

# LET IT SHINE!

BRIGHT STAR TOURING THEATRE STUDY GUIDE

## About our Play

We are inspired often by the courage and work of those that came before us to promote equal rights for all Americans. So many things we take for granted were given to us by the sacrifices of others. In creating this show we wanted to delve a little deeper into the Civil Rights Movement and offer young people real role models and heroes from this dark chapter in American History.

Our hope is that your audience learns about this period of time while realizing the power they themselves have to impact the world for future generations.

### CAN YOU IMAGINE?

Imagine what America would be like without the work of Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. If any other person had been at the helm of this Movement would it have turned out the same? What was the power of the Non-violence Movement? How could that be applied to a movement or group around the world today?



## The Civil Rights Movement

Lasting from 1955-1968; the Civil Rights Movement is the period of time when Black Americans struggled to be recognized with Equal Rights. Characterized by non-violence and acts of civil disobedience the struggle eventually resulted in the Federal ban on racial segregation and discrimination.

Through boycotts, sit-ins, mass demonstrations and more, often led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Movement successfully forced America to make drastic changes. Laws like the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act, though often implemented with force, finally brought about change that the Civil Rights Movement was seeking.



**SIT-IN MOVEMENT** Through peaceful demonstrations the integration of lunch counters and department stores. Most famously, the Woolworth Lunch Counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, became ground zero.



**FREEDOM RIDERS** Americans sought to integrate smaller communities by riding integrated buses into the South and disobeying the Jim Crow laws that were still in place in some areas.



**MARCH ON WASHINGTON** The moment that the Civil Rights Movement out of the South and into the American Mainstream. It was a tremendous success and gave us the remarkable 'I Have a Dream' speech!

## Activities!

...  
This production is designed to provide a launch pad for discussion with your students. Ask your students to openly discuss how moments of the play made them feel and what they think of the events and people they learned about.

...  
Break your students into small groups have them research various key moments of the Civil Rights Struggle and present them to the class.

...  
Create a wax museum. Have your students study people from this time period. Set-up a time for them to stand in a hall or in the gym dressed as these people. As other students or classes approach them they come to life and recite facts about the individual they are portraying.

...  
Separate your classroom up based upon a human trait like hair color or eye color. Let that special group go to lunch first or enjoy a treat while the other group doesn't. Discuss the feelings each part during that activity.

...  
Have your students imagine if they would be brave enough to step into

## FREEDOM SUMMER



They were met with bombings, murder and arson. It was an extremely dangerous time in the movement.

\* A voter registration drive was organized with over 1,000 out-of-state, mostly white volunteers who descended upon Mississippi to register black voters.



the role of someone fighting for Civil Rights. Are there issues going on in today's world that they could see themselves stepping into?

...  
Look at a map and explore things like the routes of the Freedom Riders. The Marches from Selma to Montgomery and more.

What are the Civil Rights issues facing America today?

...  
Songs became a key element in the struggle for Civil Rights. Explore the messages of some of these songs and discuss why they were effective in bringing people into the cause. Consider anthems like 'We Shall Overcome' and 'Ain't going to Let Nobody Turn Me Around.'

## SPOTLIGHT: HEROES FROM THE MOVEMENT



Medgar Evers (1925-1963) This Civil Rights Activist worked in Mississippi and was involved in efforts to overturn segregation at the University of Mississippi. A veteran of WW II; Mr. Evers became a field secretary for the NAACP. On June 7, 1963, he was gunned down in his driveway after returning home from a Civil Rights meeting.



The Little Rock Nine. In a key moment of the Civil Rights Movement nine students became the first black students to enroll at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. In 1957, these young people encountered a mass of protestors cursing and threatening them for their simple walk to a school. Eventually Federal troops made it possible for them to attend school.

Brown vs. Board of Education rules segregation illegal in schools.	1954
Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat	1955
The Little Rock Nine	1957
Greensboro Sit-ins	1960
Freedom Rides	1961
March on Washington	1963
Civil Rights Act	1964
Voting Rights Act	1965

# DR. KING



**Name:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Lived:** 1929-1968  
(Assassinated in Memphis)

**Work:** Baptist Minister / Civil Rights Leader

**Where:** Born in Atlanta, GA also active in Montgomery, AL and where ever the cause took him.

**Schooling:** Morehouse College, Crozer Theological & Boston University

**Did You Know?** His 1963, 'I Have a Dream Speech' was in part made up in the moment. His dream section wasn't part of the original manuscript.

## Notable Quotes

The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

# Birmingham, Alabama & the American South



*INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE. -DR. KING; LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL*

The American South played a pivotal role in the Struggle for Civil Rights. In Birmingham, Alabama the city earned the nickname Bombingham, thanks to the fact it had suffered 40 unsolved race related bombings. (Pictured: One of these was the tragic bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.) In cities like Birmingham, Little Rock, Montgomery & Selma The Civil Rights battle took to be Ground Zero. Here authorities and police officers refused to respect Federal Law and often had to be forced to accept the Civil Rights legislation and decisions of the US Supreme Court. The nation was especially moved to support the Civil Rights struggle when footage emerged of Birmingham officials turning fire hoses and police dogs unto protestors in 1963. At once, the Civil Rights Movement emerged from the quiet towns of the South to the National spotlight.

## NUMBERS

Age of which Dr. King won the Nobel Peace Prize (He donated all his prize money to the Civil Rights Movement)

35

The year all 50 states officially observed Dr. King Day (Utah was the last)

2000

Number of Streets named for Dr. King across the US

700+

# Everything about the Theatre!



**A mini-van is our hip and favored mode of transportation for touring the country!**

## THEATRE VOCABULARY!

**Actor:** The people on-stage performing the play.

**Backdrop:** The background for the play.

**Props:** Anything that an actor holds while on-stage--a cane, book or rubber chicken.

**Downstage:** the area closest to the audience a long time ago stage were built at angles.



**Upstage:** The area away from the audience, like the back wall of the a stage.

**Director:** The person who told

## Facts about us!

1. Did you know we're owned by an Emmy winning actor?
2. Our actors average 1,000 miles a week traveling the country to entertain young audiences.
3. Our programs have been seen in almost every corner of the country and around the world.
4. We watch over 1200 actors a season audition, before we cast our season.
5. We offer dozens and dozens different shows a season from Black History to anti-bullying and literary classics.
6. We toured Moscow with performances of our Aesop's Fables.
7. We're based in Asheville, NC.

## ABOUT US!

Founded in 2003, Bright Star Theatre tours the nation offering high quality, affordable programs to every imaginable venue. We've had countless engagements at the National Theatre, Toured to Moscow and are so grateful to be in your very school today!

the actors where to go while they were on-stage and helped them create the characters they would play.



**Costumes:** The wigs, clothing and glasses that the actors wore to help flush out their characters .

**Auditions:** How an actor gets a role is by auditioning, they may have to interview, pretend to be a character from the play, read something from it, etc.

**Set Designer:** The person who decided what should be on the background and who painted or created it.



Were there other terms that came up in the show or from the experience of seeing the live play that you'd like to learn more about?

## BRIGHT STAR THEATRE

Bright Star Touring Theatre performs across the country from Boston to Burbank and virtually every school, museum, theatre, community event in between. Each Season our shows run the gamut from Black History to anti-bullying, from literary classics to biographical shows. Our shows are available throughout the year for any event in any part of the world.

## LET IT SHINE: THE AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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Learn more about this show, this company & our whole Season:

[www.brightstartheatre.com](http://www.brightstartheatre.com)

## LET IT SHINE

Made it's Debut in January 2014  
National Tour

We want every show to be special and remarkable for our audience. Please feel free to connect with us at anytime to tell us about your experience:

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