

**THE SCHOOL IS NOT WHITE!  
A TRUE STORY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

**Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award Nominee 2008 Grades 3-5**

Submitted by Joni Murphy, Graduate Student, LSU School of Library & Information Science  
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**The School is Not White! A True Story of the Civil Rights Movement** by Doreen Rappaport.  
Illustrated by Curtis James. Hyperion Books for Children, 2005. 40 pages.

**Summary**

This is a true story about the Carter family and their struggle to integrate their children into the all white school in Drew, Mississippi in 1965. Matthew and Mae Carter, cotton farmers, had eight children and did not want their children to have to work in the cotton fields for the rest of their lives. Although the U.S. Supreme Court had made segregation illegal in 1954, Mississippi schools were still segregated eleven years later. A new federal law was passed in 1965 to enforce the anti-segregation ruling. The Carters made the decision to send their children to the all-white school, despite social pressure against integration. The Carters knew the pain and suffering their children would have to endure in order for them to get a fair and equal education. For five long years, their children were ridiculed, mocked, and mistreated in the school system in Mississippi. However, the Carter children endured and finished school. They are now living prosperous lives, but they have not forgotten the struggles they had to go through for an education.

**Awards**

2006 Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year (Outstanding Merit)  
A Book Sense Children's Pick, Winter 2005/2006  
Coretta Scott King Awards Honor Book  
Jane Addams Children's Book Award

**Author's Biography**

Doreen Rappaport grew up in New York and majored in music at Brandeis University. She taught in New York City and New Rochelle, New York. In 1965, Ms. Rappaport went to teach in McComb, Mississippi at a Freedom School and was drastically changed by this experience. She has won awards such as Notable Social Studies Trade Book for *We Are the Many: A Picture Book of American Indians*. She also received a Caldecott Honor, a Coretta Scott King Honor Book award, and an ALA Notable Children's Book award for *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

<http://www.doreenrappaport.com/>

<http://www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com/teachers/index.asp>

**Other Titles by Doreen Rappaport**

*Free at Last! Stories and Songs of Emancipation*  
*Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
*Freedom River*  
*Escape from Slavery*  
*NO MORE! Stories and Songs of Slave Resistance*  
*We Are the Many: A Picture Book of American Indians*

### **Illustrator's Biography**

Curtis E. James is originally from Albany, Georgia, but he moved to New York in 1985 to attend Pratt Institute. He received his BFA and MFA in Fine Art from Pratt and has since won several honors. His large-scale pastel drawings are exhibited in museums and galleries and held in private collections throughout the country. He lives with his wife in Pennsylvania.

<http://www.curtisejames.com/>

### **Other Titles Illustrated By Curtis James**

*Linda Brown, You Are Not Alone: The Brown v. Board of Education Decision* by Joyce Carol Thomas.

*Freedom Ship* by Doreen Rappaport.

### **Related Titles**

*Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins* by Carole Boston Weatherford.

*Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni.

*This is the Dream* by Diane Shore.

*Show Way* (Newbery Honor Book) by Jacqueline Woodson.

*A Sweet Smell of Roses* by Angela Johnson.

*Almost to Freedom* by Vaunda Micheax Nelson.

*The Bus Ride that Changed History: The Story of Rosa Parks* by Pamela Duncan Edwards.

### **Classroom Connections**

#### **Doreen Rappaport Learning Guide for *The School is Not White!***

<http://www.doreenrappaport.com/learn.html>

This is a website has questions for the students to answer and to guide their reading for all of Mrs. Rappaport's books.

#### **Hyperion Reader's Companion Guide for *The School is Not White!***

<http://www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com/board/displayBook.asp?id=1481>

This website gives a nice plan for how to read and engage your students attention while reading *The School is Not White!*

- There are a number of web sites listed below that contain lesson plans that would correlate with this book. The plans contain a number of activities that you could use in the classroom.
- Discuss the terms overseer, sharecropper or any unfamiliar words in the book.
- Have students research the Civil Rights movement, identify people who played a vital part in this movement, and create a mural showing pictures and information about these people.
- Brainstorm the meaning of the term "prejudice." Discuss why prejudice is harmful.

#### **Study Questions for *Martin's Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport**

<http://www.purdue.edu/bcc/library/bigwords.htm>

#### **Web English Teacher: Doreen Rappaport**

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/rappaport.html>

Lesson plans and teaching ideas for *Freedom River* and others books.

**Lesson Plans: Hooray for Heroes Theme Unit**

Explore the concept of heroism with cross-curricular, character-building activities.

<http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=5288>

**Lesson Plan: Being Treated Equal/Children Experience Prejudice as They Learn About Martin Luther King Jr.**

<http://atozteacherstuff.com/pages/268.shtml>

Introduces the children to Martin Luther King, and gives them first hand experience on what it must have been like to be treated differently because of ones origin or gender.

**Lesson Plan: Civil Rights/Proteacher Archive**

<http://www.proteacher.com/090159.shtml>

Includes several different lesson plans on Martin Luther King Jr. for teacher and students of all grade levels. It has activity printouts and pictures.

**Web Sites**

**50 Years Later: Brown v. Board of Education**

<http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3586>

Commemorate the Supreme Court's landmark ruling with free online resources.

**National Rights Museum**

<http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/default.asp>

Allows the student to interact with activities, see photographs of famous people and see exhibits about the Civil Rights movement. This site introduces students to people who have fought and dedicated their lives for freedom.

**Factbites/Civil Rights Act 1865**

<http://www.factbites.com/topics/Civil-Rights-Act-of-1875>

This site list several other sites on Civil Rights Acts.

**Back of the Bus/The Year is 1935**

<http://americanhistory.mrdonn.org/BackoftheBus.html>

This story is about a young white boy, Johnny, in rural Indiana, who did not understand why Negroes had to sit at the back of the bus.