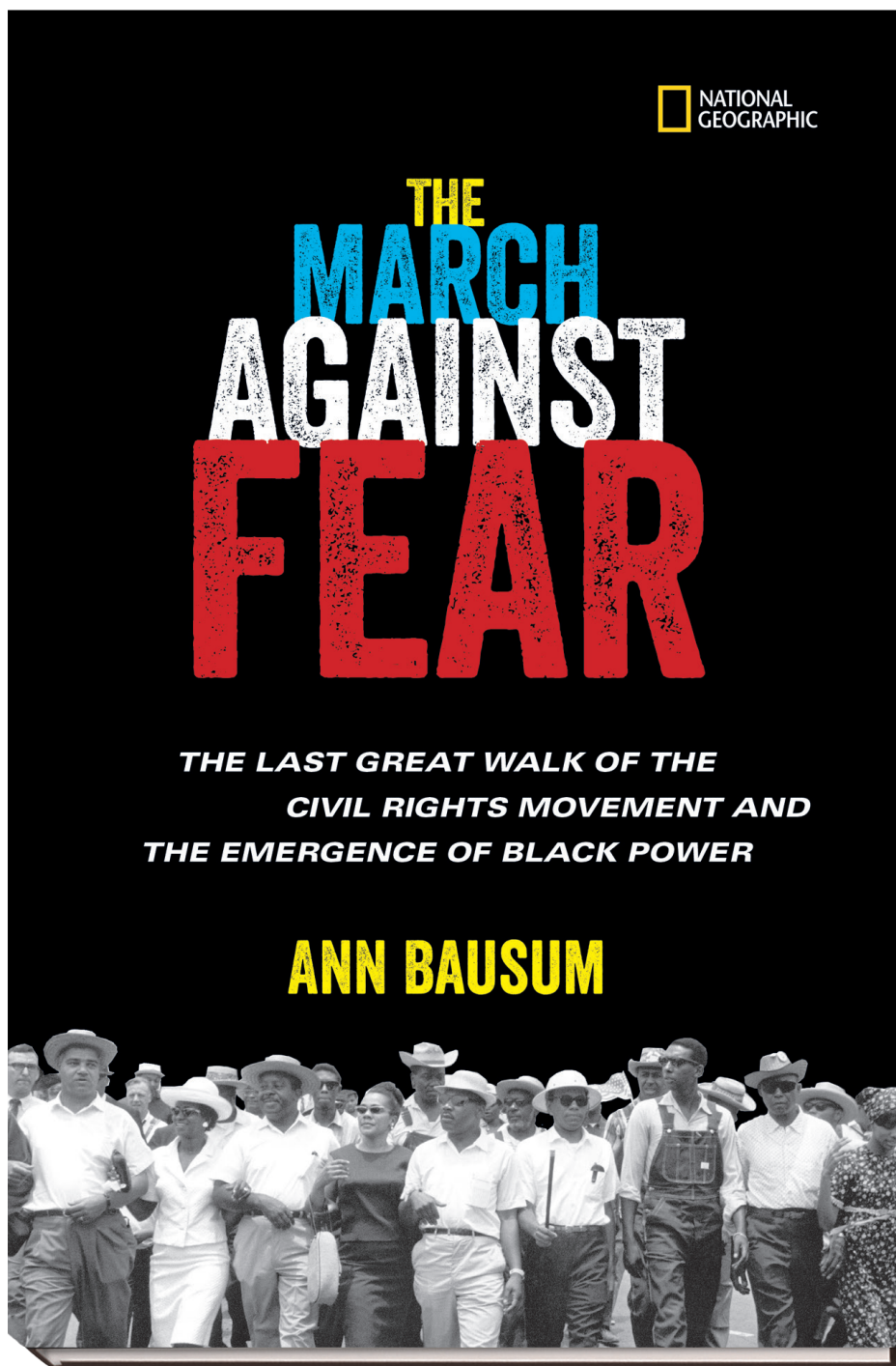



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

COMMON CORE ALIGNMENTS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES



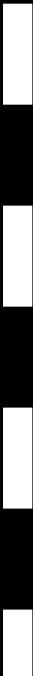
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NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
KIDS.



**“There is nothing
more powerful
to dramatize an injustice
like the
tramp,
tramp,
tramp
of marching feet.”**

Martin Luther King, Jr., writing about the March Against Fear
for the *New York Review of Books*, September 22, 1966



INTRODUCTION

A march that made history started as an individual man’s vision to walk through his home state. The man was James Meredith, an African American, who wanted to do something that he believed anyone ought to be able to do. But it was 1966 in Mississippi, and nothing for black people living there was simple.

Meredith was shot on the second day of his walk, and everything changed. Seizing the moment, civil rights organizations stepped up to fulfill Meredith’s vision, and the walk became a national event: The March Against Fear. While that was not what Meredith planned, it was, nonetheless, a major event of the civil rights movement that galvanized African Americans, drew in many white supporters, and powered the forward motion toward change.

But, as Ann Bausum points out, this March is nearly forgotten. Through this book you will be introducing your students to James Meredith, his walk that became The March Against Fear, and the leaders of the civil rights movement. You will be empowering them to think about how change is made in a democratic society—sometimes one person at a time.

This guide offers a variety of ways to use *The March Against Fear* in your classroom, from questions of fact to discussion starters to activities spanning curricula, including: History, Social Studies, Language Arts, Speaking and Listening, Research, Music, and Critical Thinking

You will find connections to Common Core Standards at the end of each activity.

BEFORE READING

8th Grade Common Core State Standards Key:

RI – Reading for Information

W – Writing

SL – Speaking and Listening

Watch with your students a Smithsonian video about the largest event of the civil rights movement: the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZA9TJCV-tks>

Note the many leaders from the civil rights movement, labor unions, and religious groups who participated. Now explain that while over 200,000 people participated in the March on Washington, the civil rights movement was also about individual efforts, individual goals, and dreams. Tell the class about James Meredith’s determination to attend then segregated University of Mississippi—an individual effort.

----- READ THEM THIS QUOTE FROM PAGE 11

“Ever since his teens, Meredith had dreamed of going to his home state’s flagship university. Having served in an integrated military, and having heard newly-elected President John F. Kennedy’s call in 1961 to national service, Meredith dared to imagine integrating Ole Miss.”

Tell your students that this quote is taken from the book they are going to read, *The March Against Fear: The Last Great Walk of the Civil Rights Movement and the Emergence of Black Power*, by Ann Bausum.

In order to prepare your students for some of the racial epithets that they will see in the book, read with them the author’s “Note about Language” on page 5. There, Ann Bausum explains that they will encounter examples of language old and new, respectful and hateful, and that racial epithets of that era remain no less offensive today but remain part of the historical record.

VOCABULARY

Language Arts; Vocabulary; History

As they read, your students will find many vocabulary words with which they are unfamiliar and terms that are important to understanding *The March Against Fear*. Encourage them to keep a running list of those words. For each word, they should write a definition in their own words that shows their comprehension of the word. For the terms and other key references, they should write brief notes of what they mean and why they are important. At the end of each week of study, have your students participate in a “Jeopardy”-type game where one student gives the definition and another answers with “What is...?”

To get their lists started, here are some words and terms from Chapter One:

- Humiliation
- Ole Miss
- Segregationists
- Nonviolence
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Visionary
- 15th Amendment to the Constitution
- Activism
- Ku Klux Klan and White Citizens Councils
- Controversy

RI 8.4

QUESTIONS OF FACT

Language Arts; Reading – Comprehension and Retention; History

These questions give you an opportunity to check in on how well your students are following, understanding, and retaining what they learn from the book. Tell the class that they should answer these questions with specific examples directly referenced from the text.

[PAGE 9]

1. *At the time of his birth in 1933, Meredith's parents chose to name him simply J.H., using initials in place of a first and middle name.*

Explain why they made that choice.

2. Prior to his being shot, how active was James Meredith in the civil rights movement?
3. James Meredith's walk from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi was not meant to further the cause of the civil rights movement but rather to fulfill his own vision of a "master plan." What was that plan? Why didn't he view his walk as a protest?
4. What did Meredith see as the major force to end the subjugation of the African American community in America, especially in the southern states?
5. Although James Meredith's "Walk Against Fear" was an individual act, after he was shot it became a movement. How and why did that come about? Who were the major participants and what were their affiliations? How did the focus of the walk change, and why did it become a "March Against Fear"?
6. How did Meredith feel about the change from a walk to a march?
7. Why did the new leaders of the March alter the route that Meredith planned and divert it to towns in the Mississippi Delta?
8. Identify the following:
 - Aubrey Norvell
 - Highway 51
 - Mississippi Delta
 - Paul B. Johnson, Jr.
 - Deacons for Defense and Justice
 - Nicholas Katzenbach
 - Tougaloo College

RI 8.1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Language Arts: Critical Thinking, Reading, Speaking and Listening; History; Social Studies: Current Events

1. Start a discussion around the questions: What is history? Is it a chronological story of events, is it about the actions of nations, or is about individuals? Do your students share Meredith's point of view, or do they agree with the civil rights movement's tactics?

[PAGE 14]

Meredith disliked the civil rights movement's strategy of including women and children in their protests.

2. Have your students discuss the reservations James Meredith had about the tactics of nonviolence and the use of women and children at protests. What about his own personal history contributed to his feelings?
3. Ask students to read closely and discuss pages 21–23 in small groups. There were all sorts of conspiracy theories as to why Aubrey Novell shot James Meredith, especially since Novell never gave a reason. Which theory do your students think is the most logical? Why?

[PAGE 64]

"You folks don't just need freedom. You need power. Power for folks with black skin...What do you want...BLACK POWER!"

4. The insertion of the words BLACK POWER into the civil rights movement by SNCC worker Willie Ricks (it was then popularized by Stokely Carmichael) both inspired and frightened many. The class should discuss why so many white southerners were intimidated by the words Black Power and how they responded to it. What about mainstream civil rights leaders? Talk about what they thought Black Power would do to their cause. And finally, discuss how the African American community reacted. Did it cause them to reject nonviolence, or did it give them a sense of empowerment?

[PAGE 92]

"Somebody said tonight we are a majority...Don't fool yourself. We are not a majority in a single state in the United States...We are ten percent of the population of this nation, and it would be foolish for me to stand up and tell you we are going to get freedom by ourselves."

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - CONTINUED

Language Arts: Critical Thinking, Reading, Speaking and Listening; History; Social Studies: Current Events

5. Martin Luther King saw that by the time the march reached Yazoo City, the unity that held the various groups together had begun to fray. What do your students think was the cause of this? What efforts did Dr. King make in order to restore unity to their message? Does your class agree that it was important not to alienate non-African Americans from the civil rights movement? Why or why not?
6. On June 26, 1966, on the steps of the Mississippi state capitol in Jackson, Stokely Carmichael (also known as Kwame Toure) made an impassioned speech to the marchers of The March Against Fear, and to all Americans. View a clip of that speech at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UpQ1woQ57j4>

Discuss the speech and Carmichael's delivery of it. How did your students react to the content and tone of the speech? What in his speech, if anything, has borne fruit? Was he a visionary, a revolutionary, or both?

7. Open up a discussion of “then” and “now.” Start by looking at the slogans of the March Against Fear and the civil rights movement. A new call we hear now is “Black Lives Matter.” How is it the same and how is it different from the slogans of the 1960s? Do your students recognize a link between the March and what is happening today?
8. James Meredith's foundational belief was that all citizens—including African Americans—have the right to walk anywhere they please in this country. Is that the case now? Have students discuss recent events in America that challenge this ideal. What is being done to restore the confidence of the African American community in the American system of justice?
9. Each chapter in *The March Against Fear* ends with two quotes. How do your students react to them? Do they represent opinions that are prevalent today? Have your students research comments made today about immigrants and undocumented aliens. What parallels do your students find between the quotes from white Mississippians in the book and comments made by anti-immigration advocates today?

Useful websites: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/immigration.html>
<http://xpatnation.com/famous-americans-on-immigration>

RI 8.1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9; SL 8.1, 2, 3, 4

***“Sing a song full of the faith that the
dark past has taught us;
Sing a song full of the hope that the
present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.”***

Rhythm and blues vocalist Maybelle Smith at the rally in Jackson, singing a verse of “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” which has been called the Negro national anthem



Marchers and supporters massed on the grounds of the Mississippi State Capitol in Jackson on Sunday, June 26, for the closing rally of the March Against Fear. CBS aired a one-hour news special that featured live coverage of parts of the event.

ACTIVITIES

Language Arts: Writing, Research, Speaking and Listening; Social Studies; History

1. In the aftermath of James Meredith's shooting, his walk was taken over by various organizations of the civil rights movement (SNCC, SCLC, etc.). By the time they reached Jackson, Mississippi, other organizations and celebrities from around the country had joined in, bringing thousands of marchers to participate in the culminating event at the state capital. Have your students identify each of those groups. Divide your students into research teams to learn more about each group.

Teams should refer to Chapters 9 and 10 and use the Internet and other research tools to answer the following questions.

- Who were the leaders?
- What were the organizations' focuses or points of view?
- What were their political agendas?
- What is the status of these groups today?

Each team should write a report of its findings and present it orally to the class.

RI 8.1, 2, 3; W 8.1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9; SL 8.1, 4 5

Language Arts: Critical Thinking, Reading, Research, Writing; History

2. One of the first things March leaders did was to establish a manifesto. Discuss with your class what a manifesto is, then go to the website of The King Center Archives and read with them the primary source document of the Meredith Mississippi March:

<http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/manifesto-meredith-mississippi-march>

A manifesto sets forth a challenge for action. The Meredith Mississippi March Manifesto challenged the federal government—specifically President Johnson—to take an active part in the civil rights movement.

ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

Language Arts: Critical Thinking, Reading, Research, Writing; History

Questions to research and answer include:

- Who wrote and signed the manifesto?
- What was its purpose?
- To whom was it addressed and why?
- From what they have read in *The March Against Fear*, do your students believe the manifesto accomplished its goals, or was it, for the most part, ignored?
- Have your students do further research to determine which civil rights leaders refused to sign the manifesto. What were their reasons for not putting their names on the document?

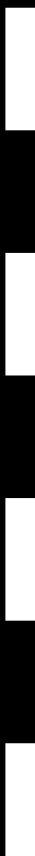
Have each student identify a cause for which he/she is passionate and write their own calls for action, i.e. their own manifestos. They can be in essay form or presented as posters or broadsides

RI 8.1, 2, 3; W 8.1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8; SL 8.1, 2, 3, 4, 5



**“For racism to die,
a totally different America
must be born.”**

Stokely Carmichael, writing about the March Against Fear
for the *New York Review of Books*, September 22, 1966



ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

Language Arts: Writing; History

[PAGE 121]

The March Against Fear stands as one of the greatest protests of the civil rights era.

3. For 22 days volunteers marched 325 miles on a route connecting Memphis, Tennessee, and Jackson, the state capital of Mississippi

Create with your class a “March Against Fear” newspaper to chronicle the daily events of the March. For each of the 22 days, your class should write articles covering what went on. Articles should include problems created by the weather, housing, and the hostility of the white population, police, and elected officials. They should also write about the successes of the March, from encouraging local African Americans to join in to supporting voter registration efforts, and they should note the national exposure of and reaction to the March. They should write and conduct mock interviews of the participants, especially the leaders, including Stokely Carmichael, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Floyd McKissick, as well as individuals who travelled from all over the country to join the March, people from the African American community in Mississippi who were empowered by the importance of the March to join the procession, and police and anti-March advocates who tried to thwart the efforts of the March.

Distribute the newspaper daily to your students and to other classes in the building.

W 8.2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10; SL 8.1, 2

ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

Music; Social Studies: Culture; History; Performance; Research

4. Hallmarks of the civil rights movement are freedom songs. These songs were meant to inspire, instill faith, and lift spirits. Freedom songs did just that on the March Against Fear. Have your students listen to a rendition of “I Want My Freedom” that was recorded at the 50th Anniversary celebration of the March in June 2016 but documented as sung at the March.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JzMMHGdkb8

While there is no recording of freedom songs from the March, your students can see and listen to an elucidating video about freedom songs, some of which were probably sung as marchers trekked the roads of Mississippi during the summer of 1966:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKWo7oMCOLQ>

Other websites to explore:

<http://newsone.com/1460645/top-10-civil-rights-protest-songs-of-all-time>

<http://www.thenation.com/article/top-ten-civil-rights-songs>

<http://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/99315652/songs-of-the-civil-rights-movement>

This website provides the lyrics to many of the song:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/soundtrack-lyrics>

Other lyrics can be found by specifically searching for particular songs.

Your students should learn and perform the songs they find. They can sing, recite the lyrics, and play recordings. They should research and write about the lyricists and singers. The project can be extended to include the entire class performing some of the songs as a travelling show throughout the school or for a large assembly program.

SL 8.1, 4; W 8.2, 4, 7, 8

ACTIVITIES - CONTINUED

Language Arts: Writing; Speaking and Listening

5. James Meredith is alive and well living in Jackson, Mississippi. He speaks extensively around the world about his experiences. Your students might want to know first-hand what his recollections are about his walk against fear; what he has been doing for the past fifty years; what he thinks about race relations in America today.

Using these questions as a starting point, have your students devise a series of questions to be used for an interview of James Meredith. As a class, cull the best questions and send them to Mr. Meredith at:

info@jamesmeredithbooks.com

From his responses, students should create a mock interview with several students asking the questions and one student acting as James Meredith.

W 8.1, 2, 4; SL 8.1, 2, 4, 5



For further information visit Ann Bausum's website: **www.annbausum.com**

**“Can’t you see I’m a human being,
just like you? Can’t you see it?
Can’t you see it?”**

Questions from a white woman targeted in the
tear gas attack in Canton

**“I couldn’t see it, friend,
I couldn’t see it.”**

Reply from a Canton policeman
who participated in the attack

This guide was created by
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