

Teacher's Guide

John Lewis in the Lead: A Story of the Civil Rights Movement

written by Jim Haskins and Kathleen Benson,
illustrations by Benny Andrews

About the Book

Genre: Juvenile Nonfiction/ Biography and Autobiography

Format: Hardcover, \$18.95
48 pages, 8-1/4" x 11"

ISBN: 9781600608490

Reading Level*: Grade 4

Interest Level: Grades 3–8

Guided Reading Level: V

Accelerated Reader® Level/Points:
5.9/0.5

Lexile™ Measure: 950L

*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Biography/Memoir, Civil Rights Movement, Politics, Legal System, Voting, Courage, Discrimination and Segregation, Nonviolence, Dreams and Aspirations, History, Nonfiction/Informational Text, Social Justice, United States History (Georgia), African/African American Interest

Resources on the web:

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/john-lewis-in-the-lead>

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

How does an Alabama sharecropper's son grow up to help change his world? For John Lewis the journey began as a boy experiencing the injustice of segregation and the inspiring words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

After high school Lewis joined with Dr. King and other civil rights leaders who believed in fighting segregation peacefully. From Nashville, Tennessee, to Selma and Montgomery, Alabama, Lewis was in the forefront of the major civil rights protests of the 1960s. In the face of physical attacks, he persevered with dignity and a devotion to nonviolence, helping southern black people gain the right to vote. Lewis continued his commitment to human rights with words and action from his home base in the South, straight to the nation's capital. In 1986 John Lewis was elected to represent Georgia in the United States Congress, where he continues to serve today.

John Lewis in the Lead celebrates the life of a living legend of American history. Lewis's passionate belief in justice is a beacon for all who wish to make the country a better place to live.

BACKGROUND

Timeline

"The Life and Times of John Lewis" from authors Jim Haskins and Kathleen Benson is a timeline with accompanying photographs located in the back of the book for information about the different monumental events in John Lewis' life and how his efforts and legacy are still impactful today as his role in Congress.

About John Lewis

John Lewis's website, "Congressman John Lewis Representing Georgia's 5th District" provides more details and specific information about John's life, his current efforts, his social media channels, and more (<https://johnlewis.house.gov/john-lewis>).

John Lewis is the son of sharecroppers from Troy, Alabama. As a young child, he was inspired by the activism of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the words of Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. He became engrossed with the Civil Rights movement and has been a pivotal figure in progressive social movement and human rights in the United States ever since.

During his time at Fisk University, John Lewis organized sit-in demonstrations at segregated lunch counters, participated in the Freedom Rides which challenged segregation at interstate bus terminals, and was beaten severely by angry mobs and arrested by police for challenging Jim Crow and the injustices of the South.

From 1963 to 1966, John Lewis served as the Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization that was responsible for initiating sit-ins and other activities protesting segregation and other horrific acts.

On March 7, 1965, John Lewis and Hosea Williams, another critical Civil Rights leader, led over 600 people across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. Their goal was to demonstrate the need for voting rights in Alabama, but the marchers were viciously attacked by Alabama state troopers in an event that is now known as "Bloody Sunday."

John Lewis continued to exemplify his commitment to the Civil Rights Movement in various capacities and demonstrated his leadership in many roles. In 1986, John Lewis was elected to Congress and served as U.S. Representative of Georgia's Fifth Congressional District ever since.

He is the recipient of many awards, including the highest civilian honor granted by President Barack Obama, the Medal of Freedom, the only John F. Kennedy "Profile in Courage Award" for Lifetime Achievement granted by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, and more.

John Lewis is also the author of the bestselling graphic novel trilogy, *March* (<https://www.penguin-randomhouse.com/series/1MA/march>), was has been adopted into the core curriculum of school systems across the country to teach the Civil Rights Movement accurately. He is the author of several

other titles, including a biography and other nonfiction titles. John currently lives in Atlanta, Georgia.

Teaching about the Civil Rights Movement

Teaching Tolerance has a unit called, “Civil Rights Done Right,” which offers a detailed set of curriculum improvement strategies for educators who want to apply these practices in their own work. Consult the different lessons for culturally responsive, accurate ways of teaching about the Civil Rights Movement with engaging primary source documents and more (<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/civil-rights-done-right>).

Civil Rights Teaching is a project of Teaching for Change that provides lessons, news, and resources about the role of everyday people in the Civil Rights Movement (<https://www.civilrightsteaching.org/>).

Facing History and Ourselves has units, lessons, individual readings, interviews, videos, and more about the Civil Rights (<https://www.facinghistory.org/topics/race-us-history/civil-rights-movement>).

Edutopia’s article, “A Better Way to Teach the Civil Rights Movement” by Melinda D. Anderson, describes different ways of teaching about Civil Rights that improve history lessons on the period and emphasizing activists, churches, schools, and women (<https://www.edutopia.org/article/better-way-teach-civil-rights-movement>).

Other Lee & Low Titles About the Civil Rights Movement

Dear Mrs. Parks: A Dialogue with Today's Youth

written by Rosa Parks

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/dear-mrs-parks>

The Bus Ride

written by William Miller, illustrated by John Ward

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-bus-ride>

Paul Robeson

written by Eloise Greenfield, illustrated by George Ford

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/paul-robeson>

Howard Thurman's Great Hope

written by Kai Issa, illustrated by Arthur Dawson

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/howard-thurman-s-great-hope>

As Fast as Words Could Fly

written by Pamela Tuck, illustrated by Eric Velasquez

<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/as-fast-as-words-could-fly>

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 the Civil Rights Movement in the United States? Who were some of the movement's leaders? What historical figures do you think of when you hear "Civil Rights Movement"?
- What do you think "nonviolent resistance" means? When have you heard of situations where nonviolent resistance has been involved?
- 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?
- What is segregation? When did it occur in this country? Do you think segregation is still present today? Why or why not?
- 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 adversity and opposition?

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, *John Lewis in the Lead*. 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 Jim Haskins, Kathleen Benson, and Benny Andrews's biographies: Read about Jim Haskins, Kathleen Benson, and Benny Andrews on the back flap of the book.
- 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.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

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

Have students read to find out:

- how John Lewis was inspired at an early age to advocate for himself and stand up to injustices

that he witnessed in the world around him

- who helped John Lewis along his career and path to becoming an icon of the Civil Rights Movement
- why nonviolent resistance was critical to John Lewis' legacy and how he executed nonviolent resistance during his protests and marches
- why John Lewis demonstrated persistence and courage in the face of not only racism but danger and life-threatening situations
- what causes John Lewis is passionate about in his current role as Congressman and the different ways that he's enacting change in the current government
- how John Lewis had a lasting impact in both the Civil Rights Movement and American society today

Encourage students to consider why the authors, Jim Haskins and Kathleen Benson, would want to share with young people this story about John Lewis and his determination to stand up to injustices despite the risks

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

sharecroppers, henhouse, minister, sermons, Montgomery (Alabama), Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., preacher, Mohandas K. Gandhi, nonviolent resistance, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Freedom Rides, sit-ins, press conference, March on Washington, "I Have a Dream" speech, Civil Rights Act of 1964, clerk, courthouse, Selma (Alabama), Marion (Alabama), Jimmie Lee Jackson, George Wallace, Reverend Hosea Williams, Edmund Pettus Bridge, unlawful assembly, bullhorn, beautician, undertaker, Major John Cloud, state trooper, concussion, Voting Rights Act of 1965, House of Representatives, President Johnson, congressman

Academic

torrent, hustled, howl, hushed, preached, segregated, deserted, boycott, discrimination, threatened, dignified, rally, deposit, casket, disperse, swarm, troopers, contorted, courageous, swarm, jeering, crest

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 was John playing when the storm began?
2. What did Aunt Seneva tell John and his cousins to do during the storm?
3. What did John have to do when he turned five? What did he have to do for his new role?
4. What did John do to quiet the chickens at night? What did he want to be when he got older?
5. How did John get the nickname Preacher?
6. What did it mean to be segregated? How did John feel about segregation?
7. Who did John hear on the radio? What was that person saying?
8. What were John's first steps to protest segregation? What did he ask for?
9. Why did John go to Nashville, Tennessee?
10. Who did Dr. King tell John to study? What was the reason behind it?
11. What is Mohandas K. Gandhi known for?
12. What did John organize and what committee did he join? What did they do as part of that committee?
13. How was John's commitment to nonviolence tested? What happened in May 1961? How did Dr. King and John react and respond?
14. What was John committed to fighting for?
15. Where did John speak in August 1963? What did he discuss in his speech?
16. What happened after John's speech? What was the March on Washington's impact?
17. What happened in January 1965?
18. What happened in Selma after black people were eligible to vote? How did John react and what did he do?
19. Who was Jimmie Lee Jackson?
20. After the funeral, what did John and Dr. King decide to do?

21. Who took Dr. King's place during the march from Selma to Montgomery?
22. What church played a particularly critical role to the moment?
23. What happened at the crest of the Edmund Pettus Bridge? Who was leading the marchers?
24. What did Major John Cloud order?
25. How did John solve the problem that he saw? What did he remember during the moment on the bridge? What did he ask people to do?
26. How did the troopers react? What did they do to John?
27. What did this event become known as? What did the reports reveal about Bloody Sunday? What were people calling for?
28. What happened on Sunday, March 21? How was this march different?
29. After the march, what act was passed by President Johnson?
30. What was John elected to in 1986?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3 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 *John Lewis in the Lead* mean to you after reading? How did your perceptions of John Lewis change after reading this story? Why?
2. Why do you think John never forgot the storm at Aunt Seneva's house? What do you think he learned from Aunt Seneva and how she reacted to the bad weather? How did this inspire his work during the Civil Rights Movement and in the present day?
3. How was John Lewis an advocate for himself and others at an early age? What were some of the things that John did as a young boy to stand up to the racial injustices that he witnessed and experienced in his everyday life?
4. How did Martin Luther King Jr. inspire John Lewis at an early age? How did he play a significant role in how John perceived protesting and advocacy?
5. What kind of legacy does John Lewis have? How was he impactful as both a social activist and Civil Rights Movement icon? Why was he honored for his work? What are the different ways that he is admired and acknowledged today?
6. How would you describe John Lewis to a person who had never heard of him before? What are some of the qualities that you would use to speak about John? What are the most important things to say when explaining John's life and legacy?
7. Why did John Lewis become involved in several different causes other than civil rights? What made him want to create awareness around issues other than civil rights as his role as Congressman? How is he an influential and important changemaker in American government?
8. Explore the structure of the 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)

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 or takeaway that you have after reading this book? Think about John's dedication to the Civil Rights Movement. How does he show commitment to what he believes in?
2. What do you think the essential message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations behind Jim Haskins and Kathleen Benson's intentions in writing the book. What do you think they wanted to tell their 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 John'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 *John Lewis in the Lead*? 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. How has a family member, teacher, or friend impacted your life? John Lewis was inspired by some early lessons from Martin Luther King Jr. and Mohandas K. Gandhi. How has a family member, coach, or friend's words inspired you to pursue an important cause in your life?

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 retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about how John's story inspired them and his persistence for

justice during the Civil Rights Movement, despite racism and violence along the way.

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, 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. Guide students to the glossary at the back of the book for further definitions.
6. There are many terms pertaining to different organizations in the Civil Rights Movement used throughout the text. Create a chart with all of the different organizations, leaders, and their objectives. Keep the graphic organizer up throughout the course of using the book.
7. There are many events with significant ties to geographic locations that are important to the story of John Lewis and the CRM. For students unfamiliar with the region, consider displaying a map of the United States highlighting the Southern states, their capitals, and the cities referenced in the book. Label significant places as your students move through the book, John Lewis' life, and the unfolding Civil Rights Movement. Make sure to mark your students' town/city on the map as well.

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. John experienced racism and prejudice because of his race. How do you respond to racism or discrimination, when you experience it yourself and/or when you see it happening to others?
2. In what ways was John able to be persistent and resilient to reach his ultimate goal? Show evidence from the book.
3. Which illustration in *John Lewis in the Lead* best shows an emotion? Explain which emotion you think it is. How does it portray that emotion?
4. How did John deal with the constant violent and racist attacks that he had to go through in his life? How was he able to solve problems in a nonviolent, effective way?
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 *John Lewis in the Lead*.

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)

- **If possible, present students with Facing History's videos of excerpts from John Lewis' speeches** (<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/congressman-john-lewis-civil-rights-movement>). Have students write a reaction essay to what it was like to watch John deliver a speech as opposed to reading about his life and legacy. Students can compare and contrast what it's like to see a person deliver a speech in real life in contrast to reading about the person or excerpts of a speech in text. Ask: How did this make you think of John Lewis differently? Did it change how you viewed him after reading *John Lewis in the Lead*? What inspired you from his speeches? Why?
- **Provide students with the opportunity to reflect on how Martin Luther King Jr. played a role in the development of John Lewis' leadership.** Have students write a reaction essay to the influence that Martin Luther King Jr. had in John's life, and how he affected him both personally and professionally. Students can also refer to the article, "How Martin Luther King Jr. Recruited John Lewis" (<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/02/john-lewis-martin-luther-king-jr/552581/>) for more details in an interview with John about how King Jr. influenced his life. Students can create a chart with two columns, one column dedicated to each influential figure, to map out their ideas. How were these two individuals different in the execution of their beliefs? How were they similar? As a follow-up activity, encourage students to write about a coach, teacher, or family figure who has influenced and motivated them to pursue their dreams, and what the mentor did to inspire the student to work hard. How are those people different in their teaching styles? How are they similar?
- **Have students think about expository nonfiction versus narrative nonfiction.** How was reading *John Lewis in the Lead* different from reading a newspaper article about John? Have students read the article, "Five Things to Know About Congressman John Lewis" (<https://www.ajc.com/news/five-things-know-about-congressman-john-lewis/uzHfUBLePoRaRnvw-jlmpkK/>). Have students create a Venn Diagram with the headings, "Narrative Nonfiction: *John Lewis in the Lead*" and "Expository Nonfiction: 'Five Things to Know About Congressman John Lewis.'" Students can compare and contrast the different formats of the texts and the information they learn in both.
- **Encourage students to select a resource from the Text & Sidebar Sources 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.

- **Consider reading John Lewis' graphic novel trilogy *March* with students in grades 5 and above along with *John Lewis in the Lead*** (<http://cdn.topshelfcomix.com/guides/march-book-one-teachers-guide.pdf>). Refer to the Teacher's Guide for *March* for additional resources and questions on how to teach the graphic novels with students. The National Education Association has additional information about the books in the *March* series as well as other lesson plans about the Civil Rights Movement that you can use along with the books: <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/67442.htm>. Have students think about the difference between reading John Lewis' graphic novels versus reading a biographical text about him. How was the process different? What did they learn from one book that they didn't learn from the other?
- **Read the Lee & Low title *Dear Mrs. Parks* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/dear-mrs-parks>) along with *John Lewis in the Lead*.** Students can compare and contrast these different leaders of the Civil Rights Movement and how they influenced history during the Civil Rights Movement and today. How were they both essential to the Movement? What were the ways that they stood up for what they believed in? How were those ways similar? Different? Why are they critical historical figures to learn about? Students can write their findings in a comparative essay and then share their thoughts with partners, small groups, or the whole class.
- **If possible, have students read *John Lewis in the Lead* along with the chapter book counter-part, *The Story of Civil Rights Hero John Lewis*.** Have students compare and contrast the experience of reading and engaging with both texts. What did they learn from *John Lewis in the Lead* that helped them to prepare with *The Story of Civil Rights Hero John Lewis*? What did students learn in *John Lewis in the Lead* that they didn't learn from *The Story of Civil Rights Hero John Lewis*? Have students write a reflection piece about the experience of reading both texts. Students can also examine how both picture books and chapter books are important for reading and learning.
- **As a follow-up activity, 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 *John Lewis in the Lead*. Have students identify the different features in *John Lewis in the Lead* 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?

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, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, and Range of Writing, Strand 10)

- **Consult Teaching Tolerance's "Civil Rights Done Right: A Tool for Teaching the Movement" for culturally responsive accuracy when teaching students about Civil Rights** (https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/TT_TTM_Civil_Rights_Done_Right_0.pdf) and **Zinn Education Project's "'We Had Ourselves Set Free': Lessons on the Civil Rights Movement"** (<https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/we-had-set-ourselves-free/>) **to prepare and engage in teaching a Civil Rights Movement in your respective setting.** Background knowledge leading up to the Civil Rights movement, examination of multiple leaders and perspectives, and current day applications are all integral to teaching the Civil Rights Movement in the classroom. Please examine the materials carefully and make sure all critical content areas are covered. Consult the article "Martin Luther King Jr. and Other Civil Rights Activists to Celebrate" for additional Lee & Low titles and further information about the Civil Rights Movement (<https://blog.leeandlow.com/?s=civil+rights&commit=Go>).
- **Have students examine the timeline in the back of the book and elaborate on the events that happened during the time period.** In order for students to understand the historical context of John's life, encourage students to research the events in the timeline by gathering photographs and other primary source documents about that particular event. 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. 1960-1965) and then add their events and findings to the class timeline, located below the enlarged timeline from the book.
- **In the beginning of *John Lewis in the Lead*, John could not receive a library card because he was black. Have students research how other historical figures were affected by segregation, and how it influenced the development of their careers and lives.** Another Lee & Low title, *Sixteen Years in Sixteen Seconds* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/sixteen-years-in-sixteen-seconds>), showcases Olympic diver's Sammy Lee's experiences with segregations and limitations just because of his race. Arthur Ashe could not play on specific tennis courts because of the color of his skin in *The Story of Tennis Champion Arthur Ashe* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/the-story-of-tennis-champion-arthur-ashe>) and *Game Set, Match, Champion Arthur Ashe* (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/game-set-match-champion-arthur-ashe>). Students can conduct an online research study about different historical figures and their personal experiences with segregation, and then write a comparative essay in regard to John's experiences.
- **Encourage students to research additional information about John's current work as Congressman.** What has he accomplished? How has he worked to raise awareness about other critical issues in the United States? Students can select one of his causes and conduct a research project on that specific issue today and how John, other members of Congress, and organizations are working towards equity and equality for all people. Visit John Lewis' personal website for more information (<https://johnlewis.house.gov/>). Students can showcase their

findings in a visual presentation format of their choosing.

- **Have students conduct a research project on each of the “Big Six” Civil Rights Movement leaders.** Divide students into six groups and have them each focus on one leader. Provide the following guiding questions: How was this person influential in the Civil Rights Movement? What were some of the things that they did to help advance the Civil Rights Movement? What was their leadership style, legacy, and impact? Why do people need to learn about them? Consult the following resources for additional information and resources (https://www.huffpost.com/entry/big-six-march-on-washington_n_3826958) (<https://americanhistory.si.edu/changing-america-emancipation-proclamation-1863-and-march-washington-1963/1963/leaders-march>). Students can present their findings in a visual presentation format of their choosing.
- **Provide students with the opportunity to investigate the Bloody Sunday event in more detail and its impact in the Civil Rights Movement and our society today.** Students can create a timeline of actual events leading up to and after Bloody Sunday. How was this event critical to the Civil Rights Movement? What additional information did students learn about Bloody Sunday that they hadn't gathered from *John Lewis in the Lead*? Consult Zinn Education Project's Bloody Sunday resources for more (<https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/bloody-sunday/>).

Arts/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 after reading *John Lewis in the Lead*.** Encourage students to think about how the story impacted them and why it motivated them to create this particular art piece.
- **Inspire students to create a piece of art about something they're passionate about.** How would they represent something that they would like to advocate for through a painting, drawing, video, or other visual format? Why is this cause important to them? How can they show their feelings about this cause through art and media?

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)

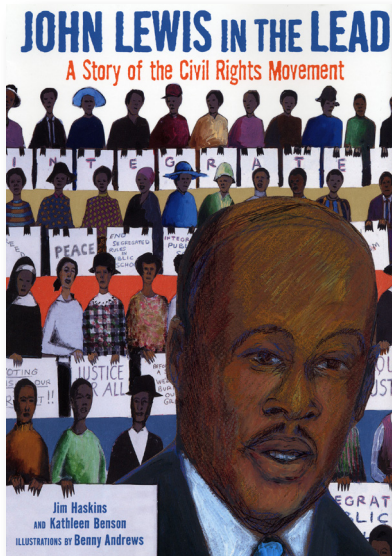
(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **If possible, provide students with a copy of Lee & Low's *John Lewis in the Lead*** (<https://www.leeandlow.com/books/john-lewis-in-the-lead>). Encourage family members to read the picture book at home. Have students and their families talk about what hard work, dedication, and social activism means to them. Students can also examine the illustrations and how they differ in each book based on illustrator style.
- **Encourage families and children to learn more about John Lewis.** Have students explain to their families and caregivers why John Lewis is essential to both the Civil Rights

John Lewis in the Lead

Teacher's Guide leeandlow.com/books/john-lewis-in-the-lead

Movement and our government today. If possible, have students and their families visit John's website to learn more about the causes he's passionate about today in addition to his work as Congressman (<https://johnlewis.house.gov/>). Another place students can learn more about civics, our government, and voting rights is iCivics (<https://www.icivics.org/>) which was started by former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.



Ordering Information

General Order Information:

leeandlow.com/contact/ordering

Secure Online Ordering:

leeandlow.com/books/john-lewis-in-the-lead

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

Jim Haskins was the celebrated author of more than one hundred books, most on topics of African American history and achievement. His works received numerous honors, including the Coretta Scott King Author Award and the Carter G. Woodson Award. In 1994 Haskins was the recipient of the Washington Post Children's Book Guild Award for a body of work in nonfiction for young people.

Kathleen Benson long served as the Curator of Community Projects at the Museum of the City of New York. With her late husband, Jim Haskins, she co-authored some twenty books for children, young adults, and adults. She lives in New York City. Find her online at kathleenbenson.com.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Benny Andrews is a renowned African American fine artist whose work is in the permanent collections of more than thirty major museums, including the Smithsonian Institution, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. His dramatic, folk art-style illustrations have also appeared in several children's books. He passed away in 2006.

REVIEWS

"Andrews's folk art-style illustrations, rendered in oils and fabric collage, convey the tenacity and courage of Lewis as well as the fierce tensions of time."

—*Publisher's Weekly*

"Without sensationalizing, [*John Lewis in the Lead*] shows the bravery of the activists and the difficult fight they faced." —*Booklist*

"[*John Lewis in the Lead*] is an attractive portrait of a living legend."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

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.