

## Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice

written by Sarah Warren

illustrated by Monica Mikai

### About the Book

**Genre:** Biography

**Format:** 40 pages, 9" x 10.75"

**ISBN:** 9781643794976

**Reading Level:** Grade 6

**Interest Level:** Grades 1–8

**Guided Reading Level:** W

**Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:**  
N/A

**Lexile™ Measure:** N/A

\*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

**Themes:** African/African American Interest, Biography/Memoir, Courage, Diversity, Dreams & Aspirations, Empathy/Compassion, Leadership, Mentors, Nonfiction, Optimism/Enthusiasm, Overcoming Obstacles

**Resources on the web:**

[leeandlow.com/books/stacey-abrams](http://leeandlow.com/books/stacey-abrams)

### SYNOPSIS

Stacey Abrams is the daughter of two civil-rights activists. She loved going into the voting booth with her parents on Election Day, knowing that their voices mattered. She loved school, even when she was the only Black student in her gifted classes. She loved her classmates at Spelman College -- a historically Black institution -- and worked hard to see they received the fair treatment they deserved.

And today, she brings all those experiences to her role as politician, author, and voting-rights advocate, helping to ensure that every person has a say and every vote gets counted. *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* follows Stacey's life from her girlhood to the present, but it also portrays the ordinary people that Stacey fights for -- the beautiful and diverse America that shows up to stand with one another. Backmatter includes a timeline of changes in US voting-rights law from the Constitution through the present day, demonstrating both how far the country has come and how far we have to go. With its spirited text and vivid illustrations, *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* will inspire readers to take their own steps forward.

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

## BACKGROUND

### A Timeline of US Voting Laws—and Stacey Abrams from Author Sarah Warren

On February 12, 1900, Black students attending a segregated school gave a performance to commemorate Abraham Lincoln's birthday. They sang a new song with words written by their principal, James Weldon Johnson, and music by his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson. "Lift Every Voice and Sing" went on to become an anthem for Black Americans. The words celebrate Black life and Black history. They honor generations of mothers and fathers and kindred souls who triumphed over tyranny. Now, our voices join with theirs. The United States has come a long way. We still have a long way to go.

The Constitution of the United States promised that Americans would have a voice in their government. However, when the Constitution was approved by the states in 1788, many people living in the US were not considered citizens. Only white men who owned property could elect the officials who would represent their interests. In addition, each state established its own rules around voting, which often meant that someone's ability to vote was determined entirely by where they lived.

But people resisted. They demanded the right to participate in elections legally and safely. They fought for a true democracy. Over time, new laws, judicial rulings, and amendments to the Constitution have removed many barriers to voting, but individual states can still make rules that target particular groups and prevent some Americans from exercising their rights. Stacey Abrams and other civil rights leaders, community helpers, activists, and public servants work to give every eligible American the chance to vote. You can get involved. Ask questions. Learn about the voting rules in your area. Reach out to your leaders. Use your voice! How can you help?

**1788** The United States ratifies its Constitution, which allows for the election of Representatives "by the People of the several States." In practice, most state-level laws exclude women, all non-white people, and white men who do not own land.

**1843** Rhode Island drops its requirement that citizens must own property to be voters—one of the last states to do so. However, immigrants must still own land in order to vote.

**1848** Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, people living in territories that Mexico lost to the United States in the Mexican–American War can choose to become US citizens.

**1868** After the Civil War, the Fourteenth Amendment grants citizenship to everyone born or naturalized in the US, including all formerly enslaved people.

**1870** The Fifteenth Amendment establishes that the right to vote shall not be denied on account of race. In response, some states pass laws or allow practices that make voting impossible for most Black Americans. Black voters are often physically attacked at the polls.

**1920** The Nineteenth Amendment gives all women with US citizenship the right to vote.

**1924** The Indian Citizenship Act extends citizenship to Native Americans. In response, some states pass laws to suppress Native American voting.

**1943** The Chinese Exclusion Act ends, allowing people of Chinese descent to become citizens and vote.

**1952** The Immigration and Nationality Act eliminates restrictions preventing people of Asian descent from becoming citizens.

**1957** The Civil Rights Act of 1957 allows the federal government to investigate and stop voting discrimination. Civil rights leaders continue to organize marches and protests, fighting for the right to register and vote.

**1964** The Twenty-Fourth Amendment prohibits the use of poll taxes in federal elections.

**1965** March 7: Hundreds of peaceful civil rights protesters march in Selma, Alabama, as part of a Black voter registration drive. Police attack. People see television broadcasts of officers assaulting protesters. Outrage spreads across the country. More Americans join the fight for equality.  
August 6: Driven in part by the public outcry for voter protections, President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act. States can no longer use unfair tests or other unfair laws to keep people from voting, and the federal government will supervise how elections are run in states that have previously violated the voting rights of their citizens. It takes years for some states to follow the law and protect all voters.

**1971** The Twenty-Sixth Amendment lowers the voting age to eighteen.

**1973** December 9: Stacey Abrams is born in Madison, Wisconsin, the second of six children born to Robert and Carolyn Abrams. The Abrams family later moves to Gulfport, Mississippi. Stacey grows up hearing stories of her parents' activism in the civil rights movement, such as her father's 1964 arrest for registering Black voters in Mississippi.

**1975** Congress changes the Voting Rights Act to ensure that ballots and voting rules are offered in multiple languages.

**1982** A bipartisan Congress and President Ronald Reagan renew the Voting Rights Act.

**1984** The Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act requires states to make sure that older Americans and Americans with disabilities have the space, technology, and support they need to cast their votes.

**1989** The Abrams family moves to Georgia. Stacey is only in high school, but she gets a job working first as a typist and then as a speechwriter for a congressional campaign.

**1991** Stacey graduates from high school and enrolls at Spelman College, a historically Black college for women in Atlanta, Georgia. She eventually serves as president of the Spelman Student Government Association.

**1993** The National Voter Registration Act makes it easier for citizens to sign up to vote.

**1995** Stacey graduates from Spelman College with top honors. She goes on to earn a Master of Public Affairs degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas and a law degree from Yale Law School. In her last year of law school, Stacey starts writing novels under the pseudonym Selena Montgomery.

**1999** Stacey starts work as a tax attorney in Atlanta.

**2002** The Help America Vote Act gives states basic guidelines for running fair elections.

**2003** Stacey is appointed the Deputy City Attorney for Atlanta.

**2005** Stacey launches a consulting firm—the first of several business ventures.

**2006** Stacey is elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. She goes on to serve as the Georgia House Minority Leader—the first woman to lead in her state's legislature and the first Black woman to lead in the House of Representatives.

**2013** In the case *Shelby County v. Holder*, the Supreme Court rules that states with a history of voter suppression no longer need to run changes to their election processes by the federal government, as the 1965 Voting Rights Act dictated, even if those changes make it harder for people to vote. States immediately begin enacting new restrictions that will primarily affect marginalized voters. In the years that follow, US senators and representatives propose many bills with new protections for voters, but they are not passed by Congress.

**2013-2014** When Georgia's governor refuses to help the people in his state learn how to sign up for new national healthcare benefits, Stacey starts the New Georgia Project—Affordable Care Act, which hires Georgians to help their neighbors navigate the new healthcare system. Eventually the organization pivots to educating and registering new voters.

**2018** Stacey becomes the Democratic nominee for governor of Georgia—the first Black woman to receive a gubernatorial nomination from a major party. Despite record turnout, Stacey does not have enough votes to be elected governor. Voters in Florida pass Amendment 4 to restore voting rights to people charged with felonies once they carry out their sentences. In 2019, the state legislature passes a new law that blocks these voters until they pay any outstanding fees and fines.

**2018-2019** Stacey starts a range of organizations to defend democracy and give Southerners the chance to thrive. One of them, Fair Fight Action, challenges voter suppression in court, pushes for legislation that will put a stop to unfair elections, and helps Georgians get the information and

support they need to vote. Over the next two years, Fair Fight, the New Georgia Project, and other organizations register an estimated 800,000 new voters.

**2019** Even though she no longer holds office, Stacey is chosen to give the Democratic Party's official response to the president's annual State of the Union address. She is the first Black woman to make this important speech.

**2020** When the COVID-19 pandemic sweeps across the world, some states enact new ways for voters to participate safely in elections, particularly through early and mail-in voting.

**2021** Stacey is nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Georgia institutes new voting restrictions. Stacey launches her second run for governor of Georgia.

### Selected Bibliography & Sources

For the Selected Bibliography & Quotation Sources, consult the Backmatter.

## 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 do you know about women in politics? Who are some famous female politicians that you know about? What have they done? What were some of the issues that they cared about?
- 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 the United States?
- What does education mean to you? Why is education important in achieving your goals? How does education provide opportunities for people?
- 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 believed in even though they encountered opposition?
- What does it mean to vote? Why is voting important to have as a right? How can people exercise their vote?

## 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, *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*. 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 Sarah Warren's Biography:** Read about Sarah Warren on the jacket back flap as well as on her website [sarahwbooks.com](https://sarahwbooks.com). Encourage students to think about how she comes up with new ideas for her books, and what could have been her inspiration for writing *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*.
- **Read Monica Mikai's Biography:** Read about Monica Mikai on the jacket back flap as well as on her website <https://monicamikai.com/>. Have students look into her illustrations for other books and compare and contrast her style across books. How are her illustrations among the books similar? How are they different? Does it seem like the subject matter of a book influences the style of her illustrations? Why do you think so?
- 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 down that feeling and have them write a journal entry about it.

## Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- how Stacey Abram's childhood influenced her career
- why Stacey became interested in current events at a young age
- how Stacey's education and desire for learning inspired her to go into politics
- why Stacey wanted to speak up for others and make a difference
- how Stacey made a difference in voting rights
- what Stacey does to help people during her time as a politician
- why Stacey Abrams is considered a trailblazer and how she made an impact in voting rights across the United States

Encourage students to consider why the author, Sarah Warren, would want to share with young people this story about Stacey Abrams, the first Black woman to receive a gubernatorial nomination from a major party.

## 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

United States, civil rights movement, vote, voting booths, elections, valedictorian, mayor, Los Angeles, California, Rodney King, system, Lincoln Memorial, Spelman, governance, law, Atlanta, Georgia, Georgia House of Representatives, the House, rib shacks, taquerias, auditoriums, voting machines, pandemic, seized

### Academic

voice, power, encyclopedia, dictionary, law, decent, newscasters, destruction, deserved

## 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. What does Stacey Abrams make sure leaders do?
2. What did Stacey Abram's parents do? How did they inspire her?
3. What were her parents' three central rules?
4. What did Stacey's father do for work? What did he remind her?
5. How did Stacey do in school? What did her parents do to ensure she could go to a good school?
6. What happened after Stacey graduated school? What honor did she receive?

7. What happened at the mansion?
8. Where did Stacey attend college?
9. Who did Stacey see speak at city meetings?
10. What happened in Los Angeles in 1992? How did Stacey respond?
11. What did Stacey ask newscasters and reporters to do?
12. How did Stacey help people elect new leaders?
13. How did the mayor respond to Stacey's activist efforts? What did he ask her to do?
14. Why did Stacey go back to school?
15. What did Stacey do as a lawyer in Atlanta?
16. How did Stacey help businesses in Atlanta? Why did she want to help people who were struggling with money?
17. What was Stacey elected to? What did she decide to do after that election?
18. Why was the governor election not fair? What happened?
19. Why were the voting results confusing?
20. What happened on Election Day in 2018? What was the result?

### 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 *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* mean to you after reading the book? Why do you think the author chose this particular title?
2. Of *Stacey Abrams*, author Sarah Warren says, "Her work helps me remember something important: Ordinary people have power. Justice, good leadership, public health, equality . . . everything we hope for is possible if we work together." How does she convey these messages in her book?
3. How were Stacey's parents three central rules influential in her life? Why were they important to her? What did they mean to Stacey and her family?
4. How did Stacey's father's saying "Having nothing is not an excuse for doing nothing" inspire Stacey throughout her life?
5. How was Stacey's family influential in her life? How did her parents' civil rights activism inspire her own work and eventual career?
6. How was Stacey Abrams an advocate for herself and others at an early age? What were some of the things Stacey did as a young girl that prepared her for a career as a politician?
7. What does "voters have power" mean? How did Stacey learn about the power of the vote?
8. Why was Spelman College important to Stacey? What did Stacey do at Spelman that she had



never experienced before in her life?

9. How did Rodney King and what happened in Los Angeles with the police affect Stacey? How did this atrocity inspire her to act? What did she do?
10. How did the media represent what happened to Rodney King and the police? How did she respond? How does the media influence how we view our news? How do you think the media described the Rodney King incident? How does this connect to other current events today?
11. Why do you think the Atlanta mayor asked Stacey to come work for him? How did Stacey encourage the mayor to do more for Black people?
12. In the text, the author, Sarah Warren, writes about Stacey, "She had her own way of doing things. She listened. She learned. She agitated and collaborated." What do you think these statements mean? Why do you think Stacey Abrams did these things? How does this relate to you in our own life?
13. Why did Stacey decide to run for governor? Why was this a big deal? How was this a significant event in American history?
14. How did the 2018 governor election in Georgia expose the unfairness of the election process? How did Stacey Abrams bring voters' attention injustice and fraud associated with the election?
15. Sarah Warren begins the book with the following statement: "The United States promises that the people can have a voice in deciding who is in charge." What do you think this means? Why do you think she began the book in this way?
16. How would you describe Stacey Abrams to a person who had never heard of her? What are some of the qualities you would use to describe her? What are the most important things to say about Stacey Abrams?
17. Explore the structure of this text. Does the story describe events chronologically, as comparison, cause and effect, or problems and solutions? Why do you think the author structured the text the way she did? How does this story 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)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What is one big thought you have after reading this book? Think about Stacey Abram's dedication to help others throughout her life. What is your takeaway from this book? What would you tell a friend about this book?
2. What do you think is Sarah Warren's message to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Sarah Warren's intentions for writing the book. What do you think she wanted to tell her readers?

3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kinds of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do Stacey Abrams'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 *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make between this book and what you have seen in the world, such as online, 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 *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*, what does the idea of making a difference mean to you? Why? Does Stacey Abrams inspire you to make a difference in your community? How?
7. What does education mean to you after reading this book? How did Stacey's passion for education and school fuel her success in life and in politics? Why is education important?
8. How has a family member or other person close to you impacted your life? Stacey's father and mother were civil rights activists and inspired her to make a difference. Have you had a family member or other person who really changed your life? What were some things that teacher or person did that were significant to you?
9. Why is Stacey Abrams an essential person to learn about today? How does Stacey Abrams lead the way for Black women and people of color in politics?

### 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. Stacey Abrams experienced racism and prejudice in the United States because of her race. How do you respond to racism or discrimination when you experience it yourself and/or when you see it happen to others?
2. How did the incident with the guard at the gate change Stacey's life? What did she realize about power after the guard didn't let her and her family into the mansion?
3. How did Stacey Abram's persistence and resilience lead to her career in politics? What experiences in her life inspired her to become an activist? Show evidence from the book.
4. How did Stacey feel about running for governor? What kinds of emotions did she have? Why do you think she felt this way? How did she manage her complicated emotions?
5. Analyze the following statement Stacey said the following while she was running for governor: "Vote for yourself... vote for the people you know and love, for the ones you work beside and worship with. For the Georgians you may never know but whose fate is undeniably tied to our own." What do you Stacey means by these statements? How do you think they connect to our social and emotional identities? Why is voting important for yourself and the people you love and care about? What about people you don't know? How do you think Stacey inspired people with her messages?
6. How did Stacey feel after losing the election? What did she decide to do? How did this demonstrate Stacey's persistence?
7. Which illustration in *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it shows. How does the image portray that emotion?
8. 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 *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*.

## 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)

- **Read *She Was the First! The Trailblazing Life of Shirley Chisholm* ([leeandlow.com/books/she-was-the-first](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/she-was-the-first)) along with *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*.** Analyze the differences and similarities among Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman to run for president, and Stacey Abrams' actions in these texts. What risks do they take to achieve their goals? What do they have to do to overcome obstacles in their lives? How do they demonstrate bravery and courage despite racism and sexism? Why do students think Sarah Warren and Katheryn Russell-Brown decided to write books about these powerful Black women? Provide students with a graphic organizer to differentiate the two titles, and then have students write an essay answering the previous questions.
- **Use *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* alongside *She Was the First! The Trailblazing Life of Shirley Chisholm* along with *Seeds of Change* ([leeandlow.com/books/seeds-of-change](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/seeds-of-change)), *Midnight Teacher: Lilly Ann Granderson and Her Secret School* ([leeandlow.com/books/midnight-teacher](https://www.leeandlow.com/books/midnight-teacher)), *Rise!: From Caged Bird to Poet of the People, Maya Angelou* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/rise>), and *Marvelous Mabel: Figure Skating Superstar* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/marvelous-mabel>) to show students powerful Black women in history.** Use a graphic organizer to compare Stacey Abrams, Shirley Chisholm, Wangari Maathai, Lilly Ann Granderson, Mabel Fairbanks, and Maya Angelou. How do these women inspire you to fight for what they believe in? Have students write a reaction after the graphic organizer exercise about these important Black women in history to address how and why they risked their lives to change those of others.
- **Conduct a Civics-focused read aloud unit featuring the following titles alongside *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*: *She Was the First! The Trailblazing Life of Shirley Chisholm*, *The Harvey Milk Story* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-harvey-milk-story>), *John Lewis in the Lead* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/john-lewis-in-the-lead>), *Marti's Song for Freedom/Martí y sus versos por la Libertad* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/marti-s-song-for-freedom-marti-y-sus-versos-por-la-libertad>), and *How We Can Live: Principles of Black Lives Matter* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/how-we-can-live>).** After reading the books, have students write a comparative essay answering the following questions: how was civic engagement featured in each book? How did the historical and/or political figure in each book fight for their beliefs? How did they demonstrate their activism? How were the people featured in the books inspiring in their communities? Use Lee

& Low's blog post, "9 Books to Encourage Civic Engagement" to consult more titles featuring civic engagement (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2022/11/02/9-books-to-encourage-civic-engagement/>).

- **Have students think about expository nonfiction versus narrative nonfiction.** How was reading *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* different from reading a newspaper article about Stacey? Have students read the article, "The Power of Stacey Abrams" (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2020/05/14/stacey-abrams-political-power/>). Have students create a Venn Diagram with the headings, "Stacey Abrams" and "Expository Nonfiction: The Power of Stacey Abrams." Students can compare the different formats of the texts and the information they learn in both. What did they learn from both texts? What was it like to take in information from a picture book about Sarah Warren versus a newspaper article about her?
- **Have students come up with a list of questions to ask author Sarah Warren.** What do students want to know about the process behind writing a children's book? How did the author come up with the idea to write *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*? What about her other books? Consider contacting Sarah Warren and inviting her to your school, library, or other relevant setting for an author visit (<http://sarahwbooks.com/>).
- **Encourage students to prepare a presentation or write an essay about something in their community about which they are passionate.** Stacey's mission is to support her communities and encourage people to exercise their right to vote. What is something you want to improve in your school, neighborhood, or community? Why is this an important cause? What are some ways you can help others or improve this specific issue? Students may share their findings with a partner, small group, or the whole class.
- **Consider using *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* 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>). Afterwards, have students select a current political figure today and have them write a short biography about that person. Have students conduct a research study about their own political figure from a picture book of their choosing to simulate the process behind *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*. Have students identify the different features in *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* that would help to inform their own book about their political 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?
- **Allow students to come up with their own political campaign.** Stacey's slogan was "Our Chance. Our Choice. Georgia." What would students' own political slogan be? What issues would they speak about? Why should they be elected president? How would they help others? Like Stacey Abrams, encourage students to debate, in partners or in small groups. Students may prepare posters to showcase their slogans and their platforms.
- **Have students write an essay or reaction to Stacey Abram's quotes: "We are trying to create a state of excellent schools, with jobs that create wealth and opportuni-**

**ty, with good leaders who stand up for all of us. . . . We are here to ensure that everyone who calls Georgia home has the freedom and opportunity to thrive—to live their very best lives!.”** What do students think of when they read these statements? How do they think her statements apply to our country's political system today? How does Stacey Abram's statements inspire them to think about politics and the future for our government?

### 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)

- **Conduct a research study on how Stacey Abrams has made a political impact in the state of Georgia.** Visit Stacey Abram's website to learn more about Stacey's accomplishments and initiatives (<https://staceyabrams.com/about/#meet-stacey>). Have students answer the following guiding questions during their project: what are some of Stacey's major accomplishments? How has she changed the way that people vote in Georgia? What are some of her goals regarding voting rights? How does she support communities in her state? What organizations is she affiliated with that help people and people's right to vote? What are some other initiatives in addition to voting rights and voting education that she's working for? Fair Fight is another organization dedicated to promoting fair elections around the country, encouraging people to vote, bringing awareness to election reform, and advocating for election reform and education across the United States (<https://fairfight.com/about-stacey-abrams/>). Students can present their findings about Stacey Abrams in an analytical essay.
- **Learn more about the history of voting and voting rights.** Learning for Justice (<https://www.learningforjustice.org/projects/voting-and-voices/classroom-resources>) (<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/the-true-history-of-voting-rights>), Facing History & Ourselves (<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/voting-rights-united-states-0>), and Zinn Education Project (<https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/teaching-voting-rights-struggle/>) all have lesson plans, activities and resources dedicated to learning more about voting and voting rights in the United States. Why is it important to vote? How can people exercise their right to vote? Why can it be difficult for some people to vote? What are some obstacles in the voting process? How has the right to vote been impacted by racism, sexism, classism and xenophobia throughout history? What does voter suppression mean, and how have women and BIPOC people been affected by voter suppression throughout history? Students can also learn about voting history in their own state. Students can write an analytical essay or prepare a poster to showcase their findings about voting rights and voting history to share with a partner, small group, or whole class.
- **Conduct a research study on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and their famous female alumni.** Stacey Abrams attended Spelman College and Kamala Harris attended Howard University (<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/10/us/hbcu-women-kamala-harris-stacey-abrams-trnd/index.html>). Consult *The Smithsonian Magazine's* "These Colleges Produced Generations of Black Women Leaders" (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/how-americas-hbcus-produced-generations-black-women->

[leaders-180976885/](#)) and Essence's "13 Successful Black Women Entrepreneurs Who are Proud HBCU Graduates" (<https://www.essence.com/news/money-career/black-women-entrepreneurs-proud-hbcu-graduates/>) for additional information and to learn more about trailblazing Black women. Have students select one of the women featured in the articles and create an informational poster based on the following guiding questions: which figure did you select? What is she known for? How is she an activist in her field? How has she made an impact on our society today?

- **Afterwards, have students learn about the power of elections and how elections work. PBS' "The Election Collection"** (<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/election-collection/>), **ReadWriteThink's Election Day** (<https://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/today-election>), **Facing History and Ourselves' "Teaching Resources for the US Elections"** ([https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-resources-us-elections?utm\\_term=&utm\\_campaign=DSA&utm\\_source=adwords&utm\\_medium=ppc&hsa\\_tgt=dsa-19959388920&hsa\\_grp=75449327748&hsa\\_src=g&hsa\\_net=adwords&hsa\\_mt=&hsa\\_ver=3&hsa\\_ad=333182733490&hsa\\_acc=4949854077&hsa\\_kw=&hsa\\_cam=1635938820&gclid=Cj0KCQiAyracBhDoARIsACGFcS71EmLwPz24XAFNTm-LsSe\\_j-7vbKgYas7EnjKeQOi82hHLJUf6dqMaAmPTEALw\\_wcB](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-resources-us-elections?utm_term=&utm_campaign=DSA&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_tgt=dsa-19959388920&hsa_grp=75449327748&hsa_src=g&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_mt=&hsa_ver=3&hsa_ad=333182733490&hsa_acc=4949854077&hsa_kw=&hsa_cam=1635938820&gclid=Cj0KCQiAyracBhDoARIsACGFcS71EmLwPz24XAFNTm-LsSe_j-7vbKgYas7EnjKeQOi82hHLJUf6dqMaAmPTEALw_wcB)) **and Learning for Justice's Voting and Elections** (<https://www.learningforjustice.org/moment/voting-elections>). What are the core components of an election? How do elections work? What kinds of elections are there in the United States? How does voting play a role in elections? Students can create informational posters with photographs and other pertinent information about elections to display in their classroom.
- **Have students conduct a research project on a woman of color in political office.** Students can get ideas from women in politics from current events or history. Students can focus on the following questions: What is the politician known for? What is her platform and what issues does she care about? What obstacles did she have to overcome to get elected? How has she made a difference in office and in her community? Resources online include Rutgers University's "History of Women of Color in U.S. Politics" (<https://cawp.rutgers.edu/history-women-color-us-politics>), *The Washington Post's* "Women of color in Congress are challenging perceptions of political leadership" (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/01/04/women-color-congress-are-challenging-perceptions-political-leadership/>), and "The Spike In Political Mobilization of Women of Color in the U.S. Will Define 2020" (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bonniechiu/2019/09/18/the-spike-in-political-mobilization-of-women-of-color-in-the-us-will-define-2020/#558386de367f>). Students may share their historical figure in a visual presentation of their choosing, using reputable resources from books and websites.
- **Encourage students to select a resource from the Selected Bibliography section at the back of *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*.** 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 develop the text. 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 select an event from the timeline of US Voting Laws in the back of *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice* and elaborate on the events that happened during the time period.** To help students understand the historical context of US Voting Rights and Stacey's determination to help others vote, encourage students to research the events in the book by gathering photographs and other primary source documents about the events mentioned and creating a timeline. Consider displaying the entire timeline in the front of the class so that students have easy access to the years and events. Students may work in groups in different years (i.e. 1940-1950) and then add additional events and findings to the class timeline.

### 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)

- **Watch WETA's "And She Could Be Next" featuring Stacey Abrams** (<https://weta.org/watch/shows/pov/lesson-plan-clip-6-she-could-be-next-1>) (<https://www.thirteen.org/programs/pov/lesson-plan-clip-3-she-could-be-next-2/>). What did students learn about Stacey Abrams that was new? What was it like to watch a video featuring Stacey Abrams? How can Stacey inspire students in their own lives? Students can write a reflective essay after they finish watching the videos.
- **Have students create a drawing, painting, or other visual representation of a cause in their community that they're passionate about, inspired by Stacey Abrams.** Why did students choose this particular cause? Students can create posters, paintings, or other visual representations of the cause that they're passionate about, and then display their work in small groups or for the whole class to see.
- **Have students create a poster encouraging people to vote.** Why did students choose this particular cause? Students can create posters, paintings, or other visual representations of the cause that they're passionate about, and then display their work in small groups or for the whole class to see.
- **Consider having students conduct an illustrator study about Monica Mikai.** Visit Monica's website for a complete list of her children's books ([monicamikai.com](https://monicamikai.com)). If possible, display the books for students to examine the illustrations, and have students brainstorm how Monica's illustrations are similar across the books, or how they differ per book.
- **As a follow-up activity, have students come up with questions to interview the Monica Mikai.** What is her process behind creating the illustrations for a children's book? What medium did she choose to create the illustrations? Why? Consider contacting Monica Mikai for a school visit (<https://monicamikai.com/>).
- **Encourage students to select the illustration that resonated with them the most from *Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice*.** 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?

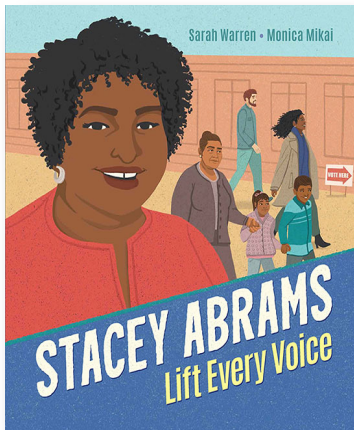
### School-Home Connection

(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)

- **Provide students with a list of other titles by Sarah Warren.** Have students investigate other titles by Sarah Warren at their local school or public library, or with their family through her website (<http://sarahwbooks.com/>). What themes do her books have in common? What topics do the books share? What do you think Sarah Warren's message is for young readers across her books?
- **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 may bring their findings to class and build a map or book of resources to share so that all families have access.
- **Encourage students and families to learn about voting in their communities.** Where do they vote? What is their local polling place? What is the next upcoming election? What are families passionate about that they want to see in candidates in their community? Go to PBS Kids (<https://www.pbs.org/parents/lets-vote>) for information about how to engage with young children about voting and Rock the Vote for older students (<https://www.rockthevote.org/>).



## Ordering Information

### General Order Information:

[leeandlow.com/contact/ordering](https://leeandlow.com/contact/ordering)

### Secure Online Ordering:

[leeandlow.com/books/stacey-abrams](https://leeandlow.com/books/stacey-abrams)

**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

**Sarah Warren** writes picture books about people who inspire her, from Dolores Huerta to Beyoncé. Of Stacey Abrams, she says, “Her work helps me remember something important: Ordinary people have power. Justice, good leadership, public health, equality . . . everything we hope for is possible if we work together.” An early childhood educator, Sarah lives with her family in the Twin Cities. Please visit her website at [sarahwbooks.com](https://sarahwbooks.com) and follow her on Twitter and Instagram at @sarahelizwarren.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**Monica Mikai** believes the stories of our lives hold great power and is passionate about bringing those stories to life through her illustrations. She has a BA from Rider University and received her MFA in painting from the New York Studio School. She lives in Atlanta, Georgia with her husband and two sons. You can find her online at [monicamikai.com](https://monicamikai.com) and on Instagram at @monicamikai.

## REVIEWS

“An important, uplifting biography with historical and contemporary significance. (timeline, bibliography, sources).” —*Kirkus*

“For a first look at a major political player, the simple text, not bogged down by heavy detail, is a powerful vehicle in conveying the importance of participating in a democratic society, especially through exercising the right to vote.” —*School Library Journal*

## ABOUT LEE & LOW BOOKS

**LEE & LOW BOOKS** is the largest children’s book publisher specializing in diversity and multiculturalism. Our motto, “about everyone, for everyone,” is as urgent today as it was when we started in 1991. It is the company’s goal to meet the need for stories that children of color can identify with and that all children can enjoy. The right book can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, prompt discussion about race and ethnicity, and inspire children to imagine not only a world that includes them, but also a world where they are the heroes of their own stories. Discover more at [leeandlow.com](https://leeandlow.com).