Lewis's desire to attend Troy State University. The courts have ruled that segregation is illegal but no black student has yet enrolled at Troy. Lewis has a meeting with activists, including King, who pledge their support if Lewis is ready to file a lawsuit against the state for admission to Troy. Ultimately, his parents refuse to give their permission and, because Lewis is too young to file on his own, the situation comes to an end. Lewis is disappointed but is able to look back on that from later in his life to realize that his time at the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville plays an important role in shaping into the successful man he becomes.

Generational Gaps

There are a couple of examples of the theme of generational gaps that demonstrate the changing attitudes of the generations, prompted by social norms, expectations, and collective expectations.

The first example the reader sees of this theme is in the scene in Lewis's office on the day Barack Obama is being inaugurated. A woman arrives with her two young sons. She wants them to understand how the black race has changed over the decades. With the young sons, she is probably not old enough to have participated in the marches of the 1960s, but she probably endured at least some instances of racial prejudice in her lifetime. This has likely provided her with an understanding and respect for what Lewis's generation went through and for what they accomplished. Her sons are growing up in a generation that has a black president and sees far less prejudice. She wants to plant the seed of understanding so that they will never take their past for granted.

The boys, on the other hand, are less enthusiastic about meeting Lewis. One of them makes a comment when Lewis apologizes for the appearance of his office. The other reprimands him, but it is clear that neither fully grasps the significance of Lewis's role in the Civil Rights Movement. The boys look around the room instead of focusing on Lewis's photographs, even though the boys are likely to recognize the names of Kennedy and King. They show the level of their disinterest by asking why Lewis has so many chickens in his office.

Another example of this theme is seen in the official stand of the NAACP and the student protestors' reactions to that stand. Thurgood Marshall tells the protestors that they should stand down after they are arrested. He says that they have made their point by their willingness to be arrested, and that they have no need to go farther than that.

Styles

Structure

The book is a graphic biography, and as such, is presented in the traditional style of a comic book. There are individual frames depicting people and events, including dialogue and some pieces of basic information, such as the sound of a faucet turning. The author probably chose the comic book structure because Lewis cites a book about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that has a similar structure and ultimately had an impact on a generation of people, including children. It is possible that Lewis hoped for the same far-reaching affect with his book, with the comic book style crossing over to gain the interest of younger generations.

The book has very limited color, which is probably a statement of the main issue of the book – the conflict between blacks and whites in the 1960s. Part of the story is set in 2009 and part of it is set in late 1950s and early 1960s. The author and illustrator define the different time setting with dates in the first frame each time the time setting changes. While some readers may be tempted to quickly read over the storyline, they may miss subtle issues, including the changing of time and place.

The book opens with a dedication, “To the past and future children of the movement” (2). The graphics then begin, opening with a scene on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. John Lewis is there with an unnamed group of people, and police attack them. That scene is a preview of one of the major events in Lewis's life, but the remainder of that scene does not appear in this book. The title page appears next, and the main body of the book opens after that.

Perspective

The book is presented in first person from the perspective of one of the authors, John Lewis. The book is structured like a comic book and depends heavily on graphics. The drawings, however, are also from Lewis's perspective. For example, the book opens with a scene on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. There are protestors on the bridge and police advance on the protestors. The police have dogs with them. The images of the dogs are clearly seen from the perspective of the protestors. The dogs are snarling with exaggerated teeth in menacing stances. The purpose of the graphic is to make the reader see the dogs as the protestors would have seen them.

Lewis meets two young boys in his office, and he begins to tell them the story of how he became involved in the Civil Rights movement. But in the true nature of a person who has the opportunity to tell his story, he talks first about being raised on the farm. As a young boy he wants to be a preacher and he preaches to the chickens under his care. He is upset whenever the family eats a chicken but discovers while visiting relatives that he does not have the same reluctance to eat chickens that he has had no part in

raising. These stories and some other details about his early life have no direct correlation to his activity in the Civil Rights movement, but help define him as a character.

The perspective is limited to Lewis. Other characters that appear in the book are seen only through his eyes. He relates what happens to them, but is not able to talk about their feelings or thoughts. The limited perspective is appropriate to the story.

Tone

The overall tone of the book is one of struggle, perseverance, and hope. The book is structured as a graphic book in the form of panels, and some aspects of Lewis's life lose their impact. For example, there are a series of scenes in a diner when whites attack the protestors. The protestors are quietly seated at the lunch counter and are not reacting with violence or anger, but the attack continues. There are about 16 panels devoted to the attack at the counter, including one man being hit, one being stomped, and someone pouring liquid on another man's head. The truth would have been much more serious than these few panels make it appear. The authors may have known that young people were going to be among their audience, and they may have toned the violence down for that reason. This attack may also have been relatively mild, though it seems unlikely. The most reasonable explanation is that it is difficult to convey that kind of brutality graphically in the limited space allotted for the scene.

The book includes a limited amount of dialogue, depending more on illustrations to make the points. There are some extended monologues as John Lewis tells his two young visitors about his early life. The conversations seem somewhat stilted but that could be an effort to pack a lot of information into short sentences.

Readers will have to depend on the illustrations as well as the dialogue. While some are explained, others depend heavily on interpretation of the images. The graphics are detailed and tend to be easy to understand. In most cases, the images carry greater impact than the words. For example, there is a sentence saying that one of the lunch counter protestors was a white student who was treated brutally for standing with the blacks. One frame depicts a boot coming down heavily on the white student's head.



Quotes

Today, we reaffirm our commitment to democracy by bearing witness to the peaceful transfer of power.”

-- Newscaster (chapter 1 paragraph Frame two)

Importance: The newscaster is on television as Lewis is getting his day started. The reader already knows the date is January 20, 2009, and the newscaster's announcement makes it clear that Obama's inauguration is an important event for the book.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

-- Young John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame two)

Importance: Lewis is preaching to the chickens he cares for on the family farm, but this verse is significant because it gives a foreshadowing of the persecution Lewis will face as a protestor associated with the Civil Rights Movement.

The thing is, when I was young, there wasn't much of a Civil Rights Movement. I wanted to work at something, but growing up in rural Alabama, my parents knew it could be dangerous to make any waves.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame one)

Importance: Lewis is talking to Jacob, Esau, and their mother about his early childhood. He is expressing the fear his parents felt and that fear played an important role in where he attended college. This is also one of the first mentions in this book of the dangers protestors faced, whether they were involved in an organized protest or merely objecting to unfair treatment.

That fall, I started riding the bus to school, which should have been fun. But it was just another sad reminder of how different our lives were from those of white children.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame one)

Importance: Lewis is remembering how his attitudes change after spending the summer with relatives in the North. He is fully aware that the black children ride a dilapidated school bus and use books discarded from the white school, and that the whites have a far superior school campus than the black children in the same school district.

One May morning in 1954, near the end of my freshman year of high school, I read a headline that just turned my world upside-down. The U.S. Supreme Court had handed down its decision in the school desegregation case of Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka.”

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frames six and seven)



Importance: Lewis has been fully aware of the prejudicial treatment and he believes this Supreme Court decision will have an immediate impact on the daily lives of blacks. He expects that everyone, including school districts, will obey the law without delay. He is very disappointed when that does not happen.

Dr. King's message hit me like a bolt of lightning. He applied the principles of the church to what was happening now, today. It was called Social Gospel."

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame one)

Importance: Lewis has just heard King on the radio for the first time. Lewis is disappointed that the officials and leaders in his life, including clergy, are not speaking up about the continuing prejudices and segregation.

Here I was reading about justice when there were brave people out there working to make it happen. I started to feel guilty for not doing more."

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frames five and six)

Importance: Lewis is in college by this time and he is excited about the new concepts and ideas he is learning. However, he is, at heart, a man of action and he feels that learning about the Civil Rights Movement is not the same as doing something. This feeling persists and he soon becomes an active member in the movement.

But if you want to go, we'll help - we'll raise the money to file those suits, and we'll support you all the way. But you must keep in mind - your parents could lose their jobs. Your family home could be burned or bombed."

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

Importance: King is talking to Lewis about Lewis's desire to attend Troy State University, a traditionally all-white school. King pledges to support Lewis, providing the money to pay for the lawsuit against the state of Alabama, but he follows that pledge with a series of warnings that Lewis and his family could face serious retaliation. Ultimately, Lewis does not go through with the plan.

But the hardest part to learn - to truly understand deep in your heart - was how to find love for your attacker."

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame five)

Importance: Lewis and other protestors are involved in training to learn how to participate in nonviolent protests. The graphic in this frame is a close-up of a man's face, with eyes narrowed and forehead furled. The impression is that he is angry and struggling with that anger.

If you attempt to sit-in, the business community, the local officials, and the authorities will all pull back. They will let police and the rough element in the white community come into the stores and beat you."

-- Will Campbell (chapter 1 paragraph Frame four)



Importance: Campbell is sympathetic to the Civil Rights Movement but he is a white man and, as such, knows what the protestors will face if they go through with their plan for a sit-in at the lunch counters. Campbell goes on to say that the protestors, now fully informed of what is waiting for them, have to make up their own minds about what to do. The protestors go forward and Campbell's predictions are correct.

Thurgood Marshall was a good man, but listening to him speak convinced me, more than ever, that our revolt was as much against the traditional black leadership structure as it was against segregation and discrimination.

-- John Lewis (chapter 1 paragraph Frame five)

Importance: Lewis is reacting to Thurgood Marshall's insistence that protestors have accomplished their goal from the moment they are arrested, and that they should then "get out" if there is a way. He seems to be criticizing the protestors' decision to remain in jail rather than pay fines.

I appeal to all citizens to end discrimination, to have no bigotry, no bias, no hatred."

-- Nashville Mayor Ben West (chapter 1 paragraph Frame six)

Importance: West is reacting to the protestors who have marched on the Nashville City Hall. His words prompt change in the city and the first black people are served at the lunch counters the following day.



Topics for Discussion

Describe John Lewis's early childhood.

Readers should talk about his life on the farm, how he raises and feels about chickens, and how his attitudes are formed by his circumstances. They should also discuss how his attitudes change after his summer visiting relatives in the North.

Describe the sit-ins at the Nashville lunch counters. Why do the students stage the sit-ins and what do they accomplish?

The lunch counters are segregated prior to the sit-ins, which prompts the protests. The students should discuss the process, including the nonviolent attitude of the protestors, and the attacks. This answer should also include information about the arrests and the protestors' refusal to pay bail, ending with Nashville Mayor Ben West's meeting with the protestors.

Describe the effect of segregation on the lives of people during the 1950s and 1960s.

Many aspects of life are segregated during this era, evidenced by the events and images of the book. The reader should explain the idea of "separate but equal" and the court ruling that made that illegal but did little to change the daily practices. The lunch counters could be part of this answer and the death of Emmett Till. Readers could also talk about Will Campbell, a white man who was chased out of Oxford, Mississippi for playing ping-pong with a black man.

Who is Ben West and what kind of person is he?

Ben West is the mayor of Nashville during the Civil Rights events discussed in this book. He is a progressive man but lacks the backbone to stand up for what he knows is right. He takes some steps in the correct direction, such as integrating services at the airport, but seems to fear angering white voters by insisting that the lunch counters be integrated. The reader should also discuss his actions, including creating a biracial committee, but that he does not accomplish anything until the protestors march to city hall for a meeting.



Who are Jacob and Esau? How and why do they meet Lewis? How do they react to the meeting?

These are the two boys who visit Lewis's office with their mother on the day of Obama's inauguration. They are reasonably well behaved but obviously have no real understanding of the sacrifices made by blacks during the Civil Rights era. The reader should explain that the boys' mother wants them to have a better understanding of black history, but they do not seem especially impressed by the meeting.

Describe what happens in the courtroom when the massive group of protestors show up for their court appearance.

The reader should talk about Z. Alexander Looby's decision to represent the protestors at no charge, and his disgust with the judge's attitude. The answer can also include information about the protestors' decision to refuse to pay bail and their reason for that decision, concluding with Nashville Mayor Ben West's order to release them after only a few days.

Describe Lewis's desire to attend Troy University and the reason he does not follow through with that desire.

Lewis knows that segregation is no longer legal though there are still schools, businesses, and services that are not open or available to blacks. Troy University is one of those. Lewis writes to the university officials but they do not respond. He then writes to Martin Luther King, Jr., knowing that King will understand the frustration. The reader should describe King's offer to support Lewis's fight, including the legal battle, to be the first black student at Troy, then should talk about Lewis taking the idea back to his parents and his disappointment at their negative reaction.

Why is the trip to visit northern relatives a turning point in Lewis's life? How are his attitudes changed when he returns home?

The reader should discuss the fact that Lewis has never been anywhere except the rural region of his southern home prior to this trip, and that he only knows blacks who are fearful of white justice and white retaliation up until that point. In the north, he learns that blacks and whites can live side-by-side, and that there are places where blacks have the rights they are denied in the South. When he returns home, he is more aware



of the situation, including the segregation of his school, and he begins to have a desire to do something to change it.

Describe Thurgood Marshall's attitude about arrest. How do the protestors, including Jim Lawson, react?

Marshall says that a protestor who has been arrested has succeeded in making a point. He goes on to say that the protestor should leave the situation once that point has been made, implying that they should pay bail or the fine and get out of jail. The protestors react by saying that the NAACP is overly conservative. The reader should discuss the Nashville protestors' decision to remain in jail, compared to Marshall's advice.

Describe the training Lewis and the other protestors undergo as they prepare for the sit-ins at the lunch counters. What is the purpose?

The protestors take turn in role play situations, pushing, hurling slurs, and humiliating their fellow protestors. They also learn to cover the most vulnerable parts of their bodies to protect themselves against violence and to gather closely to provide the best defense against attacks. The reader should discuss this training is a way to make certain the protestors are ready to stand strong as they face attacks from whites who do not want to give in to the black demands for equality. The reader should also talk about the program of nonviolence as a means of enacting change, which is why the protestors learn to defend themselves without fighting back.