

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

The March on Washington



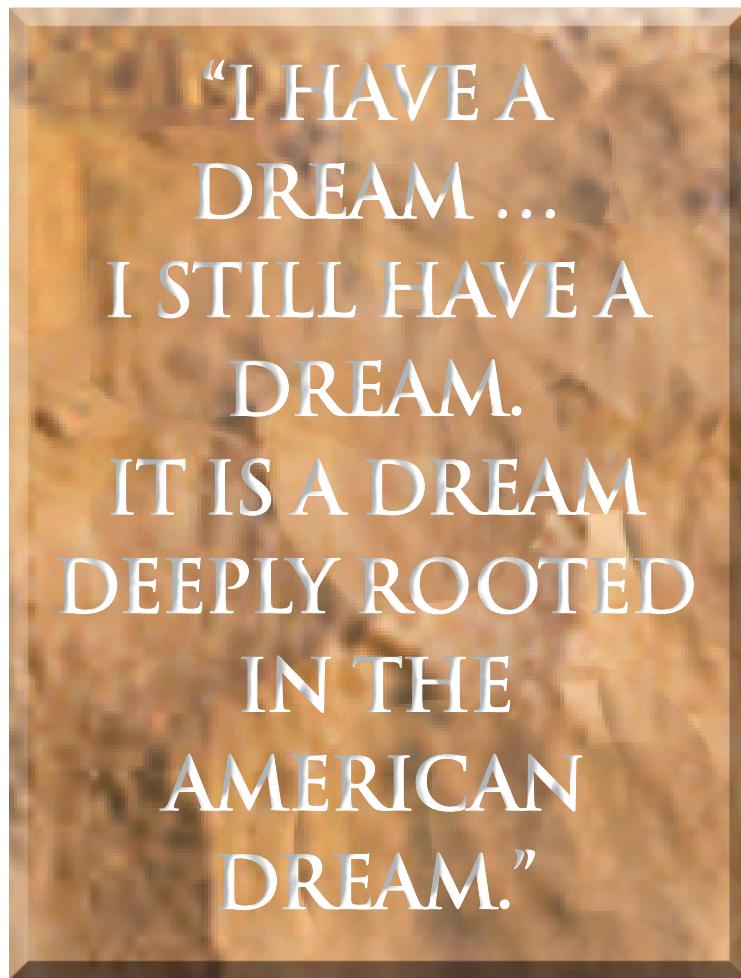
- KidsPost Reprint: “They Stood for Change”
- KidsPost Reprint: “Who Was Martin Luther King Jr.”?
- Reading Resource: Read About Martin Luther King Jr. for Younger Readers
- KidsPost Reprint: ““I have a dream””
- KidsPost Graphic Reprint: Dream of Equality
- Student Activity: Posters and Placards
- Teacher Resource: More Than a Memoir: John Lewis's *March*

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On August 28, 1963, more than 250,000 people, young and old, gathered at the Lincoln Memorial, along the Reflecting Pool and down the Mall. For more than five hours the marchers sang, prayed and listened to speeches.

The last speaker of the day was a young pastor from Georgia. Martin Luther King, Jr., had been the spokesman for the Montgomery Bus Boycott and president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In 1963, he was imprisoned in Birmingham, Alabama, during the nonviolent campaign seeking civil rights. Months later, as he took his place at the microphone in D.C., he would begin the last remarks of the day and delivery of one of the most significant speeches in American oration.

The articles and graphic reprinted in this section and the suggested activities are to give younger students an introduction to the leaders and goals of the March on Washington, the diversity of people who came together on that day and the dream — then and today.



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KIDSPOST

BY MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT

Imagine standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, looking out toward the Washington Monument. A huge crowd has gathered — more than 200,000 people — from all across the nation. They fan out around the Reflecting Pool, to the base of the monument and beyond.

It's August 1963, and people have come to Washington to demand change. In some parts of the country, black people are not treated the same as white people. The marchers want that to end. They want fair and equal treatment for everyone, no matter the color of their skin. They are part of a growing force called the civil rights movement.

By bus, train and plane, they have come to Washington. Some arrive by car, and one even roller-skates into town. Now they are all on the Mall. For more than five hours they have been marching, singing, praying and listening to speeches.

You are the last speaker on this tiring but exciting day. How will you stir the crowd? As recently as last night, you told a friend you still didn't know exactly what you would say. But now, here you are. Everyone's eyes are on you. If you are nervous — who wouldn't be? — you don't show it.

You are the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., and you are about to give one of the most famous speeches

THEY STOOD FOR CHANGE

**50 years ago,
a huge crowd marched
in Washington to demand
equality for all people**



Twelve-year-old Edith Lee-Payne attended the March on Washington with her mother.

in American history. It will be known as the "I Have a dream" speech.

For many, it will be the high point of the entire civil rights movement.

A nation still divided

The year 1963 marked the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, in which President Abraham Lincoln declared that all slaves in the South were freed. But in some ways, life in the 20th century wasn't much better for black people (then often called "Negroes" or "colored people").

"White Only" signs hung over drinking fountains and doorways in several states. Many hotels would not rent rooms to black people. The best jobs went to whites. In some places, black people were not allowed to vote.

Keeping the races separated is called segregation. Schools, churches, buses and trains, movie theaters and even professional sports teams all were segregated at some point in U.S. history.

The 1950s and '60s featured a big push for equality. King, the son of a Baptist minister and a minister himself, was a leader in

this fight for civil rights. He preached the power of love over hate. He urged people to challenge unfair laws and actions, but to do so peacefully. King said black people should work with white people to gain equality.

Not everyone agreed with King, but there was no doubt that his was a powerful voice.

They Stood for Change *continued*

Steps toward equality

Several civil rights milestones happened in the decade before the 1963 rally in Washington. Among them:

The U.S. Supreme Court said “separate but equal” schools for white and black children were illegal. Then Rosa Parks, who was black, refused to give up her bus seat to a white rider in Montgomery, Alabama. Her case and others led to a court ruling that segregation on buses was illegal.

Across the South, rallies were held to protest other forms of segregation, including keeping black people from voting. There were “sit-in” protests at segregated lunch counters, libraries, parks and other public places. In Birmingham, Alabama, police dogs and water cannons were turned on protesters; more than 1,000 people, including King, were arrested.

The nation was moving slowly — but not always willingly — toward treating the races equally, a process called integration. In June 1963, President John F. Kennedy called on Congress to pass a major civil rights bill giving all Americans access to public places and protecting the right to vote.

‘Freedom now’

Civil rights leaders and others got busy planning a big rally. They called it the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. When the big day, August 28, arrived, thousands of marchers headed for the Mall.



Many carried signs: “We Demand Equal Rights Now!” … “With Liberty and Justice for All!” … “Freedom Now.”

It was the largest civil rights march in history. Millions watched on television.

Several people spoke before King. Some were civil rights leaders; others were leaders of religious groups or groups of workers. Rosa Parks was introduced. Singers Marian Anderson, Mahalia Jackson and Bob Dylan performed.

The youngest speaker was 23-year-old John Lewis, who led a student activist group. Lewis, now a congressman from Georgia, was angry about the slow pace of change in the country, and he wrote a speech that said so. That upset some people, so Lewis agreed to delete the harsh wording. That, in turn, upset other people. Because of this dispute, Lewis’s speech is the only one besides King’s that is still talked about.

Right after the march, King and others met with President Kennedy at the White House. The following July, they returned to watch the new president, Lyndon Johnson, sign the Civil Rights Act of 1964. And in August 1965, two years after they marched on Washington, the group came back. This time they stood under the Capitol dome as the president signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, calling it “a triumph for freedom.”

The March on Washington had indeed changed history. ■



LOC.GOV

Rosa Parks, with Martin Luther King Jr., was instrumental in the Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott.



LOC.GOV

North Carolina college students are refused service at a luncheon counter reserved for white customers. This is a sit-in.

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KIDSPOST

Who was Martin Luther King Jr.?

Martin Luther King Jr. was the son and grandson of Baptist ministers. He grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, in the 1930s and '40s. His parents weren't rich, but they did have a car and a piano.

Martin and his siblings liked board games. His favorite was Monopoly. Like other kids, he had chores. His sister complained that when it was Martin's turn to do dishes, he would hide in the bathroom.

Martin grew up in a segregated time. (That means different races of people were kept separate.) When he was 14, he traveled 90 miles with his teacher to a speech contest. On the way home, the bus driver made them stand so that white riders could sit. "It was the angriest I have ever been," he later wrote.

Martin wanted to be a doctor or a lawyer. He wanted to help people. He was already a powerful speaker. His college teachers showed him he could change people's lives by becoming a preacher. So he did. In 1954, at age 25, he became pastor of a church in Montgomery, Alabama.

King believed nonviolent protest was the way to react to evil and wrongdoing. The next year, when a black woman named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus, King led a citywide protest. Black people refused to ride city buses until all riders were treated the same. It took many months, but that finally happened.

Civil rights protests spread to other cities and states. King helped start a group called the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and he became known across the country. His supporters held nonviolent "sit-ins" at segregated stores and other places.

King was arrested more than 20 times for his activism. His house was bombed. But he kept preaching nonviolence. In 1964 he received a big honor called the Nobel Peace Prize. Just 35, he was then the youngest person to win the award.

Four years later, he was in Memphis, Tennessee, for a workers' rally when he was shot and killed.

In 2011, 48 years after the March on Washington, a memorial to King was dedicated not far from the Lincoln Memorial, where he uttered the famous words "I have a dream . . ." ■

Read About Martin Luther King, Jr. for Younger Readers



<http://www.amazon.com/dp/0448447231>

Who Was Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Bonnie Bader

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/i-have-dream>

I Have a Dream: The Story of Martin Luther King

Margaret Davidson

http://www.amazon.com/The-Martin-Luther-King-Shot/dp/0590436619/ref=as_li_wdgt_ex?&linkCode=wey&tag=wwwapples4thetec

The Day Martin Luther King Jr. Was Shot

Jim Haskins

<http://sojo.net/store/product/becoming-king>

Becoming King: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Making of a National Leader

Troy Jackson

<http://www.amazon.com/The-1963-March-Washington-Speeches/dp/0823962555>

The 1963 March on Washington: Speeches and Songs for Civil Rights

Jake Miller

<http://www.faithringgold.com/ringgold/book05.htm>

My Dream of Martin Luther King

Faith Ringgold

August 16, 2013

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KIDSPOST

‘I have a dream ...’

The speech took less than 18 minutes to deliver.

It was inspired by wording in the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the works of William Shakespeare and Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and Gettysburg Address.

It talked about the “shameful condition” of a country where basic rights, including life and liberty, were denied because of skin color.

It was named the top American speech of the 20th century in a poll of scholars.

Its most famous lines — eight sentences that begin “I have a dream” — were not in the original text. They were added as the speech was being delivered.

Martin Luther King Jr. stood in the shadow of Lincoln's great statue at the 1963 March on Washington urging the people gathered to be a force for justice. Black people had the same right as white people to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” he said.

Throughout his speech, King employed a language tool called anaphora (uh-NAFF-o-ruh), in which words are repeated at the start of sentences to make a bigger



LOC.GOV

Martin Luther King Jr., greets marchers gathered at the Lincoln Memorial. He was the last speaker on August 28, 1963.

impact. The best example was his use of the phrase “I have a dream.” Each time he said it, the crowd got more excited.

“I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.’ ...”

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. ...”

That part of his speech was an idea King had used in previous speeches. King, an experienced preacher by then, added it as he sensed the crowd's mood.

As the final speaker on the long summer day, King wanted to leave the crowd revved up. To do that, he began repeating himself again.

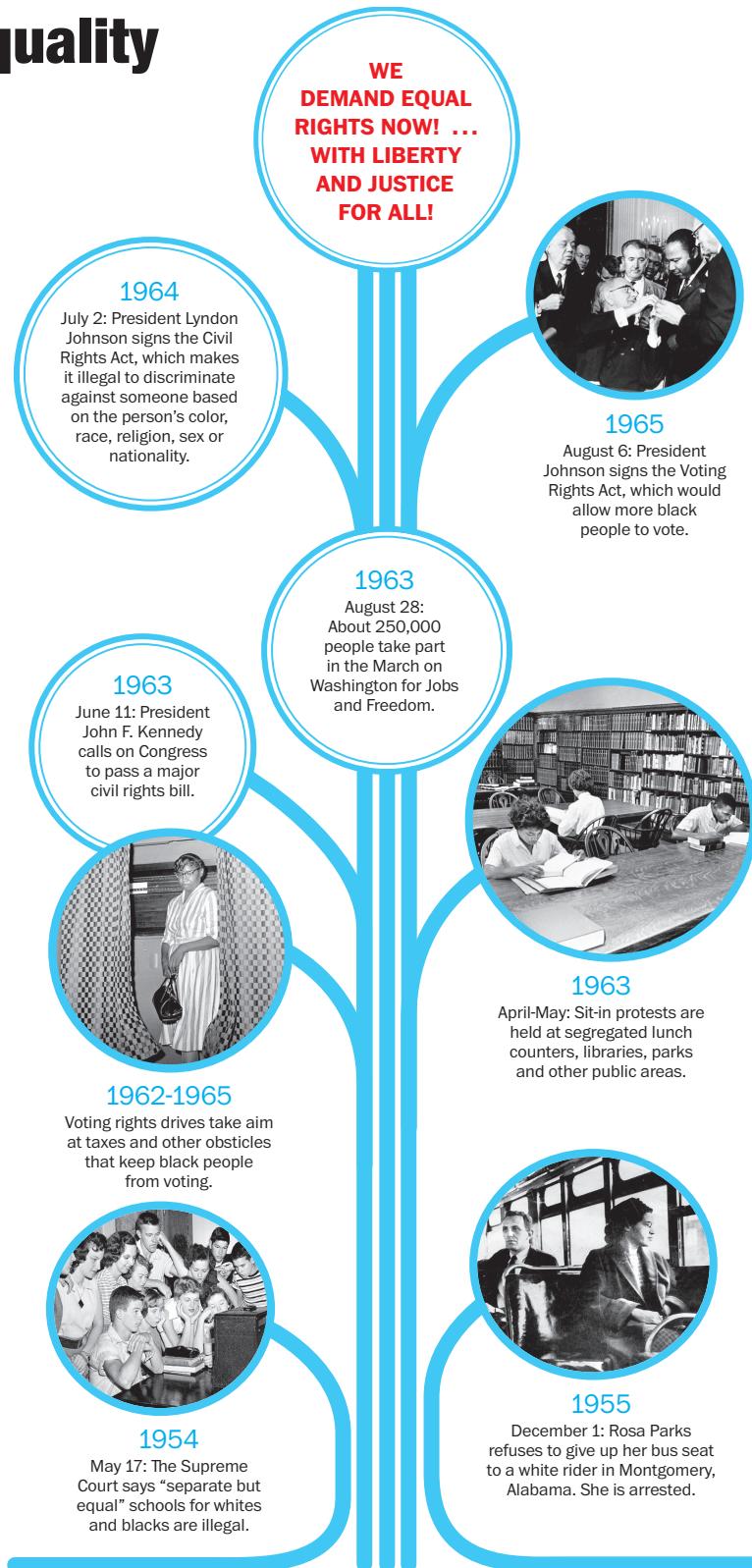
He mentioned mountains and hills across the country, each time urging people to “Let freedom ring!”

It was a stirring message of hope and promise, not just for black Americans but for all Americans. As one newspaper reporter wrote, “He sent the crowd away feeling that the long journey had been worthwhile.”

—August 16, 2013

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Dream of Equality



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Posters and Placards

A *placard* is a sign or poster that is created to post on a wall or carry in a demonstration.

A *poster* is a large artistic work or a large printed placard or announcement meant to publicize or communicate information.



Marchers carry placards and posters in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

LOC.GOV

1. Read the examples of posters and placards prepared for the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. List five kinds of information provided in them.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

2. Select one of the placards used by participants in the March on Washington.
 - a. Was it printed or hand lettered?
 - b. Is the information brief and easily read?
 - c. Summarize the information that is communicated to you.

3. According to the manual prepared by March organizers, “All slogans carried in this March will be designed exclusively by the National Committee and will be distributed at the Washington Monument.”
 a.“We shall overcome” and “We March for Effective Civil Rights Laws NOW!” and “WE DEMAND Voting Rights NOW!”are three slogans that appeared on placards. What do they reveal about the purpose of the March?
 b. Those who traveled to the March from outside of D.C. were advised to come and go on the same day. Why was this done? Why would it be helpful to have posters and placards at the Washington Monument for distribution?

4. Design a poster for a cause that you think is important.



Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) with co-authors Andrew Aydin, left, and Nate Powell, center. Powell is an award-winning cartoonist and Aydin a member of Lewis's staff.

TEACHER RESOURCE

More Than a Memoir: John Lewis's March

“At 73, the Georgia Democrat is living history, and he knows that a graphic novel holds unique storytelling powers. ‘It’s another way for somebody to understand what it was like and what we tried to do,’ Lewis told me. ‘And I want young children to feel it. Almost taste it. To make it real. … It’s not just the words but the action and the drama and the movement that bring it alive.’”

— Michael Cavna

“Graphic novel draws strength from a civil rights icon’s riveting story”

1. Post Comic Riffs reporter Michael Cavna writes in his review of the graphic novel, first of an intended trilogy, “As a young man, Lewis got his hands on the 1958 comic book *Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story*, which, he said, with its poster-colored lesson of nonviolent protest, inspired many student activists. ‘It was about the way of love,’ Lewis says. ‘We were beaten and arrested … and that comic book inspired me to make trouble. But it was the good kind of trouble.’

- In what ways does Cavna’s being a cartoonist, reporter and editor make him a good choice to review this work?
- Why was John Lewis receptive to his memoir being presented in the form of a graphic novel?
- In what way does Cavna’s interview of the author give the review a different dimension?
- What other insights to the work does Cavna give before students read *March: Book One*? What benefits would there be in giving students Cavna’s review after they have read *March*?



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AN ARTFUL LIFE: Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) is the last surviving speaker from the 1963 March on Washington. He has written a memoir, *March: Book One*, that he says is “another way for somebody to understand what it was like and what we tried to do” in the civil rights movement. The graphic novel portrays the fear and tension that permeated the times. One page, above, shows Lewis’s arrest in February 1960 — the first of about 40. The congressman recalls that it was a comic book about Martin Luther King, Jr., that helped persuade him to join the struggle for equality.

2. *March: Book One* has been rated as suitable for grades 6-12. John Lewis includes depiction of racism in the 1950s and 1960s, examples of racist language and other potentially offensive epithets. There are also historic contexts that readers are expected to know, for example Edmund Pettus Bridge at the opening of the book.

How can you prepare your students and their parents for this language, reading experience, and actual events in American history and Lewis’s life?

- As you prepare your lesson, make a list of the events that may be new to students, terms they should understand and music that is included.
- Prepare to handle the sensitive language. Guidelines are found at
<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/racialguidelines>,
<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-40-fall-2011/feature/straight-talk-about-n-word>
- For more ideas and resources download an 11-page teachers guide found at <http://www.topshelfcomix.com/contact/teachers-guide>.

3. John Lewis was the youngest speaker on the dais on August 28, 1963. *March: Book One* takes the reader to his growing up in rural Alabama to his meeting of Martin Luther King to nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins. Discuss with students the personal insight given in memoirs and autobiographies. What are biographies? What is the distinction of each genre?

4. Review techniques used by cartoonists to convey stories, moods and inner thoughts.

- How does Nate Powell make use of shading, dark vs. light, and shadows?
- Does he make use of the same techniques as a photographer with close, medium and wide angle images?
- What means does he use to convey sound and atmosphere of the setting?
- What kind of information appears in balloons?
- Is it clear that John Lewis is the narrator?

Where Were They?

When people and events reach milestones, reminiscing and recalling the personal feelings, actions, atmosphere and impact are part of the commemoration. Think about your grandparents' 40th wedding anniversary, your parent's 10-year high school reunion, and the 150th commemoration of the Civil War. The 50th anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom is another significant milestone in personal and national history.



AP

Kathleen Johnson of Newark receives a helping hand from Clinton McRae after falling into the Reflecting Pool while trying to take a photograph.

Read Petula Clark's "Remembering the March on Washington, 50 years later" for Kathleen Johnson's memories of her fall into the Reflecting Pool that day and its impact.



ROWLAND SCHERMAN/NATIONAL ARCHIVES

On her twelfth birthday, Edith Lee-Payne's mother took her to Washington, D.C., for the March on Washington.

Watch the National Archives Inside the Vault video [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhuSyFHGes0>] in which photographer Rowland Scherman and Edith Lee-Payne tell about the photograph that became the "face of the March on Washington."

We wouldn't know these stories if someone hadn't seen the photographs, talked with someone who was at the event or heard about the story from someone. Then an interview took place.

YOUR TURN

Ask members of your family, school and community where they were on August 28, 1963. If someone attended the March, ask if he or she has pictures from that event. Select one of the photographs. Ask enough questions to write an informative caption.

Interview the individual to get the personal story of this significant event in American history.

Be sure to take careful notes and spell names correctly. Do follow-up questions to clarify information.

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Remembering the March on Washington, 50 years later



Kathleen Johnson of Newark receives help from Clinton McRae after falling into the Reflecting Pool while trying to take a photo. She and her husband had come to D.C. with their friends the McRaes to hear Dr. King. The two widows plan to return for the anniversary march with their children and grandchildren. They will mark the changes that have occurred and the work that remains.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

By Petula Dvorak
• Originally Published August 19, 2013

She had on her Sunday best, as everyone else did.



**Petula
Dvorak**

In her pretty, embroidered dress, done hair and cat-eye glasses, Kathleen Johnson was stretching to see the speakers on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial

and to snap a better photo of the crowds when — splash! — in she went.

“It was the most embarrassing thing that could’ve happened to me,” Johnson said, describing the day she lost her balance and fell into the Reflecting Pool.

Hundreds of people watched her fall. Later, the whole nation would see her in that water, because it happened during the March on Washington 50 years ago, and the nearly biblical photo of an

outstretched hand reaching to help lift her out of that deceptively slippery pool was printed in magazines and newspapers across the nation.

“It was slimy, and I kept trying to get up. You think you can get right back up, but you can’t, you just keep slipping back in,” she said, powerfully describing much more than her own struggle in Washington that day.

Johnson, who prefers to describe her age as “upper 70s,” lives in

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DVORAK *continued*

Laurel and grew up in New Jersey, where she had a good job at a bank, was married and had two children.

As the civil rights movement unfurled around her in the 1960s, she would talk about it with her best friend, Jean McRae. They were both moms of little kids at the time, neck-deep in child-rearing yet longing to be part of the movement.

For a while, her New Jersey-born husband didn't quite understand what was happening in the South. But Johnson knew.

With family in North Carolina, she was familiar with the way the world changed once the train clanked south past Washington, when her family would have to move to the back of the car. She knew what it was like to be afraid while driving, to be directed to a different and dirty water fountain.

"We were young at the time, but those things stay with you," she explained.

When she brought her Northern husband to the South, it stayed with him, too.

He never forgot the day they sat down at a drugstore counter to have an egg cream and the entire shop fell into an ominous silence as they sat and sipped quietly, all eyes on them.

They were served in paper cups, rather than glasses, her grandfather

later explained. And that meant they were supposed to leave, not sit.

Johnson's husband told everyone about it back up North.

When word spread that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. would be in Washington, the Johnsons knew they had to go. The McRaes were in, too.

"We received really negative responses from some of our own relatives and friends when we told them we were going to Washington," McRae said. "They told us it was a huge mess, and why were we going?"

"But that didn't deter us from planting our feet in Washington that day," she said.

The relatives, though still grumbling, watched the kids.

"That journey was mixed with emotions of fear, excitement, and we had the determination of the marchers with us," McRae said.

The day was electric. Everywhere they looked, people had come, dressed in their best. They managed to get a great spot along the water, near the speakers.

When Johnson fell into the Reflecting Pool, she was mortified. Clinton McRae, Jean McRae's husband, pulled her up. She smoothed her dress and quickly dried off in the hot August sun.

As soon as she got home, one son said, "Mommy, you fell in the water!" He, too, had seen her

picture in the paper.

But her fall, her quiet little struggle to get upright and out, and the silent respect of that huge crowd while all this happened spoke volumes about the solemnity and purpose of that historic day.

"When Dr. King was speaking, you could hear a pin drop," Johnson said.

Both Johnson's and McRae's husbands have died. But the two, their kids and their grandkids will be back in Washington this weekend, hoping to get right back on that spot near the Reflecting Pool.

There will be joy. All of those kids went on to get great educations; they grew up never having to move to the back of the train. There is an African American president who will speak next Wednesday from the steps where King once stood.

But it won't be just an anniversary celebration. The work is not done.

McRae and Johnson will be, a little sadly, passing along the tradition of protest.

"Some of the issues that are happening now are some of the same issues that we marched for 50 years ago," Johnson said. "We don't need to be going backwards with this voting situation and jobs. Things have to change to move forward. And we still have work to do." ■