

## **PEACEFUL FIGHTS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS**

### **An Educator's Guide**

by Rob Sanders

#### **About the Book**

This book is a primer for peaceful protest, resistance, and activism. Every voice matters, no matter how small. Peaceful protest. Standing up for what's right. Uniting around the common good—many children hear these terms frequently. Through sparse and lyrical writing, Rob Sanders introduces abstract concepts like “fighting for what you believe in” and turns them into something doable. Arranged alphabetically, the text is a protest chant, a poem, a call to action. Jared Schorr's bold, bright cut-paper illustrations bring resistance to life, making it clear that one person *can* make a difference. And together we can accomplish anything.

#### **About the Author**

Rob Sanders is a teacher who writes and a writer who teaches. Not only does he write picture books for children, he also teaches fourth-grade language arts in Tampa, Florida. His other titles include: *Cowboy Christmas*; *Outer Space Bedtime Race* (a Crystal Kite Award winner); *Ruby Rose: Off to School She Goes*; *Ruby Rose: Big Bravos*; *Rodzilla* (winner of the Florida Gold Medal for Younger Children's Literature); and *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*.

#### **About the Illustrator**

Jared Andrew Schorr lives in Southern California. As an illustrator, he specializes in creating detailed art with meticulously cut paper. His work has appeared in many publications, as well as in galleries and in homes around the world. Jared also illustrated *Better Together: A Book of Family* (written by Barbara Joose and Anneke Lisberg).

### **Prereading Activities**

#### **Peaceful Protest**

**Discussion Questions:** What is peaceful protest? Whom do you associate with peaceful protest? Why might people have chosen to protest peacefully? What movements do you associate with peaceful protest?

**Activity:** Gather newspaper headlines, photographs, books, and articles that focus on individuals and groups protesting peacefully. The article in the back of *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights* could also be used. Display the resources and allow students time to examine and discuss what they find. Lead a class discussion about peaceful protest, why people chose to peacefully protest, what strategies of peaceful protest were/are used, and what individuals and movements were/are associated with peaceful protest. During the discussion, you may also ask: “What would be difficult about protesting peacefully? What would be the benefits of peaceful protest?”

Ask each student to identify a cause, belief, or issue he/she feels needs to be protested peacefully. Next, ask each student to write a short response to these questions: Why is this cause, belief, or issue important to you and which peaceful protest strategy or strategies would you use? Why? Younger students may dictate their response, use a combination of words and sketches, or work with partners or in a small group to complete the writing activity.

CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Reading Strategy 7

### **Finding Context**

Discussion Question: What do we know about equal rights?

Activity: On chart paper, write the following terms: *fairness*, *equality*, *equity*, and *equal rights*. Read the terms to the students. Lead children to discuss *fairness* by asking: “Why do you think fairness is important? What have you experienced that was not fair? How do you feel when things are not fair?” Ask students if they’ve heard the words *equality*, *equity*, and *equal rights*, and, if so, when and in what context. Help students to distinguish between *equality*—the state of being equal; *equity*—the quality of being fair and impartial; and *equal rights*—the idea that everyone should be treated equally under the law. Lead the students to discuss how the terms are similar and different and how the terms relate to one another.

Point out that *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights* discusses the efforts people have made to achieve fairness, equality, equity, and equal rights without ever mentioning those words in the text. Ask: “Why do you think the author chose not to use the terms we’ve discussed in the text? How could a book about equality, equity, and equal rights accomplish its goal without using those terms?”

CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Reading Standard 5

### **After Reading**

#### **Analyzing the Text**

Discussion Questions: Why did the author arrange the words of the text in alphabetical order? Why are some words repeated? Why are some words and phrases followed with exclamation marks and others aren’t? How does the author develop a rhythm or cadence with the words in the text?

Activity: Type up the words of the text, and project the words so students can clearly see them. Next, read the projected text. Ask students to identify what they notice about the text now that they can see it in isolation and without the illustrations. (Answers may include: The text is in alphabetical order, some words and phrases are repeated, lines of text are punctuated differently, the text seems to have a rhythm, cadence, or beat.) Guide students to analyze the text using the discussion questions. Help students understand that they are inferring why the author made the choices he did, and that all answers are valid and worth discussing. Remind students that a picture book contains two stories—the words and the illustrations—and that they need to read both in order to understand the full message of the book.

CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Reading Standard 4

#### **Analyzing the Illustrations**

Discussion Questions: What forms of protest and/or protest words are included in the illustrations, but not the text? How do the illustrations make the text clearer or more understandable?

Activity: Before beginning, write the discussion questions on chart paper or on the board. As you lead the students through the book again, cover the words of the text with stick-on notes, thus allowing them to focus only on the illustrations. After viewing the illustrations on each two-page spread, guide students to discuss what they see and to discuss the questions. Remind students to focus on each speaker and to connect their thoughts to the thoughts of others.

CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Speaking and Listening Standard 1

### **Writing about the Illustrations**

Discussion Question: Why do you think the illustrator chose the medium of cut paper to create the illustrations for this picture book?

Activity: Write the question on chart paper or on the board. Read the question to the students and allow for a brief discussion. Then ask students to write their opinion about why the illustrator chose the medium of cut paper to illustrate the book. Younger children may use a combination of words and sketches to create their opinion, dictate their responses, or work with a partner or in small groups.

CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Writing Standard 1

### **Online Research**

Discussion Questions: Which peaceful protest word or phrase do you want to know more about? How can you learn more about that kind of peaceful protest?

Activity: Give each child a stick-on note and a pencil. Ask the first discussion question and allow each student to write his or her choice on a stick-on note. To guide thinking, you can turn through the pages of the book again, so students can be reminded of words, phrases, and illustrations that might inspire their choices. When each student has made a selection, ask: "How can you learn more about that kind of peaceful protest you chose?" Allow time for discussion. Remind students that one way to learn more about a topic is by researching online. Tell students that each person will have time to research his or her topic online and then to write a brief report about what he or she discovers. For younger students, you may conduct your research as a class, and students may then write independently about the research, write with a partner, or write in a small group. Students may choose to work together as a class to dictate their writing to the teacher.

CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Writing Standard 6

### **Glossary Scramble**

Purpose: This activity will help students connect peaceful protest terminology with definitions. You may use the activity to introduce or review terminology, as a concentration game, a simple match game, or as entries on a word wall. The cards may be used individually, with a partner, in a small group, or as a whole class.

Directions: Copy the words and definitions on card stock. Cut apart the cards.

<b>assemble</b>	to gather together in one place
<b>banner</b>	a sign painted on cloth or paper and hung for others to see
<b>boycott</b>	to stop buying or using something, or to stop going to a particular place
<b>bumper sticker</b>	a stick-on piece of paper with a printed message, for sticking to the bumper of a car
<b>button</b>	a badge with an image or a printed message; can be pinned onto something else
<b>camp out</b>	to pitch a tent and stay in a location in order to register a protest
<b>campaign</b>	to participate in the competition between candidates for public office
<b>demonstrate</b>	to gather in order to publicly display a group's feelings toward something

<b>encourage</b>	<b>to inspire with courage or confidence</b>
<b>endure</b>	<b>to hold out against without yielding</b>
<b>exemplify</b>	<b>to show by example</b>
<b>expect</b>	<b>to look forward to</b>
<b>explain</b>	<b>to make something understandable, plain, or clear</b>
<b>imagine</b>	<b>to think or believe; to form a mental image of</b>
<b>inform</b>	<b>to give knowledge</b>
<b>inquire</b>	<b>to seek information; to ask questions</b>
<b>invite</b>	<b>to request the participation or presence of</b>

<b>mediate</b>	<b>to settle disputes</b>
<b>meditate</b>	<b>to contemplate or reflect</b>
<b>nonviolent</b>	<b>peaceful; free of violence</b>
<b>persevere</b>	<b>to persist; to maintain with purpose</b>
<b>persist</b>	<b>to continue on with purpose</b>
<b>picket</b>	<b>to protest with signs during a strike or demonstration</b>
<b>post</b>	<b>to publish an online message</b>
<b>resist</b>	<b>to oppose; to withstand; to take a stand</b>

<b>sit down</b>	<b>or sit in; to participate in a protest where people sit down and will not leave</b>
<b>strike</b>	<b>to stop work in order to force an employer to comply with demands</b>
<b>take a knee</b>	<b>to rest on one knee in protest</b>
<b>unite</b>	<b>to join together</b>
<b>vigil</b>	<b>a period of watchful attention</b>
<b>volunteer</b>	<b>to perform a service willingly and without pay</b>
<b>vote</b>	<b>to use a ballot to express one's opinion or choice</b>
<b>zealous</b>	<b>filled with passion, enthusiasm, and eagerness</b>

*This guide was created by the author of *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights*, Rob Sanders. Rob is a writer who teaches and a teacher who writes. Every day he goes to Mintz Elementary School in Brandon, Florida, to teach kids about books and words and reading and writing. Then he heads back home to write books for children. On weekends and holidays, you might find him hanging with his dog, Baxter; spending time at the beach with his great-nieces and -nephews; or talking with other children's writers. Nothing makes his heart dance more than hearing boys and girls say, "Read it again!"*

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