



## DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY GUIDE

### *A Ride to Remember: A Civil Rights Story*

by Sharon Langley and Amy Nathan, with illustrations by Floyd Cooper

Abrams Books — ISBN: 978-1-4197-3685-8

[https://www.abramsbooks.com/product/ride-to-remember\\_9781419736858/](https://www.abramsbooks.com/product/ride-to-remember_9781419736858/)

### ABOUT THE BOOK

*A Ride to Remember* tells the true story of how a little girl's ride on a carousel in Baltimore, MD, made a powerful civil rights statement. The carousel she rode is now on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

#### Before reading or hearing the story:

- Look at the picture on the book's cover and quickly browse the book's illustrations.
- Where do you think the girl is?
- What do you think the story might be about? What do you think will happen in the story?

#### After reading or hearing the story: (Possible answers are in italics after each question.)

- Who was the story about? (*Sharon Langley, her parents, people in Baltimore who opposed segregation.*)
- What did she and others do? (*Ride the carousel at Baltimore's Gwynn Oak Amusement Park, protest at the amusement park, help integrate the amusement park.*)
- What was important about that? (*She was the first black child to go on a ride at the park on its first day without segregation.*)
- Where is the carousel now? (*On the National Mall in Washington, DC.*)
- What important civil rights event took place on the same day as her ride? (*Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his "I Have a Dream" speech at his March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.*)
- What big problem did her carousel ride help address? (*Segregation*)
- Does this story remind you of another story you've read or heard about? (*Stories on Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, Sylvia Mendez, Martin Luther King, Jr., others who took a stand against discrimination.*)

#### Further thinking: In the book, Sharon says: "everyone—even children—can help create a world where all are welcome and treated fairly." (This appears in the extra information section at the end of the book.)

- How did children in this story try to end unfairness? (*Taking part in protests at the amusement park, riding the carousel on its first day without segregation—both Sharon and the other children.*)
- Are there still unfair situations that you've seen or heard about — in school, on the playground, in the community, or in the wider world? (*bullying, homelessness, fighting, hunger, poverty, people being unkind to each other, littering, climate change, schools being closed, sports games cancelled, and others.*)
- What unfairness would you change, if you could? What answer would you have for this question: "If I could change the world, here's what I'd change...."
- How can young people help end unfairness? (*Be kind to people, create a story, song or picture about ending unfairness, talk to others about this, write a letter to a newspaper or to an elected official.*)

### ART ACTIVITIES

#### COLORING PAGES (in the four attached files, courtesy of the book's illustrator, Floyd Cooper)

Questions to help guide children in using the coloring pages.

#### "Gathering at the Carousel" Coloring Page

- Where do you think this scene takes place?
- Who do you see in this scene? (*Grown-ups, children, women, men, etc.*)
- What are they doing? (*Protesting, demonstrating, or picketing.*)
- Why do you think they are \_\_\_\_\_ (*Insert words possibly used above.*)

- When do you think this took place?
- Notice their sign boards. Imagine you are one of the protestors. What would your sign board say? Write on the board what you want the sign board to say and then color in the picture.

**“Carousel Crowns” Coloring Page** (*Two versions: one says “I Ride for...” ; the other doesn’t.*)

- Sharon and her father rode the carousel for “fairness.” Her parents wanted children to be able to enjoy the park, no matter the color of their skin.
- If you were to ride the carousel—either today or when Sharon was a little girl—what would your ride stand for? Write it on your crown’s headband. Decorate and cut out your crown. (*Use the extra strip to attach to the sides so it will fit around your head.*)
- Imagine that you are riding the carousel. Parade or gallop wearing your crown proudly.

**“Sharon on the Carousel” Coloring Page**

- In this picture, Sharon’s father is holding her safely and singing to her. Sharon asked illustrator Floyd Cooper why he chose to show Daddy singing. He said, “I thought it might be a comforting thing for a father to do.”
- What do you think Daddy is saying or singing to Sharon?
- What are comforting words that you’d like to hear (or say to others) when taking a bold stand?
- What song would you sing if you were Sharon’s Daddy trying to comfort her on that ride?
- Have fun coloring in the page!

#### **OTHER CREATIVE ACTIVITIES:**

**Draw your own Carousel Horse:** Write on the saddle a change you’d like see happen, to answer this question: “If I could change the world, here’s what I’d change....” Put your drawing on your wall or give it to someone. You could also draw another kind of animal that could be on a carousel.

**A Fairness Picture or Story:** Draw a picture — or write a story — about children or grown-ups treating people fairly: in school, on the playground, in the community. It could be about a time when you helped someone who needed help, or when someone helped *you*. Or it could be about a time when you *wished* you had helped someone. Another idea: Create your own Super Hero (a person or animal) who could help end unfairness in the world.

**Ask Others:** Ask family members or friends about a time when they stood up for fairness, or protested an unfairness, or experienced unfairness themselves.

#### **WE’D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU:**

Please send your questions, comments, or photos of your artwork to both of the authors of *A Ride to Remember: A Civil Rights Story*. We’d love to hear from you! Here are emails to use:

For **Sharon Langley**: [info.sharonlangley@gmail.com](mailto:info.sharonlangley@gmail.com)

For **Amy Nathan**: [info@AmyNathanBooks.com](mailto:info@AmyNathanBooks.com)

#### ***A RIDE TO REMEMBER: A CIVIL RIGHTS STORY***

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E-book and audio versions are also available in some public libraries for use during library closures.

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