



Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down

By Andrea Davis Pinkney

NOTES TO 3rd GRADE TEACHERS:

Please complete the Teacher Activity with your class prior to the volunteer's visit. Since the volunteers only have 30 minutes with your class, it's important to build the background knowledge needed for listening comprehension.

Lesson Objectives:

At the end of this lesson the students will be able to discuss the essential questions, as well as define and synthesize the vocabulary important to the theme of civil rights, segregation, and integration.

Essential Questions:

1. What is courage?
2. What is kindness?
3. What is a hero?
4. Why does kindness matter?
5. What can I learn from the text that can help me be a better citizen?

Comprehension Strategy: (Synthesizing)

Synthesis take place when readers' thinking changes. Their thinking evolves. They infer meanings beyond the story line. They recognize themes.

Teacher Activity (Prior to the Volunteer’s visit):

Discussion:

Provide background information about civil rights, segregation, and integration in the early 1960s.

Vocabulary:

Note to teachers: The following definitions were taken from various dictionary sources (e.g., Merriam-Webster, Oxford Language) and are offered as instructional material in preparation for the reading of Sit-In.

1. **Civil Rights** - the rights of all citizens to political and social freedom and equality.
2. **Segregation** – separation because of skin color.
3. **Integration** – to give everyone equal opportunity to belong.
4. **Racism** -
 - a. prejudice or discrimination directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one’s own race is superior.
 - b. {More complete but more complex definition} - prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized. [Oxford Language]
5. **Protest** – a public demonstration of disapproval.
6. **Picket** – to walk or stand, often in protest.
7. **Sit-in** – an act of sitting in the seats or on the floor as a means of organized protest.
8. **Martin Luther King Jr.** - one of the most prominent leaders in the U.S. civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968.

Discussion:

1. Discuss what is courage and identify traits that show courage.
2. Discuss what kindness is and identify situations when students have been kind or seen kindness.
3. Discuss the question: Why does kindness matter?
4. Discuss the character traits of a hero.
5. Record responses on chart paper.

Teacher Activity (Day of the Volunteer’s Visit):

Setting the Purpose:

1. Tell the students that they will be listening to the story “Sit-In” by Andrea Davis Pinkney. As they listen to the story they should be thinking about courage and kindness. Explain that at the end of the story they will be having a discussion and will need to support their response from evidence from the text.
2. Review what courage and kindness are and then identify the traits that show each. Display the responses previously recorded on the chart paper.

Volunteer Activity:

Explain to the listeners that the book is a narrative of actual events that took place in the U.S. in 1960. Tell them it all happened at this lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Show them the picture on the following page.

Read the book Sit-In by Andrea Davis Pinkney all the way through (without stopping) so that the students get the flow of the story.

1. Why was there a rule of WHITES ONLY at the lunch counter?
 - a. What is that called when black people can't go to the same places as white people?
 - b. Do you think that's fair?
 - c. Why or why not?
2. The words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. got the four students started. "We must...meet hate with love. We must meet violence with nonviolence." Who was Dr. King?
3. As the students at the lunch counter were treated badly, they wanted to lash out and strike back.
 - a. Did they?
 - b. What did they do?
4. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned segregation in public places. Do you think protests like the Sit-Ins helped to persuade our government leaders to make this change?
5. Who showed kindness in the story?
6. Who showed courage in the story?
7. What can I learn from this story to be a better citizen?

Please show the students a real picture from the second day of the sit-ins. This picture is also in the third to last page of the book. There are apparently no pictures from the first day.



Four black college students sit in protest at a whites-only lunch counter at a Woolworth in Greensboro, North Carolina on Feb. 2, 1960. From left: Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Billy Smith, and Clarence Henderson.



WE SERVE
WHITE'S *only*