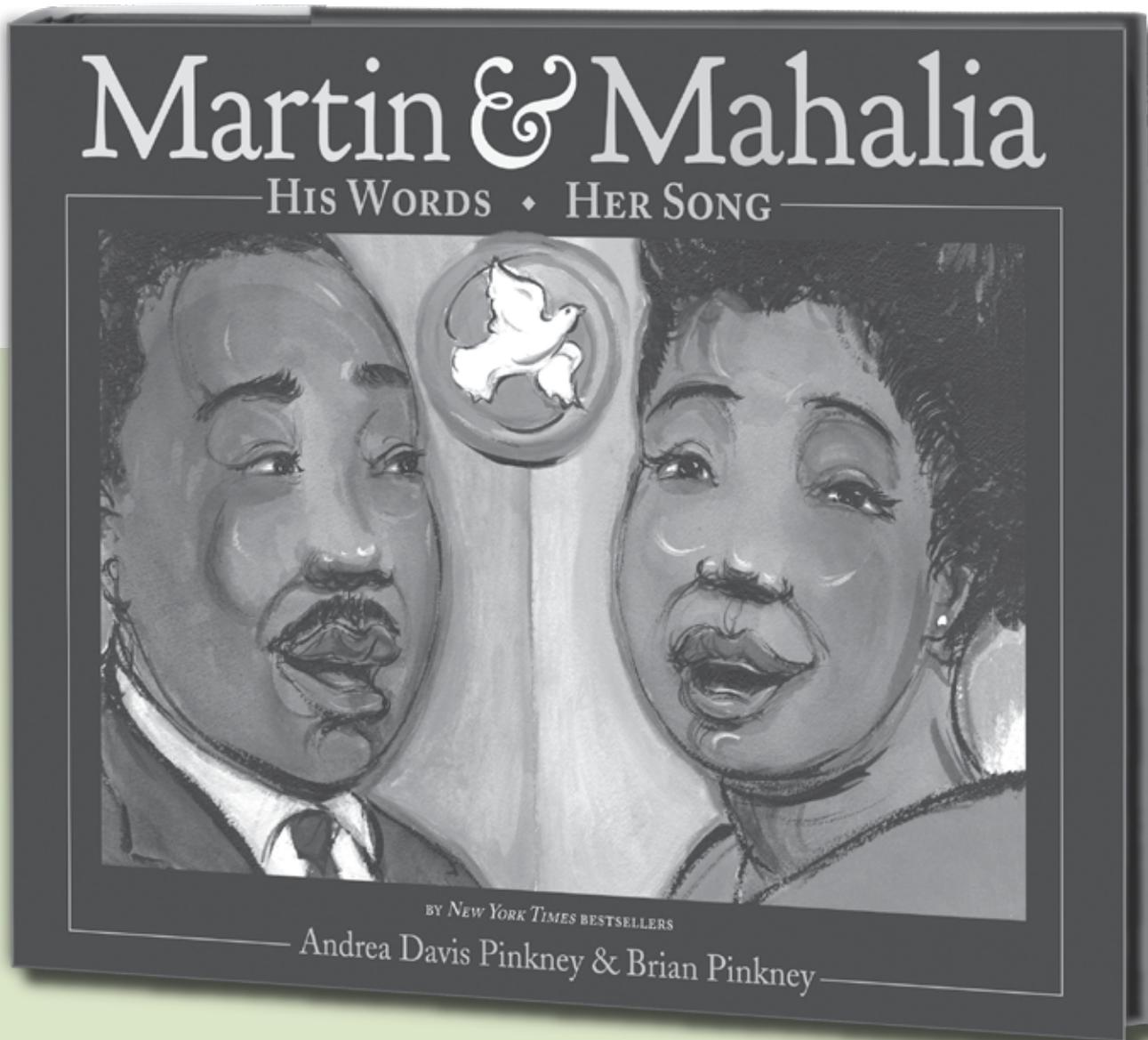


# Martin & Mahalia

## HIS WORDS ♦ HER SONG



### Curriculum connections

- ❖ African American Heritage
- ❖ History

Grades 1 & Up

by  
Andrea Davis Pinkney  
& Brian Pinkney

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Have you ever heard of Martin Luther King, Jr.?  
What do you know about him?  
Have you ever heard of Mahalia Jackson?  
What is gospel?  
What do you think having a gift for music gospel means?



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did Martin learn how to be a strong preacher? What have you learned from your family?
2. Where did Mahalia first learn she had a gift for singing?
3. What did the Jim Crow laws do in the south to the people who lived there? Why weren't things equal?
4. How did Martin become a master minister? Why was he so good at what he did? Who is the best speaker you've ever heard? What made you want to listen to them?
5. Explain how Mahalia's voice could be both "brass and butter." What do you think that sounded like? How did people learn of Mahalia's gift for singing?
6. Which song sold over two million copies? Why do you think it was so popular?
7. How were Martin and Mahalia's messages similar? What did people in the south want for themselves?
8. Explain how the Montgomery Bus Boycott worked. What were people trying to prove by walking instead of riding the buses? Did it work? How did Mahalia help?
9. What did the March for Jobs and Freedom hope to inspire people to do? What type of freedom were they looking for? **REPHRASE**
10. How did Mahalia help prepare the audience for Martin's most important speech?
11. How did Mahalia encourage her friend before his speech? What dream did Dr. Martin King have for his children and all the children of the world? **REPHRASE**
12. Can a friendship change the course of history? What can we learn from this important friendship?

## PROJECTS

### Powerful Stories:

Mark the box that best shows your understanding of the words from the book.

New word	Heard it before	Read it before	Could use it in a sentence	Could tell you what it means
Sermon				
Congregation				
Gospel				
Boundaries				
Spirituals				
Nonviolence				
Demonstrators				

### Compare/Contrast:

Compare Mahalia and Martin by filling out the following chart.

	Childhood	Talents	Dreams/Wishes	Impact
Martin				
Mahalia				

## Art:

Brian Pinkney was inspired to use a bold color palette for this book to capture the two famous friends who helped shaped America's future. Inspired by his work, choose another important figure from the Civil Rights Movement and create a portrait of them using bold colors. You may want to use some of their own words to frame their work as well. Hang this gallery in the hallway with brief biographies beneath.

## Music:

Listen to many of the songs that inspired people to attain their rights and stand up for justice during the Civil Rights Movement including:

“We Shall Overcome”

“I’m On My Way”

“Free at Last”

“Move on Up a Little Higher”

Provided with the lyrics from these songs, look for examples of simile, metaphor and personification. Discuss as a class how these songs helped inspire and encourage the movement.

## Writing:

Write a letter from either Martin to Mahalia or the reverse. Tell what you admire about your friend and what you hope others learn by listening to him or her.

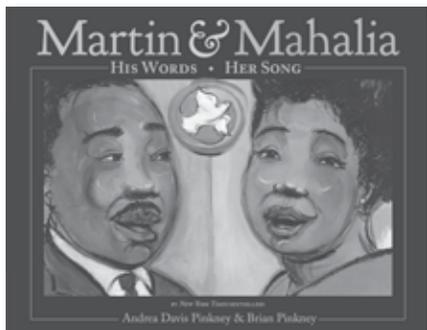


## History:

Research the Civil Rights Movement in American History. Using a reputable source answer the following:

WHO were the KEY players in the Civil Rights Movement?	
WHAT did they want?	
WHEN did it take place?	
WHERE did the movement begin? WHERE did important demonstrations occur?	
WHY was it necessary?	

## about the book



**MARTIN & MAHALIA:**  
***His Words, Her Song***

by Andrea Davis Pinkney  
& Brian Pinkney

978-0-316-07013-3

They were each born with the gift of gospel. As partners in the Civil Rights Movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahalia Jackson fought segregation in America with the sheer power of their voices. Martin moved crowds with his message of hope and peace, while Mahalia stirred their souls with her smooth and booming vocals. United at the momentous March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, they stood together, shared a dream, and changed the course of history.

## about the creators of the book



**Andrea Davis Pinkney** is the author of many acclaimed books for children, including *Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters*, a Coretta Scott King Honor Book, and *Bird in a Box*, a *Today* show Al's Book Club for Kids pick. She is also a children's book editor at a major publishing company.

**Brian Pinkney** has illustrated many books for children, including *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* and *The Faithful Friend*, which both received Caldecott Honors. Brian has also been awarded the Coretta Scott King Book Award for Illustration and three Coretta Scott King Honor Medals.

Andrea and Brian are a *New York Times* bestselling husband-and-wife team who were among *Children's Health* magazine's "25 Most Influential People in Our Children's Lives." They live with their family in New York City.



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*The questions and activities in this guide are aligned with Common Core Reading and Language Arts standards.*

*Educator's Guide prepared by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer.*

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