

JOURNEY TO JUSTICE EXHIBITION – suggested activities for younger pupils

A teacher/facilitator can select from these activities, also including an activity based on the local stories.

ACTIVITY 1 – introduction

Standing round the timeline and map panel, give them a brief introduction to segregation in the USA. Explain that the WHOLE of the USA did NOT have laws promoting segregation; that the legacy of the Civil War and slavery applied particularly to the southern states. The North had fought against slavery.

Introduce children to the concept of the difference between state laws and federal law; federal law could overrule state laws.

ACTIVITY 2 – stories (extra resources: sets of activity sheets)

Put them in five teams: red, yellow, blue, green, orange. Each team gets an activity sheet taking them to particular parts of the exhibition, focused around the themes in one of the five core stories.

Tell them that their team is going to look at lots of stories of people who did something to end injustice. They will be working out why they succeeded.

They will have to read, think and discuss their stories and ideas, and be ready to report back to the whole class.

ACTIVITY 3 – storytelling and reflection

Bring the whole class together to share the stories and thoughts about them. Then a whole class discussion:

“All the people whose stories you have seen were ‘ordinary’ people and they were successful in bringing change. So let’s think about why they succeeded. What qualities did they need?”

ACTIVITY 4 – using the arts

Key Stage 2

Get each team to look at one of the following:

- the map of the UK
- the poems on the ‘bus stops’
- the Ruby Bridges poetry in the desk
- the music on the jukebox and Mark’s blue booklet
- all the big photos

Then come back together as a whole class and discuss how the arts – music, photography, visual art, poetry etc - play an important part in action and why.

Key Stage 3

As an alternative to the KS2 activity, each group could be given questions to think about, viz:

TEAM 1 – the map of the UK

People have taken action for justice all over the UK all through our history. Here people have added examples of UK journeys to justice. Read some of them and pick out three from different parts of the country. What was the injustice people were taking action against? What injustice concerns you? What action could you take?

TEAM 2 – the poems

All round the exhibition at the 'bus stops' there are poems by children in East London. Why did children write these poems? What or who inspired them? Choose one poem you really like? Why do you like it?

TEAM 3 – the music

In the 1960s many cafes had juke boxes like this. You could put in a coin and select the track you wanted to hear. This juke box is playing songs of protest and freedom. Some are from the USA in the 1960s. Some are from protests at other times including our own time, all over the world.

Look through the blue booklet attached to the juke box. Choose a song and read its lyrics. What is the song saying? Choose two other songs. Are they the same or different? In what ways?

Can you write a song about one of the stories in this exhibition?

TEAM 4 – the photos

There are many big photos in the exhibition. Go round again looking closely and carefully at the photos. Which do you like best and why? How do the photos help tell the stories in the exhibition?

ACTIVITY 5 – creative workshops

(extra resources: flip chart paper, felt tips, poster paper – guitar optional if including song)

(a) A poetry, music or art workshop based on Ruby Bridges

Gather the class round the Ruby/Barbara stand and Ruby's desk. Ask 6 children to read out **one** each of the selection of KS2 poems there. Discuss the poems with the children. Then ask children how they would have felt if they were Ruby. Discuss, too, how Ruby *actually* felt.

On flip chart paper, make list of powerful words about how 'YOU' would have felt if you had to go to that school every day. (Alternatively, children could do this on paper in groups or individually).

If time, using the powerful vocabulary suggested by the group and on flip chart paper, compose a class poem or song together - 3 verses (or one only depending on time).

- 1) How might you have felt when leaving home every day?
- 2) How might it have felt walking through the racist crowds every day?
- 3) How might you have felt in the classroom alone every day being taught by Mrs Henry?

OR

The children make posters with POSITIVE slogans which Ruby might have wanted to see. There are examples illustrating the children's poems in Ruby's desk, eg 'Black and White unite', 'Every child welcome here'. 'Integration not segregation'

Read children extracts from published books in the desk: THESE ARE A VERY USEFUL RESOURCE.

- 'Through my eyes', by Ruby Bridges. Pages 15 (Nov 14th 1960), pg 22 (My first white teacher) and pgs 40-45.
- Last 6 pages of 'The Story of Ruby Bridges' by Robert Coles

(b) Music, poetry or art workshop based on any of the stories in the exhibition

ACTIVITY 6 – planning your own journey to justice

Now it's their turn to plan an action for justice. In their groups, they

- decide on an issue
- agree an action that could be taken
- agree what they want to achieve
- think about what might prevent them
- decide how they will use the arts in their action

There is brief feedback from each group.

People like us can take action for justice and can succeed.