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On May 4, 1961, a group of thirteen black and white civil rights activists launched the Freedom Ride, aiming to challenge the practice of segregation on buses and at bus terminal facilities in the South. The Ride would last twelve days. Despite the fact that segregation on buses crossing state lines was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1946, and segregation in interstate transportation facilities was ruled unconstitutional in 1960, these rulings were routinely ignored in the South. The thirteen Freedom Riders intended to test the laws and draw attention to the lack of enforcement with their peaceful protest. As the Riders traveled deeper into the South, they encountered increasing violence and opposition. Noted civil rights author Larry Dane Brimmer relies on archival documents and rarely seen images to tell the riveting story of the little-known first days of the Freedom Ride. With author's note, source notes, bibliography, and index.

Twelve Days in May: Freedom Ride 1961 Details

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Author : Larry Dane Brimmer

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From Reader Review Twelve Days in May: Freedom Ride 1961 for online ebook

Dani Kraft says

I would use the web strategy to talk about what exactly the children think a freedom rider is. This would be from previous knowledge. Then after we read the book I would have them add in examples from the story too.

The questions that I would ask would be the following:

Creating Question:

Formulate what you think will happen to the 13 friends, as they journey on the bus to celebrate the 17th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education.

Evaluating Question:

Argue why you know that everyone in our society deserves equal rights.

-Because every person is a person no matter their race. In today's day in age racism is not accepted. Back in the 1960's it was not the same. They had to do many different things in order to have the same rights that they have now today. These rights should have just been naturally given to them, but our society in the 1960's was corrupt. Today we know that everyone can go wherever they would like. We all can share this world and live happily.

Analyzing Question:

Identify some of the friends who were on the bus. Give descriptions of them and some facts about them from the reading.

"-James Farmer: An African American male who was the organizer of the freedom ride in 1961.

-John Lewis: An African American male who was a student from Tennessee. He was studying theology. Lewis wanted to be a preacher and wanted to be involved in this activist movement.

-Walter Bergman: A White male who was the oldest freedom rider on the bus. He is from Michigan and is a professor."

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Applying Question:

Apply some of the struggles the freedom riders went through to if they happened to you today. How would you handle it? Would this type of unacceptable be accepted today?

Understanding Question:

Paraphrase what happens to the freedom riders and their bus on page 57 until the end of the book.

Remembering Question:

Describe some characteristics of the freedom writers. What are some of their strengths? Did they have any weakness's?

Jennifer Mangler says

This is a wonderful resource to help students understand the methods used and the sacrifices made by people involved in the civil rights movement. It really brings the Freedom Ride to life. I highly recommend it.

TammyJo Eckhart says

As Martin Luther King, Jr. Day approaches you should check out this book. Larry Dane Brimner has put together a wonderful book filled with historically accurate information and photographs arrived in a very engaging fashion.

I wasn't yet born when the events covered in this book happened but as a historian I have learned a bit about them. Usually history is presented in a dry fashion but the layout of this book makes one eager to keep reading. Not only that, but if you slow down and look at the photos you will understand even more. Besides photos there are also a political cartoon from the period that made my blood boil.

The most moving part of the book is the honest descriptions of the people who took part in the Freedom Ride. While they are all heroes they also all just every day men and women, black and white, who decided it was time to do something. Here's to hoping more of us can follow their example today before we lose so much of what it has taken over a century and a half to accomplish.

Suzanne says

This book is a great resource for students or classes studying the Civil Rights Movement and especially the Freedom Riders. It is packed with archival photos of the riders, as well as images of other protests such as marches and sit-ins. Key figures in the Freedom Ride such as the riders, organizers, and "Bull" Connor are shown, but there are also images such as signs posted by the KKK welcoming visitors to Tuscaloosa and even one shot of a young child wearing the white robe and hood of the KKK. The text walks through events in chronological order, narrating the actions of the riders, the response of law enforcement and those opposed to integration, and comments on what was shared about the ride in the media of the time.

The format of the book is large, like a coffee table edition. This makes the photos an excellent size for viewing details. The font size is correspondingly large, as well. A section on "Landmark events before the Twelve Days in May" serves as background for the story, highlighting court cases such as Plessy v. Ferguson and Brown v. Board of Education. The story of the ride itself begins with a cast of characters, "Who's on the Buses?" which gives the name, race, and age of each rider. The closing section of the book gives a more detailed description of each rider's involvement in the Civil Rights Movement. Back matter also includes a bibliography, source notes, index, and picture credits.

Highly recommended for middle grades and up, especially classrooms and school libraries providing U.S. History materials to students. I received a copy from the publisher for review purposes.

Amy says

Sibert Medal (2018) - The Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award, established by the Association for Library Service to Children in 2001 with support from Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc., is awarded annually to the author(s) and illustrator(s) of the most distinguished informational book published in English during the preceding year. The award is named in honor of Robert F. Sibert, the long-time President of Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc. of Jacksonville, Illinois. ALSC administers the award.

A fabulous piece of literature that significantly contributes to the History of the Civil Rights era. Although cataloged as a Children's book, I sincerely believe adults and teens would get a lot out of this, as well!

Sunday Cummins says

Get this into your classroom. Book talk this with your students, read aloud excerpts, and then leave for them to grab up. Make this part of an integrated unit of study. Buy a set for small groups to read and discuss. Spend time looking closely at the photographs. Introduce words like perseverance, determination, courage, tenacity.

Brimmer never fails. His writing is straightforward and to the point. This is what happened + You can judge from there. The layout and design of this book is aesthetically appealing - students will not be overwhelmed by pages and pages of running text. Instead--the large print, the spacious layout and design allow the reader to take a breath and then breathe into this serious topic, to contemplate, to begin to question whether they could step up and ACT like the freedom riders did.

I read this book a few days ago and the content has stayed with me. It's the kind of book students could talk about in small groups and respond to in writing or some other type of response. Teachers could ask them to wrestle with questions like "How did strategy play a role in this movement?" or "What was important about how people from all walks of life, from different races play a role in this movement?" or "What did you have to be willing to do to be a freedom rider? Mentally and physically?" Powerful potential.

Vicki says

There were typos in this book, which is something I really struggle with.

The author included a list of who exactly was on the Freedom Ride and whether they were black or white, which is a resource I find to be really helpful when the author goes on to refer to each person by last name. Without this, it can be tricky for students who struggle to create a picture in their mind as there are so many different names.

That being said, it still felt a little difficult to follow and was a bit too sequential (this happened, then this happened, then this happened); this made it easy to check out. Overall, it's a super important story that must be told and features incredible photos, but I felt like I could have/should have been more engaged while reading given the outrageous nature of the content.

Kirsten says

This is an excellent middle-grade nonfiction book about the Freedom Ride of 1961. Brimmer keeps the language simple enough for younger readers to understand, but doesn't talk down. The book is filled with quotes from Riders and photographs from the time. The end matter includes biographies of the Riders, an excellent bibliography, source notes for the quotations, and an index.

While this book is geared toward younger readers, it also serves as an excellent introduction for adults who want to learn the pertinent details of the Freedom Ride of 1961 in an engaging manner.

Barb Middleton says

A quick read. The Freedom Riders faced hatred and prejudice as they used civil disobedience to change segregation laws. The narration is factual and with an observant view of the violence and not sensationalized. Would pair well with "We've Got a Job: The 1963 Birmingham Children's March" by Cynthia Levinson for discussions.

Joan says

The County library system has it as YA but it has a lot of white space and uses a fairly simple text. I would consider it J. Just because it covers violence and hatred shouldn't keep it from being J. As Brimmer noted, the heroine who brought the beat up Freedom Riders buckets of water to wash their tear soaked eyes from the smoke was only 12. The power is as much in photos as in the text. This deserves the Sibert Award! The text is a bit understated but is quite powerful too. The restrained text is very fitting to the style of the Freedom Riders who were modeling Ghandi's belief in nonviolence. But when you turn the last page of text and look at the photograph there, it hits you right between the eyes!

I pretty much read this in one sitting. It is a short and powerful book. It will be very useful to teachers explaining the Freedom Fighters. I knew very little of this and I learned a lot. This is highly recommended.

Suzanne Jordan says

A powerful book that walks the reader through a day by day account of a Freedom Ride in 1961. The daily breakdown of their brave journey, the descriptions of people involved coupled with the photographs make this a perfect choice for students studying the Civil Rights Movement. The text is organized in an easy to read design that keeps the reader fully engaged. I will be recommending this to our 5th grade teachers and students.

Margie says

On February 12, 2018 the American Library Association Youth Media Awards aired live from approximately 10:00 am to 11:00 am EST. It doesn't get any better than watching this event with a friend and colleague and two classes of fifth grade students. There were congratulatory yells, clapping, laughing, jumping up and down and verbal comments shared among those watching in that classroom.

When the 2018 Sibert Medal title was announced, one voice, mine, was a bit louder than the others. Twice

Twelve Days In May: Freedom Ride 1961 (Calkins Creek, an imprint of Highlights, October 24, 2017) written by Larry Dane Brimner was renewed from our public library. I had it on the top of the stack next to my computer. For some reason, I knew this book was special. I was not ready to return it to the library. Now I know why. I read it cover to cover in a single sitting the next day.

My full recommendation: <http://librariansquest.blogspot.com/2...>

Laura Gardner says

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In May 1961, thirteen individuals from different backgrounds (black and white, young and old, northern and southern) boarded buses in Washington, D.C. with a plan to defy the Jim Crow laws of the south and integrate buses. They experienced hate and violence during their journey and a few were gravely injured. Twelve Days in May first gives context for the freedom rides by detailing the major court cases up to that point and then tells the full, unvarnished story of those twelve days.

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Full-page images, first person accounts and emphasized text all contribute to this very strong addition to the author's nonfiction books about the civil rights movement. The story is told chronologically and pictures take the forefront. Readers could spend a long time analyzing the photos in this book to enhance their understanding of the events and luckily the photos are frequent and large. The bibliography, suggested source list, index and biographies of riders are appended.

In my opinion, everyone should be exposed to this book. It would be a great addition to civil rights units. Perfect for grades 5+!

Kirsti Call says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

I just watched the documentary, I'M NOT YOUR NEGRO and this book was the perfect companion to that powerful movie about racial discrimination. This book beautifully describes the events of the 1961 Freedom ride. Filled with real pictures and real facts, the story is interspersed with words that are larger and emphasized.

INTEGRATION.

JAIL. NO BAIL.

KEEP THE RACES APART.

KEEP THEM SEPARATE.

This book has shorter chapters to keep middle graders interested and engaged. I learned so much about the Freedom Ride. This is an important book for readers.

Barbara says

It is hard to imagine the courage it took for those 13 men and women to board those two Greyhound buses on May 4, 1961 as the Freedom Riders set off from Washington, D.C. bound for New Orleans, Louisiana. They

surely knew some of what they might face as they attempt to highlight how the law is being ignored and how segregation still exists on those buses. But as frightening as the anticipation of what might lie ahead as the buses headed further south might have been, how much harder would it have been to climb back on the buses after some of the violence these men and women saw and experienced! In his usual thorough fashion, Larry Dane Brimner puts his readers right on the bus with the Freedom Riders, charting their course through various states including Virginia, South Carolina and Alabama, as they meet violence with nonviolence. The book contains several large black and white photographs as well as plentiful white space and large font size and carefully describes what happens over the course of those 12 days in May. In addition to providing context for the bus rides into the South, the author includes brief notes on all 13 participants. I'm pleased to be able to offer this volume to my students who are interested in social justice and civil rights as well as the history of segregation in the United States.
