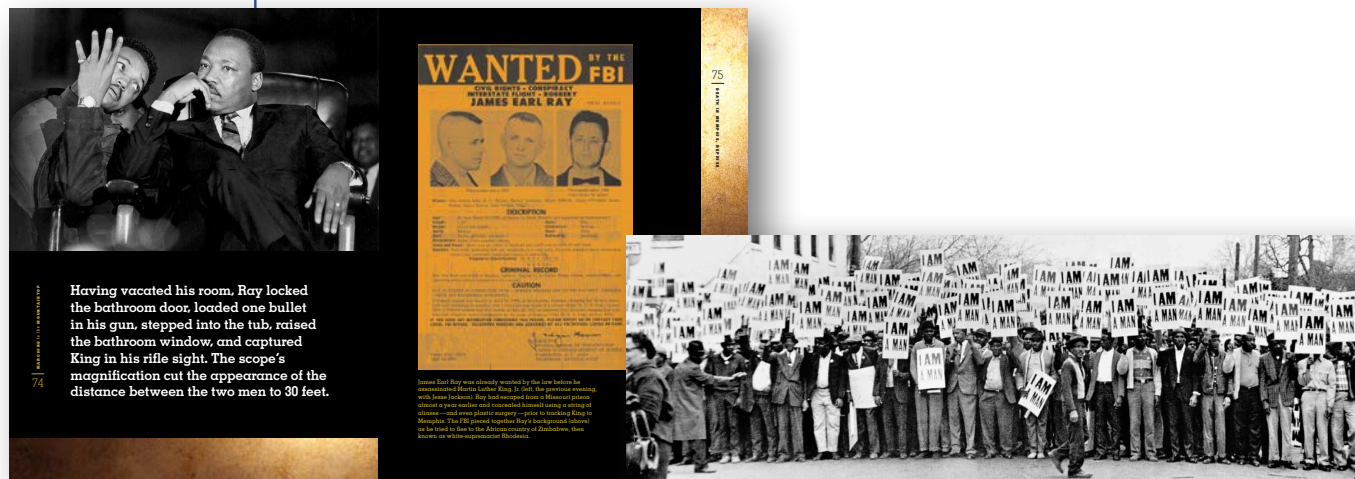


REVIEWING WHAT STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED

1. Have the class identify these important people involved in the Memphis Garbage Strike:
 - Echol Cole and Robert Walker
 - Charles Blackburn
 - Thomas Oliver (T.O.) Jones
 - P. J. Ciampa
 - Henry Loeb
 - Charles Blackburn
 - James Reynolds
2. Why did the national union office want the Memphis workers to put off their strike? Why did the Memphis leaders refuse to postpone their action?
3. How did the garbage strike finally end? Who was responsible for forcing the parties to negotiate? What was the resolution?



Having vacated his room, Ray locked the bathroom door, loaded one bullet in his gun, stepped into the tub, raised the bathroom window, and captured King in his rifle sight. The scope's magnification cut the appearance of the distance between the two men to 30 feet.

WANTED BY THE FBI
 JAMES EARL RAY
 FUGITIVE
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

James Earl Ray was already wanted by the law before he assassinated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In the previous chapters, you learned that Ray had escaped from a Missouri prison several years before the assassination. He was a member of a white supremacist group and was known for his violent behavior. He was also a member of the Black Liberation Movement and was known for his political activism.

A large group of people is marching down a street, holding signs that say "I AM A MAN". The signs are held high, and the people are walking in a line. The street is lined with buildings, and there are other people watching the march.



Chapter 1
DEATH IN MEMPHIS

“We shall overcome. We shall overcome. We shall overcome some day—ay-ay-ay. Day in my heart, I do believe. We shall overcome some day.”

Freedom song adapted from a gospel hymn for a southern labor fight during the 1930s.

10 a.m., as many assembled outside warming day. pared to lead am hoisted large ur words— ned for emphasis.



On March 28, 1968, a young woman named Coretta Scott King led a funeral procession for her husband, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The funeral was held in Memphis, Tennessee, and was one of the largest funerals in American history. It was held in the city of Memphis, Tennessee, and was one of the largest funerals in American history.

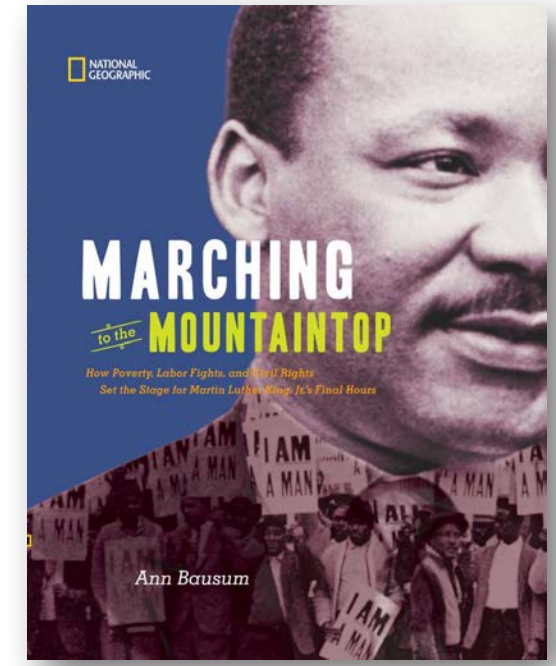
This guide was created by Clifford Wohl, Educational Consultant

MARCHING to the MOUNTAINTOP

How Poverty, Labor Fights, and Civil Rights Set the Stage for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Final Hours

Written by Ann Bausum

“My greatest joy as a researcher came when I requested container nine from the Sanitation Strike Collection. As I unpacked the oversize archival carton I flipped through original sign placards from 1968 picket marches: “Honor King: End Racism!” “Union Justice Now!” “lest we forget . . .” And there, nestled among them, rested a card bearing the words I AM A MAN. A talisman of history. An object that yanked me straight back to 1968 when someone wearing this sign may have marched on Beale Street, perhaps in the face of bayonet armed troops from the National Guard.” —Ann Bausum



Hardcover 978-1-4263-0939-7 • \$19.95/\$22.95 CAN
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 e-book: 978-1-4263-0945-8 • \$19.95 U.S. and CAN
 Ages: 10-14 • 112 pgs • 8-1/2" x 10-7/8"

A CLASSROOM GUIDE

There is an ongoing discussion among people who study history that begins with the question:

“Do individuals—great thinkers, great warriors, great leaders—“cause” events? Or is it the other way around? Do events happen—one small bit at a time—creating a need for an individual to step forward and help shape the outcome of the events?”

Marching to the Mountaintop makes the clear case that both have to occur simultaneously: the leader has to be in place and the events have to be ongoing for major historical moments to happen.

As your students read this fascinating, thoroughly researched book, and as they examine the photographs and other primary sources, they will see how events and people intermingled at a critical moment in our nation’s history to change the future—the world you and your students live in.



ANN BAUSUM

INTRODUCTION

ACTIVITIES

“Oh, workers can you stand it? Oh, tell me how you can. Will you be a lousy scab, or will you be a man? Which side are you on, oh, which side are you on?”

Which side are you on, oh, which side are you on?”

Verse from a labor song written in 1932 by Florence Patton Reece, a coal miner's wife

MACE
WON'T
STOP
TRUTH!

This classroom guide will assist you in taking full advantage of *Marching to the Mountaintop*. In it you will find activities for the whole class, for groups and for individuals; a research project; topics for consideration and discussions; and some questions to serve as a review of what your students learned. The projects and questions connect *Marching to the Mountaintop* with language arts—reading, writing; oral performance; music; research; cooperative learning; history; social studies; art; and visual learning.

1. In 1968 most Americans got their news from newspapers augmented by television and radio programs. Get your students into the spirit of that time by creating newspapers to cover the events of the Memphis garbage strike. Divide your class into 5 or 6 groups. Each group will create its own newspaper.

Have the students look through the Timeline (pages 92–95) and pick a day to cover. They should select a date for which there is further information in the body of the book. Some suggestions: February 1, February 13, February 23, March 18, March 24, and April 16.

Examine a current newspaper, and as a class make a list of the sections and features, including the front page news, editorial (including editorial cartoons); national politics; international events; sports; comics; puzzles; book, television or movie reviews; advertisements; even the name and masthead. The students can research their stories and the period on the internet or just use the material in the book itself. Either way, they should stay as true to the time as possible—no references to contemporary technology, etc.

The groups should share their newspapers with each other.

2. The photographs throughout *Marching to the Mountaintop* not only illustrate and emphasize the text, but also convey a good deal of additional information. Several of them show marchers carrying placards—picket signs—broadcasting their message. See pages 32, 51, 54–55, 64, and 87 for examples. Ask your students to create placards for any of the marches covered in the book. Their slogans should communicate the message/purpose of the march, and be brief and memorable.

If you like, take this activity to the present day, and have the students create slogans and placards that speak to current issues.

3. There are many members of your community who remember the events that are discussed in *Marching to the Mountaintop*. Some may even have participated personally. They can add interesting perspectives to your class's studies.

Pair up your students for an oral history project in which they will interview neighbors, family members, teachers, or other community members who can talk about the happenings of 1968 as they experienced them.

You will find some guidance for such a project at <http://www.folklife.si.edu>. Click on “Education and Exhibits,” then go to Smithsonian Folk Life and Oral History, and open the Resources Section's Interviewing Guide on the left-hand side of the page.

Brainstorm with the class to develop a series of questions for their interviews based on their knowledge of the time. Be sure to include some basic questions to identify where the subject lived and what he or she was doing at that time. Students should practice their interviewing skills through role-playing: interviewing each other; developing follow-up questions in response to answers; taking notes or making recordings. If their subject is willing, they might also ask for old photographs (which they can scan and then return) and take a new photo.

The teams should present their findings in a class book designed like *Marching to the Mountaintop*: using photographs and pull-out quotes.

4. This activity references pages 63 and 67. By evening not just thunder and lightning but high winds and tornadoes threatened the region. Nonetheless, 2,000 to 3,000 hardy souls braved the weather to gather at Mason Temple in anticipation of hearing another speech by King. ... An electric air hung over the audience as King's voice competed with the sounds of the storm raging outside. ... “There was an overcoming mood, an overcoming spirit in that place,” recalled one local minister. “When Dr. King spoke that night we knew that we were going to win.”

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a great orator. His speeches—in both their content and in the way he delivered them—changed minds, raised passions, elevated spirits, built hope, and encouraged action.

Your class should explore the texts of some of Dr. King's most famous speeches, and then each student should select a section, memorize it, and perform it for the class. You might also select a long passage from a speech for the whole class to perform in a choral reading. You will find a selection of Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches at: <http://www.famous-speeches-and-speech-topics.info/martin-luther-king-speeches/index.htm>

“It is in your power to mold Memphis into a genuine city, or to reduce it to a pile of stinking rubble. May history praise you as a man of wisdom — not condemn you as a fool.”

Carroll Richards, a Memphis white, from a published letter to the mayor, March 1968

- Look at the beginning of each chapter of *Marching to the Mountaintop*. They all begin with the words to folk or protest songs that were the sound track of the civil rights and other movements throughout the 1960s. You and your students can listen to brief clips from these songs and others at the following web sites:

If I Had a Hammer: Songs of Hope and Struggle—Pete Seeger
<http://www.cduniverse.com/search/xx/music/pid/1055055/a/If+I+Had+A+Hammer%3A+Songs+Of+Hope+%26+Struggle.htm>

I'm Gonna Let It Shine: A Gathering of Voices for Freedom
<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/billharley24>

Enjoy the experience of listening to the songs as a class. Set your students' creativity working. Ask them to write a new song for that time—a song that addresses the events described in the book and the needs of the people who were fighting for change. The kids can team up if that works best.

Performance of their songs (and some of those from the book) should conclude this activity. Each song should be introduced, with performer(s) identifying the inspiration for it, e.g. supporting the garbage strikers; helping marchers remain nonviolent; lifting the spirits of the families who were suffering from poor wages and lack of opportunity; mourning the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Invite parents, other classes, and community guests to attend the performance.

Using the section of the book called “King’s Campaigns” (pages 96–99), have students research any of the campaigns profiled (except the Memphis Campaign) and write reports that fill in some of the details of the action. Ask them to use at least one primary source (a newspaper report; photographs; filmed television coverage; etc.) in their research.

- Have your students talk about courage. How do they define it? Whom can they name that has exhibited courage by their own personal definitions. Ask them to apply those characteristics to people discussed in *Marching to the Mountaintop*. Talk about the garbage men, the local union leaders, the national union leaders, members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Do any of your students think Mayor Loeb and members of the Memphis City Council displayed any kind of courage? How about the police officers in Memphis?

“We shall overcome.
 We shall overcome.
 We shall overcome
 some day-ay-ay-ay-ay.
 Deep in my heart, I
 do believe, We shall
 overcome some day.”
 Freedom song adapted
 from a gospel hymn
 for a southern labor
 fight during the 1940s

RESEARCH

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Look at the photograph on page 32. There is much about the dignity of work in the presentation of the Memphis Garbage Strike. Even today politicians talk about creating an economy where every person who wants work can find a job. Certainly people’s jobs enable them to earn money to pay for the cost of living. Beyond that, why else are jobs important to us?
- Imagine a garbage strike in your town lasting more than two months. What can the citizens do to support the strike yet also keep the town safe and sanitary? Would it be possible to negotiate a settlement on the workers’ demands if they returned to their job on a “conditional” basis? Why or why not? Should city workers like the police, firefighters, sanitation workers, and teachers be allowed to strike? What other tools might city workers develop to make their needs heard?
- This question references page 72. Arguing before a judge to allow a demonstration to be held in Memphis, Andrew Young said, “I would like to remind you that there is no place else in the world where people even assume that this kind of change should come about nonviolently except Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.”

In the face of police clubs and mace and among name-calling and other indignities, marchers tried to keep their protests nonviolent. This is true not only of the garbage strikers but also of the civil rights activists as well. Nonviolence was an essential element in Martin Luther King, Jr.’s view of the world. What kind of training do your students think people need to refrain from violence? What tools would your students arm themselves with in order to not strike back?

- Many people thought Dr. King had a premonition about his death. Even the police were waiting outside his motel, keeping a protective eye on him. But James Earl Ray was able to execute and kill Dr. King. Do your students think today’s more sophisticated surveillance methods could have prevented this tragedy?

