



**HE USED
HIS WORDS
FOR JUSTICE!**

THURGOOD by Jonah Winter, Illustrated by Bryan Collier



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THURGOOD

Classroom Activity Guide



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About the Book

Thurgood Marshall was a born lawyer—the loudest talker, funniest joke-teller, and best arguer from the time he was a kid growing up in Baltimore in the 1920s. He would go on to become the star of his high school and college debate teams, a standout law student at Howard University, and, as a lawyer, a one-man weapon against the discriminatory laws that predominantly affected black Americans. After only two years at the NAACP, he was their top lawyer and had earned himself the nickname Mr. Civil Rights. He argued—and won—many cases before the Supreme Court, including one of the most important cases in American history: *Brown v. Board of Education*. And he became the first black Supreme Court justice in U.S. history.

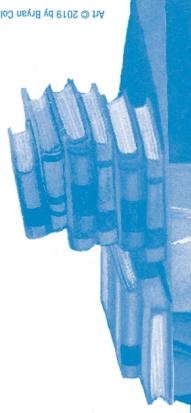
Like its subject, this biography crackles with energy and intensity—a great introduction to a great man.

About the Author

JONAH WINTER is the author of many highly acclaimed picture books, among them *Lillian's Right to Vote* (four starred reviews, ALA-ALSC Notable Children's Book, Jane Addams Children's Book Award, *Kirkus Reviews* Best Children's Book of the Year), *Ruth Bader Ginsburg* (three starred reviews, *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book Award), *My Name Is James Madison Hemings* (*New York Times* Notable Book), *Elvis Is King!* (two starred reviews), *The Secret Project* (five starred reviews), and *The Sad Little Fact*. Visit him at jonahwinter.com.

About the Illustrator

BRYAN COLLIER is the illustrator of four Caldecott Honor-winning books, including *Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni, *Martin's Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport, *Trombone Shorty* by Troy Andrews, and *Dave the Potter* by Laban Carack Hill. His first book, *Uptown*, won the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award and the Ezra Jack Keats Illustrator Award. He has won five more Coretta Scott King Awards, for *Rosaz*, *Knock Knock* by Daniel Beaty; *Dave the Potter: Trombone Shorty*; and *I, Too, Am America* by Langston Hughes, along with three Coretta Scott King Honors. Visit him at bryancollier.com.



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Classroom Activities

Read the Book and Watch a Video

After students have read the book, watch the following short biographical video together as a class. Hold a discussion about how the book and the video overlap. Have students consider the strengths of books compared with those of documentary videos. Have them discuss how the two mediums complement each other. Ask students what they found most interesting in the book and the video.

biography.com/video/thurgood-marshall-mini-biography-2106987833

Clues to Character

Ask students to reread *Thurgood* and find three sentences or passages in different parts of the book that tell them something important about Thurgood Marshall's character. For example, they might find a passage that shows Marshall's courage, persistence, or intelligence. Have students copy each quote and explain in a short paragraph what it shows and why they chose it.

Changes That Matter

Thurgood Marshall dedicated his life to fighting for justice and equality. Have a class discussion about some of the court cases he worked on and his other accomplishments. Ask students to choose one of the issues Marshall worked on, and think about why he believed it was important. Students should use print and digital resources to learn more about the topic they choose. Then have students gather in small groups to discuss the issues and why they matter.

That's Debatable

Thurgood Marshall learned important skills by arguing with his father, who made him back up his arguments with evidence. He improved those skills as captain of his high school debate team. Introduce the idea of debating to your students, and brainstorm possible topics and questions for simple debates. Have them form teams to prepare arguments for each side of a topic. Some possible questions are: Should students wear uniforms? Should homework be abolished? Should cell phones be allowed at school?

This guide was written and prepared by Kathleen Odean, a former school librarian who gives workshops on new children's and young adult books. She chaired the 2002 Newbery Award Committee and served on the 1996 Caldecott Award Committee.



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Jobs That Make a Difference

Thurgood Marshall worked as a lawyer and a judge in order to fight for civil rights, equality, and justice, making a difference in the lives of millions of Americans. Consider other jobs that make a difference by helping improve our world. Fill out the following chart with the job title, a description of the job, and how the job makes things better in some way. Add to your answers by interviewing parents and other adults about jobs that make a difference.

JOB TITLE	JOB DESCRIPTION	HOW IT MAKES THINGS BETTER

REPRODUCIBLE



The Power of Pictures

Choose a picture you especially like from *Thurgood*, and evaluate it in the following chart. Think about the picture itself as well as its relationship to the text. *Thurgood* was written by one person and illustrated by another. How does this affect the book? Share your results in small groups.

What's happening in the picture?	
What information is shown about the time and place?	
How does the picture relate to the text? What does it add?	
What colors are in the picture?	
What kind of lines and shapes do you see? (Round? Sharp? Bold? Fuzzy?)	
How realistic is the picture?	
What emotions do the people in the picture show?	
How does the picture make you feel?	
Why did you choose it?	

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