

The Harvey Milk Story

written by Kari Krakow

illustrated by David C. Gardner

About the Book

Genre: Nonfiction/Biography

Format: 32 pages, 8" x 10"

ISBN: 9781643796000

Reading Level: Grade 4–5

Interest Level: Grades 3–8

Guided Reading Level: W

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
N/A

Lexile™ Measure: N/A

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Biography/Memoir, Courage, Discrimination, Dreams & Aspirations, History, Identity/Self Esteem/Confidence, Leadership, LGBTQ, Nonfiction, Overcoming Obstacles, Persistence/Grit, Pride

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/the-harvey-milk-story

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

SYNOPSIS

On a rainy day in January, on the steps of San Francisco's City Hall, Harvey Milk was sworn into office, the first openly gay man to be an elected official in the United States of America. Harvey Milk had made history.

From his childhood on Long Island, through college, his service with the Navy, and years as a schoolteacher, Harvey Milk was always popular, intelligent, and energetic. But he was also hiding a secret: He was gay. He eventually moved to San Francisco, where there was a strong LGBTQ community and he could be free to be himself. As he talked to people in his neighborhood, he realized many people who were usually ignored by the government deserved better protection: gay, lesbian, and transgender people, people of color, people with disabilities, and more. He decided to run for public office, and eventually won election to the city's Board of Supervisors. Though his career as a public servant was sadly and suddenly cut short, his pride as an openly gay man and his passion for equality has inspired countless people to continue his work. Harvey's legacy is everywhere today, especially in the hundreds of openly gay elected officials in every level of government.

One of the first picture book biographies for children about a gay leader, this is a perfect introduction to one of the most important figures in the fight for LGBTQ civil rights. Backmatter includes further details about the struggles faced by different groups mentioned in the story, other sources readers can turn to for more information about Harvey, and more books about LGBTQ+ history.

BACKGROUND

Epilogue from *The Harvey Milk Story*

Harvey Milk's memory continues to live on in many places and in many ways. His life has been the subject of books, plays, films, and even an opera. In San Francisco, the Harvey Milk Memorial Plaza marks the entrance to the Castro, and a statue of him now stands in the rotunda in City Hall. Government buildings and schools around the world bear his name, including the Castro elementary school that Harvey fought to keep open, the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy. Harvey Milk posthumously received the Medal of Freedom in 2009 from President Barack Obama. He was also inducted into the California Hall of Fame, and his birthday, May 22, is now celebrated annually in the state and elsewhere as Harvey Milk Day. In 2014, he became the first openly gay public official to appear on a US postage stamp, and in 2021, the US Navy named a ship after him, the USNS Harvey Milk. For more information about Harvey and the ongoing work in his name toward education and equality, visit the Harvey Milk Foundation website at milkfoundation.org.

Harvey Milk believed that one person could make a difference in the lives of others. His legacy continues to inspire and give people hope as they struggle for justice. Nearly half of all cities and states now have laws prohibiting discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people in employment and housing. In 2015, the Supreme Court decided that all states must recognize same-sex marriages. More and more LGBTQ people are running for office and getting elected. While more remains to be done, Harvey Milk once said, "The true function of politics is not just to pass laws, but to give hope." Harvey Milk pioneered a road to freedom. He showed the world that all people can have their hopes realized.

Author's Notes & Additional Information about Harvey Milk from Kari Krakow

p. 6: "Harvey never forgot . . . the brave Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto, who continued to defend themselves even when outnumbered and surrounded by Nazis."

In 1940, the Jewish residents of Warsaw, Poland were forced into an area known as a "ghetto," which was sealed off by a ten-foot wall and guarded by Nazi troops. Thousands of people died from starvation, disease, and cold. In 1942, three hundred thousand Jews were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp. When reports of mass killings in Treblinka leaked back to the ghetto, the surviving Jews organized a rebellion. They refused to report for deportation and bravely battled the Nazis against incredible odds. After days of fighting, the Nazi troops retreated. Even though the Nazis later destroyed the ghetto, this struggle inspired resistance groups throughout Europe to fight against Nazi oppression.

p. 9: "Fears that he would be beaten up at school and abandoned by his friends and family troubled his sleep and tormented his days." When Harvey was young, most LGBTQ people were forced to keep their lives a secret. They were misrepresented and misunderstood. Even friends and family members might reject someone if they found out he, she, or they had a different sexual or gender identity. Harvey Milk gave many people the courage to live openly despite the risks. Today most people know someone who is LGBTQ. More and more LGBTQ people live proudly as who they are and are

acknowledged for the important contributions they make to our society. Harvey Milk believed that one person could make a difference in the lives of others. Each of us, straight and LGBTQ, can make a difference too. We can respect and value the LGBTQ people in our lives and encourage our schools and communities to be safe and welcoming places for all. If you feel you might be LGBTQ yourself, you can visit the Trevor Project at thetrevorproject.org to get more information and find support. For more information about creating supportive school communities, check out the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network at glsen.org. To support LGBTQ family and friends, contact PFLAG (formerly Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) at pflag.org.

p. 16: "Gay people had no legal protections, and they risked losing their jobs and homes." When Harvey Milk was a young man, overt discrimination against groups of people was legal and commonplace. African American people were denied equal access to public places. Jewish people were barred from membership in clubs and organizations. Women were not allowed entry to many universities. LGBTQ people were also the subject of prejudice and mistreatment. They could be harassed, arrested, and sometimes beaten by police for going to gay bars or clubs. Violence against LGBTQ people was ignored by law enforcement and the legal system. Gays and lesbians were routinely fired from their jobs and evicted from their homes. For these reasons, they were often forced to hide their identities and relationships. Many people fought to create laws that protect against discrimination. Harvey Milk was one of them. The fight continues. In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that employers cannot discriminate against LGBTQ Americans. Cities and towns across the country have adopted civil rights ordinances to help ensure that LGBTQ people receive fair treatment. But many other cities and towns have not, meaning that legal protections for LGBTQ people often depend on where they live in the United States. Transgender people especially struggle to have their rights and identities recognized. For more information about laws protecting LGBTQ people, visit the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund at lambdalegal.org.

p. 20: "Harvey Milk became the first openly gay man sworn in to public office in the United States." Harvey Milk was not the first openly LGBTQ person elected in the US. In 1974, Kathy Kozachenko won a city council race in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Later that year, Elaine Noble took a seat in the Massachusetts General Assembly—the first LGBTQ person elected to statewide office.

Bibliography from *The Harvey Milk Story*

Books

Marcus, Eric. *Making History: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Equal Rights*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.

Miller, Neil. *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Shilts, Randy. *The Mayor of Castro Street: The Life and Times of Harvey Milk*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.

Films

Epstein, Rob, dir. *The Times of Harvey Milk*. San Francisco,: Black Sands Productions, 1984. Stein, Peter, dir. *The Castro*. San Francisco: KQED, 1997.

Periodicals

The Advocate, 1977-1979.

The San Francisco Chronicle, 1977-1979.

The San Francisco Examiner, 1977-1979.

More Resources on LGBTQ History from *The Harvey Milk Story*

Picture Books

Ellison, Joy Michael. *Sylvia and Marsha Start a Revolution!: The Story of the Trans Women of Color Who Made LGBTQ+ History*. Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2020. Pitman, Gayle E. *Sewing the Rainbow: A Story About Gilbert Baker*. Washington, DC: Magination Press, 2020.

Sanders, Rob. *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers, 2018.

Sanders, Rob. *Stonewall: A Building. An Uprising. A Revolution*. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers, 2019.

Middle Grade & Young Adult

Bronski, Michael. *A Queer History of the United States for Young People. ReVisioning History for Young People*. Adapted by Richie Chevat. Boston: Beacon Press, 2019.

Prager, Sarah. *Rainbow Revolutionaries: Fifty LGBTQ+ People Who Made History*. New York: Harper-Collins, 2020.

Sicardi, Arabelle. *Queer Heroes: Meet 53 LGBTQ Heroes From Past and Present!* London: Wide Eyed Editions, 2019.

Adult

Faderman, Lillian. *Harvey Milk: His Lives and Death*. Jewish Lives. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. Milk, Harvey. *An Archive of Hope: Harvey Milk's Speeches and Writings*. Edited by Jason Edward Black and Charles E. Morris. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

Reynolds, Andrew. *The Children of Harvey Milk: How LGBTQ Politicians Changed the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Film

Van Sant, Gus, dir. *Milk*. Universal City, CA: Focus Features, 2009.

Additional Teaching Resources and Materials for Harvey Milk

The Milk Foundation published a guide for *The Harvey Milk Story* (<https://milkfoundation.org/harvey-in-schools/using-the-harvey-milk-story-in-schools/>). Additionally, the Milk Foundation provides several links to resources, books, and videos geared toward librarian and educator support. Safe Schools Coalition also has resources and lessons dedicated to teaching about Harvey Milk in the classroom (http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/HarveyMilkDay/HarveyMilk_Mills%20Curriculum.pdf). The Legacy Project Education Initiative has information, video clips, and suggested books for teaching about Harvey Milk (<https://legacyprojectchicago.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/Harvey%20Milk%20Lesson%20Plan.pdf>).

Additional Teaching Resources and Materials for Harvey Milk

For LGBTQ+-inclusive curriculum, lesson plans, and booklists, consult the following organizations for more information:

- Garden State Equality: <https://www.gardenstateequality.org/trainings/safe-schools/>
- Learning for Justice Gender & Sexual Identity: https://www.learningforjustice.org/topics/gender-sexual-identity?gclid=Cj0KQCQiAmKiQBhCIARIsAKtSj-kvW8E3-NJzTyCIDmqB-HSO-p55n6lRyz4cUfwYAbgcNWkCRtUwE4bkaAhzIEALw_wcB
- Welcoming Schools: https://www.hrc.org/resources/schools?utm_source=GS&utm_medium=AD&utm_campaign=BPI-HRC-Grant&utm_content=276041283782&utm_term=lgbt-inclusive%20curriculum&gclid=Cj0KQCQiAmKiQBhCIARIsAKtSj-lqvPXTXTm-4dtrKEvuq5-OqccdgD_3OxQjQ5aKRZK9Eiv0x13SdbMaAqtQEALw_wcB
- GLSEN Inclusive Curriculum Guide: <https://www.glsen.org/activity/inclusive-curriculum-guide>
- Safe Schools Project Curriculum: <https://safeschoolsproject.org/curriculum/>

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- What does it mean to be persistent? How do you demonstrate persistence even though something may be challenging? Why is it important to be persistent? Do you think persistence can be learned? How so?
- How does someone “make a difference”? What do you think making a difference means? Who are some famous people who have made a difference in this country?
- Was there a time when you took a chance on something? What did you do? What was the end result? Was it worth taking a chance? How are taking chances important in your life?
- What does it mean to stand up for what’s right? What are some instances in history where people had to stand up for what they believe in even though they encountered opposition?
- How is a sense of belonging important to someone? Why is it important to feel like you belong? What do you think it feels like to not belong? What does that mean to you?
- What does it mean to be discriminated against? Why do people discriminate against other people? How does it feel? What are ways that you can defend people against discrimination? Why is it important to stand up to discrimination?
- What discrimination have gay people experienced politically? Do you know what laws have been passed to support gay people’s rights? What about laws that have been rejected or

protested in favor of gay people's rights?

Please note that the topics presented in *The Harvey Milk Story* can potentially be triggering to students: be aware of your student population and customize the questions accordingly.

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)
(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

- **Book Title Exploration:** Talk about the title of the book, *The Harvey Milk Story*. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?
- **Read Kari Krakow's Biography:** Read about Kari Karkow on the inside front cover. Encourage students to think about how her possible inspiration for writing *The Harvey Milk Story*.
- **Read David Gardner's Biography:** Read about David Gardner on the inside front cover cover as well as at his website <https://flyingdogstudio.com/>. Have students look into his other illustrations and compare and contrast across books. How are his illustrations similar? How are they different? Does the subject matter influence his illustrations?
- Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.
- Have students quickly write a feeling in their notebooks during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them write a journal entry about it.
- **Note:** Harvey Milk's assassination is addressed at the end of the book. Be aware of students' prior knowledge about assassinations or if there is potentially triggering content. Colorin Colorado's "15 Tips for Talking with Children About Violence" (<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/15-tips-talking-children-about-school-violence>) provides more strategies and information on discussing violence with young people.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- how Harvey Milk's childhood influenced his career
- how Harvey's personality and charisma stood out
- how Harvey's passion for his community inspired him to go into politics
- why Harvey wanted to speak up for others and make a difference
- how Harvey paved a way and stood up for gay people
- what Harvey did to help people during his time as a politician
- how Harvey's assassination inspired people to uphold his dreams and beliefs

- why Harvey was a trailblazer and how his legacy is important today

Encourage students to consider why the author, Kari Krakow, would want to share with young people this story about Harvey Milk, the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

Woodmere, New York, middle-class, Jewish, orchestra, Warsaw Ghetto, Bayshore High, politicians, gay, New York State College for Teachers, State College News, diploma, Navy, USS *Kittiwake*, submarine rescue vessel, San Francisco, the Castro, San Francisco Board of Supervisors, supervisor, gay rights bill, George Moscone, 1978 Gay Freedom Day Parade, Dan White

Academic

conduct, unseen, charisma, guarded, maneuver, harassed, brochure, tirelessly, ensure, abandoned, discrimination, swift, unambiguous

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. Where and when was Harvey Milk born?
2. What was Harvey like as a child?
3. What did Harvey's mother tell him that he would never forget?
4. What did Harvey like to do during his childhood?

5. What sports did Harvey play?
6. What did Harvey's friends and family not know about him?
7. What happened after Harvey graduated high school?
8. What was Harvey's role in the Navy?
9. Who did Harvey meet and fall in love with? Where did they move?
10. Why did Harvey have to keep his relationship a secret?
11. What happened to Harvey and Joe's relationship?
12. Where did Harvey move to next?
13. What did Scott and Harvey do together?
14. What was Castro Camera like? How did Harvey help people there?
15. What did people tell Harvey about their lives? What did Harvey realize and decide to do?
16. How did people help Harvey campaign for office?
17. How many times did Harvey run for public office? How did he react?
18. What did people begin to realize about Harvey?
19. What happened in January of 1977? How did Harvey make history?
20. What did Harvey do as a supervisor?
21. Who passed the gay rights bill? What happened afterwards?
22. What did Harvey call for during his speech after the gay rights bill passed?
23. Who tried to vote against the gay rights bill? What did he do after his loss to Harvey?
24. How did people react to the double assassination of Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone?
25. What happened in October of 1979?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

1. What does the title *The Harvey Milk Story* mean to you after reading? Why do you think the author chose this particular title?
2. How was Harvey Milk an advocate for himself and others at an early age? What were some of the things that Harvey did as a young man that prepared himself for his career as a politician?
3. How did Harvey work with community groups? What groups were important to Harvey to represent? Why was this important to him?
4. Why do you think people thought Harvey Milk running for public office was a joke? What do you think this meant about how people treated gay people?

5. Despite losing several elections, how did Harvey Milk persevere? How did he demonstrate persistence? Why didn't Harvey give up?
6. What were some of the causes that Harvey worked for during his time as San Francisco supervisor? What issues did he care about? Why were they important to him?
7. What was significant about the passing of the gay rights bill? Why do you think the mayor said as he passed the bill, "I don't do this enough"? How did this bill impact gay people's lives in San Francisco?
8. How did Harvey's assassination affect his community? How did his followers make sure that his legacy and dreams lived on? How did Harvey continue to inspire people after his murder?
9. Harvey Milk was assassinated by Dan White because Dan hated and feared gay people. Did Dan's beliefs reflect how most of the country felt about gay people? Do you think this is still true today? Why or why not?
10. How would you describe Harvey Milk to a person who had never heard of him before? What are some of the qualities that you would use to speak about Harvey? What are the most important things to say about Harvey's life and legacy?
11. Explore the structure of this text. Was it written as chronology, comparison, cause/effect, or problem/solution? Why do you think the author made this choice? How does it compare to other texts you have read?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about Harvey Milk's dedication to help others throughout his life. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think Kari Krakow's message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Kari Krakow's intentions to write the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do Harvey's experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *The Harvey Milk Story*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world, such as on television or in a newspaper? Why did this book make you think of that?
6. What does making a difference mean to students after reading? After reading *The Harvey Milk Story*, what does making a difference mean to you? Why? How did Harvey Milk inspire you to make a difference in your community?

7. What does education mean to you after reading? How did Harvey's passion for education and school fuel her success in politics? Why is education important?
8. How has a family member, teacher or other person close to you impacted your life? Harvey's mother, Minnie, always encouraged him to stand up for what he believed in. Did you have a family member or other person who has made an impact in your life? What were some things that person did that were significant to you?
9. Why is Harvey Milk an essential person to learn about in our history? How did Harvey lead the way for gay people in politics? What has he done for LGBTQ+ people in politics in today's world?

ELL Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are English Language Learners.

1. Assign ELL students to partner-read the story with strong English readers/speakers. Students can alternate reading between pages, repeat passages after one another, or listen to the more fluent reader.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading:
 - Review the illustrations in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing.
 - Have students work in pairs to tell what they learned about one of the spreads. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about what making a difference and something they can do to improve their school or community.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose English Language Learners to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Harvey experienced discrimination because he was gay. How do you respond to discrimination, when you experience it yourself and/or when you see it happen? How did Harvey react to discrimination? How did he help others who also experienced discrimination?
2. In what ways was Harvey able to be persistent and resilient to reach his political goals throughout the story? Show evidence from the book.
3. Which illustration in *The Harvey Milk Story* best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it is. How does it portray that emotion?
4. People in the LGBTQ+ community experience frequent discrimination and hatred just because of their sexuality. The Human Rights Watch put together a report on Discrimination against LGBTQ+ youth in schools (<https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/12/08/walking-through-hailstorm/discrimination-against-lgbt-youth-us-schools#>). Have students react to the statistics and data from the article. How does this make students feel when they review this information? How can they support LGBTQ+ communities in their own environments? How can they try to make the world a better place for people who are LGBTQ+?
5. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, frustration, hope, perseverance and so on. Illustrate or act out what that emotion looks like in *The Harvey Milk Story*.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Conduct a picture book biography study on Harvey Milk.** Compare *The Harvey Milk Story* with *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*. Analyze the authors' different decisions in these texts and how they are similar. How did they write about Harvey Milk? What kind of information did they share about his life? What did they learn from each story? Why do you think the authors chose to write about Harvey Milk and share his story in a picture book with young readers? Provide students with a graphic organizer to differentiate the three titles, and then have students write an essay answering the previous questions. For more information on how to teach with *Pride: The Harvey Milk Story and the Rainbow Flag*, consult Welcoming Schools' lesson plan (https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/WS_Lesson_Harvey_Milk_Rainbow_Flag_Symbols.pdf).
- **Reflect the quote that's often associated with Harvey Milk, "Hope will never be silent"** (https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2017/harvey-milk?gclid=Cj0KQCQiAoxiQBhCRARIsAPsvo-wxG_J4JDde63omvFcqAPCP9sa0DdOkN2SKdyRh80SG61YkMCNWvcMaAmIOEALw_wcB). What do students think this means? Why is it associated with Harvey Milk? Students can write an essay analyzing the quote in connection to what they learned from *The Harvey Milk Story*.
- **Brainstorm and collaborate on ways to support LGBTQ+ communities in your school.** Have students brainstorm with a partner or small groups some ways that they can support LGBTQ+ communities in their own classroom and the school at large. There are many different resources to support your work in researching how you can support LGBTQ+ student and educator communities:
 - ACLU's "Know Your Rights": <https://www.acludc.org/en/know-your-rights/know-your-rights-lgbt-students-what-do-if-you-face-harassment-school>
 - Resources for LGBTQI+ Students from the U.S. Department of Education: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/lgbt.html>
 - Resources for Gender and LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools from Welcoming Schools: <https://welcomingschools.org/resources>
 - Afterwards, have students come up with a word cloud (<https://www.wordclouds.com/>) or a

chart that outlines how they are going to be supportive of LGBTQ+ people in their schools, and ways that they can work together to create safe and welcoming spaces.

- **Encourage students to prepare a presentation or write an essay about something in their community that they're passionate about.** Harvey helped people in need during his time in political office. What is something that you want to improve in your school or neighborhood? Why is this an important cause? What are some ways that you can help others or work to improve this specific issue? Students can share their project in a visual presentation of their choosing, whether it's an information poster, flyers around the school, etc. Edutopia's "Social Justice Project in the Classroom" provides more information, resources and ideas for how to structure a social justice project in your relevant setting (<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/social-justice-projects-in-classroom-michael-hernandez>).
- **Consider using *The Harvey Milk Story* as an anchor text to teach students about biography writing.** ReadWriteThink's "Writer's Workshop: The Biographical Sketch" has tips and step-by-step instructions on how to ease students into writing biography and the different techniques and strategies that are used to make engaging and informative stories (<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/writers-workshop-biographical-sketch>). Afterward, have students select a picture book biography in their classroom and create their own book about that historical figure. Have students conduct a research study about their own historical figure from a picture book of their choosing to simulate the process behind *The Harvey Milk Story*. Have students identify the different features in *The Harvey Milk Story* that would help to inform their own book about their historical figure. What kinds of information do they need to research? How should they present it in the book? What images, diagrams, or photographs would be helpful to their reader?
- **Have students select a quote from the the Author's Note section of *The Harvey Milk Story*.** After their selection, have students read Kari Krakow's notes, and conduct additional research on that information and share what they learned about that process. How do you think these statements apply to what's happening in our political landscape today?
- **Write and design a commemorative plaque for Harvey Milk.** What would you want to say about Harvey Milk in a paragraph? What were the most important parts of his life, and what would you want to share with visitors? What was Harvey passionate about, and what is his legacy? Students can create artwork for their plaque to display around the classroom.
- **Have students think about expository nonfiction versus narrative nonfiction.** How was reading *The Harvey Milk Story* different from reading a newspaper article about Harvey Milk? Have students read the article, "'Harvey Milk, Activist and Politician, Led a Revolution for LGBTQ Rights'" (<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/harvey-milk-lgbtq-activist-legacy>). Then students can create a Venn Diagram with the headings "Narrative Nonfiction: *The Harvey Milk Story*" and "Expository Nonfiction: 'Harvey Milk, Activist and Politician, Led a Revolution for LGBTQ Rights.'" Students can compare the different formats of the texts and the information they learn in both.

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Encourage students to conduct a research study on an LGBTQ+ politician working today** (<https://stacker.com/stories/3088/harvey-milk-mayor-pete-and-30-other-lgbtq-politicians-who-broke-barriers>) (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2020/11/04/election-day-2020-mcbride-torres-jones-more-made-lgbtq-history/6158853002/>). Ask the following guiding questions: who is this person? What does this person do? What are they passionate about? Where are they from? What causes are they working to improve? How do they help their communities? Why did you select this person? Students can share their findings in an informational poster or a visual presentation of their choosing.
- **Conduct a research study for Harvey Milk Day (May 22) and consider celebrating it in your own classroom or educational setting** (<https://gsanetwork.org/resources/harvey-milk-day/>). The GSA Network has educational resources dedicated to discussing and teaching Harvey Milk Day. Students can brainstorm ways that they want to celebrate their own Harvey Milk Day. What do they want to share with their school community about Harvey Milk? Why is important to celebrate Harvey Milk? How can they encourage others to celebrate Harvey Milk Day?
- **Reflect on Harvey Milk's legacy and how he impacted politics today** (<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/forty-years-after-his-death-harvey-milk-s-legacy-still-n940356>). Have students research how Harvey Milk's legacy still impacts the political landscape today. What politicians credit Harvey Milk in their success? How are Harvey Milk's initiatives long-lasting? Students can also use the Teen Vogue article, "Harvey Milk, Activist and Politician, Led a Revolution for LGBTQ Rights" (<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/harvey-milk-lgbtq-activist-legacy>) for inspiration. Finally, ask students why Harvey Milk's legacy is important to learn about today. Students can share their thoughts in an essay.
- **Encourage students to select a resource from the "Author's Sources" section from the back of the book.** Students can examine the piece, whether it's a book, video, photograph, or website, and write a reaction to how they think the author and illustrator were informed by this information and how it helped to develop the book. Have students consider what kind of resource it is, how they know that it contains accurate and correct information, and why research is critical in developing a book. The Library of Congress has a lesson plan for further information about teaching students about using primary sources (<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>).
- **Have students create a timeline of Harvey Milk's life from the biography and elaborate on the events that happened during the time period.** In order for students to understand the historical context of Harvey's life, encourage students to research the events in the book and on the timeline by gathering photographs and other primary source documents about the particular events mentioned. Display both enlarged timelines in the

front of the class so that students have easy access to both the dates and events. Students can work in groups in different years (i.e. 1940-1950) and then add their events and findings to the class timeline.

- **Research issues impacting LGBTQ legislation today** (<https://www.aclu.org/legislation-affecting-lgbtq-rights-across-country-2021>). Harvey Milk worked to pass the gay rights bill in San Francisco. What are issues that are still present today for people who are LGBTQ? Students can work with a partner and select one of the bills/laws from the ACLU and research more about that bill/law. Ask students the following questions: What is the law/bill in question? Why is there an issue surrounding this bill? How does the law discriminate against people who are LGBTQ? What can students do in their own community to improve discrimination against people who are LGBTQ? What can they do with their local or state governments to work towards passing effective legislation in defending people who are LGBTQ?

Art & Media

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students create a drawing, painting, or other visual representation of a cause in their community that they're passionate about, inspired by Harvey.** Why did they choose this particular cause? Students can create posters, paintings, or other visual representations of the cause that they're passionate about, and then display them in small groups or for the whole class to see.
- **Consider having students conduct an illustrator study about David C. Gardner.** Visit David Gardner's website for a complete list of his children's books (<https://flyingdogstudio.com/>). If possible, display the books for students to examine the illustrations, and have students brainstorm how David's work is similar across the books, and how it differs by book.
- **As a follow-up activity, have students come up with questions to interview the illustrator David Gardner.** What is his process behind creating the illustrations with a children's book? What medium did he choose to create the illustrations? Why? What was it like to illustrate Harvey Milk and presenting his life story through art? Consider contacting David Gardner for a school visit.
- **Encourage students to select an illustration that resonated with them the most from *The Harvey Milk Story*.** Have students write a reflection about the illustration. What stood out to them? How did it make them feel? What did it make them think about?
- **Have students watch TedEd's "Harvey Milk's radical vision of equality"** (<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/harvey-milk-s-radical-vision-of-equality-lillian-faderman>). What did students learn about Harvey Milk from watching this video? What was it like to watch an animated video of Harvey Milk versus reading a picture book? What beliefs did Harvey Milk have for an equal society? How is Harvey Milk inspiring to you and why?

- **Using the poster from the English Language Arts, have students create a piece of artwork inspired by the quote that's associated with Harvey Milk** (https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2017/harvey-milk?gclid=Cj0KCOiAxiQBhCRARIsAPsvo-wxG_J4JDde63omvFcqAPCP9sa0DdOkN2SKdyRh80SG61YkMCNWvcMaAmIOEALw_wcB). Before students begin, ask them to think about how viewing this poster makes them feel. What does it make them think about? How do they want to create a piece of art designed to honor Harvey? What do they want to include? What are some of the most important things to share about Harvey, and how can they demonstrate that in their artwork?

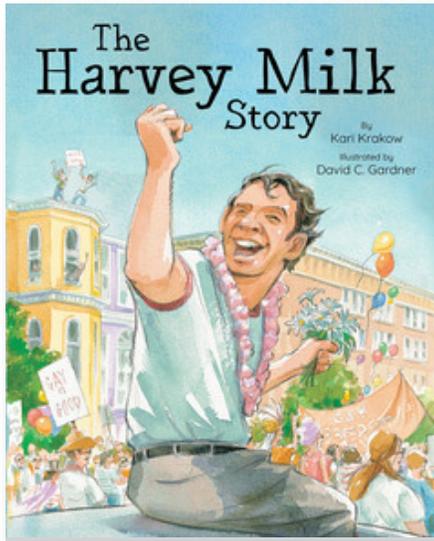
School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Have students investigate different organizations in their community that help people.** What resources are in the community to help people complete their education, get support on learning English and other language-learning skills, or have access to medicine? Students can bring in their findings and build a map or book of resources to share all families to access.



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/the-harvey-milk-story

 **By Phone:** 212-779-4400 ext. 25

 **By Fax:** 212-683-1894

By Mail:

Lee & Low Books, 95 Madison Avenue,
New York, NY 10016

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kari Krakow grew up in East Aurora, New York and now lives in Ithaca, New York with her family. A teacher for forty years, she believes biographies help children learn that individuality can be a source of strength. She hopes *The Harvey Milk Story* will inspire children to be themselves and make the world a better place.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

David C. Gardner grew up loving picture books, puppets, and cartoons, and now has three decades of experience as a professional illustrator. He's been the illustrator of many books for children including *The Harvey Milk Story*, *Sarah Gives Thanks*, and *Write On, Irving Berling!* He also worked on movies like *Beauty and the Beast* as an artist at Walt Disney Animation Studios. He studied filmmaking at Northwestern University and illustration at the American Academy of Art. He now lives in Sarasota, Florida and teaches at Ringling College of Art & Design. You can visit him at flyingdogstudio.com.

REVIEWS

"Krakow's succinct text portrays Milk as a caring individual who worked to ensure the rights of all people who lived in the San Francisco community he represented as supervisor ... Illustrated with cartoon-style drawings, the book is accompanied by excellent author notes and sources for further information." – *Cooperative Children's Book Center*

"[T]his book is needed in both public and school libraries. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED." – Jamie Campbell Naidoo, PhD, "Rainbow Family Connections: Selecting and Using Children's Books with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Content"

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