



FOCUS: AUTHOR NIKKI GRIMES

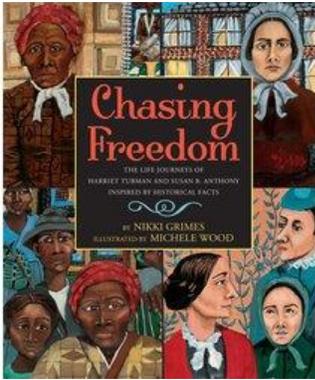
This education resource guide supplements the presentation made by Nikki Grimes at *In Search of Wonder: Common Core and More*, a professional development day presented by The National Children’s Book and Literacy Alliance, in conjunction with the Perry Ohio School District. Included on these pages are engaging activities and discussion questions based on Common Core English Language Standards for two of Nikki Grimes’

books: *Chasing Freedom* and *Words with Wings*. We invite you to print and share these materials as needed. This document is formatted so you can print it double sided on 3-hole punch paper and store in a binder. Education resource guides for authors Chris Crutcher, Steven Kellogg, Katherine Paterson, and Tanya Lee Stone are available at: thencbla.org

You know the young people in your own classroom. You know their academic prowess, their study habits, and the level of their literacy skills. You know what resources you have on hand and your students’ capabilities using those resources. You know what your students will find exciting and challenging. Consequently, we present these activities and discussion questions for general use in classrooms and libraries, hoping that you will use your own insightful creativity and sound judgment to shape the ideas, activities, and resources we offer, expanding on them to meet the needs of your students. These materials were created by Maria Salvadore, Children’s Literature Specialist.

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CHASING FREEDOM: THE LIFE JOURNEYS OF HARRIET TUBMAN AND SUSAN B. ANTHONY, INSPIRED BY HISTORICAL FACTS by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by Michele Wood

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SUMMARY: What if Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony sat down over tea to reminisce about their extraordinary lives? What would they recall of their triumphs and struggles as they fought to achieve civil rights for African Americans and equal rights for women? And what other historical figures played parts in their stories? These questions led Coretta Scott King Award winner Nikki Grimes to create *Chasing Freedom*, an engaging work of historical fiction about two of the nineteenth century's most powerful, and inspiring, American women.

With breathtaking illustrations by Coretta Scott King Award winner Michele Wood, *Chasing Freedom* richly imagines the experiences of Tubman and Anthony, set against the backdrop of the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and the Women's Suffrage Movement. Additional back matter invites curious young readers to further explore this period in history—and the larger-than-life figures who lived it. (*From Scholastic*)

Grade Levels: 5-8, but can also be used with 4th grade.

The **Common Core English Language Standards** state that “To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements...” These concepts are foundational to all of the following activities and material.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STANDARD:

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Application:

Each of us has a personal connection to the past. Some feel a connection that goes back decades or centuries, others only days or weeks. Have students read the Author's Note at the end of *Chasing Freedom*, then ask the following questions:

- ❖ What inspired Nikki Grimes to write this book? Why do you think she feels a connection to these two women? How is a connection to the past established?
- ❖ How is the impact of Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony still felt today?
- ❖ Why would Nikki Grimes include an Author's Note? How can you, the reader, determine what is fact and what has been imagined in the conversation between Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony beyond what the author explicitly states?
- ❖ How have the expectations for women changed? What are some of the major turning points?
- ❖ Why were these two women extraordinary? What did they do to distinguish themselves?

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STANDARD:

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Activities: News Yesterday and Today

- ❖ Have students write an editorial for a newspaper in the 1840s taking a position held by Harriet Tubman or Susan B. Anthony. Ask students to support the position with quotes from the dialogue in *Chasing Freedom*. A further step could be to find additional resources to support that position.
- ❖ Ask students: Are there issues in current news headlines that call to mind concerns expressed by Susan B. Anthony and Harriet Tubman? Ask students to find a news article that relates to the issues.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STANDARD:

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Have students describe the status of women in the late nineteenth century, using *Chasing Freedom* as well as support from additional research. Ask students: Have women achieved complete equality? Following the discussion, have students write an article for a magazine or create a blog posting comparing the status of women in today and in the late nineteenth century using primary source material.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STANDARD:

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Activities: History Comes Alive

❖ What Is a Monologue?

A *monologue* in literature and drama is a speech given by only one person. Why is this technique used in theatrics? How can a monologue be a powerful dramatic tool? Using scenes from *Chasing Freedom*, ask students to write a dramatic monologue in the voice of either Harriet Tubman or Susan B. Anthony. Share it with a group.

❖ What Is Dialogue?

A *dialogue* is a conversation between two or more people. Working in small groups, have students choose one or more historical figures who might actually have met and had a conversation with either Tubman or Anthony. Have students write dialogue for this conversation. Students can begin their research using the biographical sketches and/or bibliography at the end of *Chasing Freedom*. Present the dialog to a group. Make sure information presented is authentic and verifiable.

COMMON CORE AND MUCH MORE: MULTIPLE-DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES!

American History: Women's Vote and the Women's Movement

❖ Celebrate Women's History Month

Working individually or in small groups, assign or have students identify an American woman who lived during the same time period as Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony. Doing research about them from print and other sources, develop a short presentation using different media to present to other groups.

❖ Create a Timeline of Women's Right to Vote

Women haven't always been allowed to vote in the United States. In fact, the U.S. was late in getting the vote. Ask students to find out when American women got the vote. Create a timeline to show when women in countries throughout the world got the right to vote. Create icons or find images to denote the each country.

Ask students to find out if there are there places today where women are not allowed to vote. What countries do not allow women to vote? Can these places be noted on your timeline?

❖ Creative Writing

Invite students to imagine themselves as a woman without the right to vote or perhaps a contemporary woman in a country without voting privileges. Ask: How would you respond? What would life be like for you and your family?

Online Resources: Women's History and Women's Suffrage

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/women/womensbook.asp>

<http://womenshistorymonth.gov/>

<http://nmwa.org/>

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/suffrage/history.htm>

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/womens-suffrage/>

Books: Strong Women and Women's History

A is for Abigail: An Almanac of Amazing American Women by Lynne Cheney, illustrated by Robin Preiss Glasser (informational picture book)

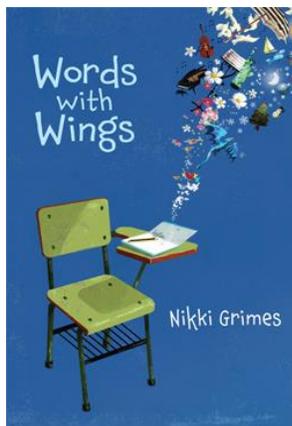
The Girls of Gettysburg by Bobbi Miller (historical fiction)

Harriet Tubman, Secret Agent: How Daring Slaves and Free Blacks Spied for the Union During the Civil War by Thomas B. Allen (nonfiction)

Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom (a Caldecott Honor Book) by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Kadir Nelson (picture book/historical fiction)

Nurse, Soldier, Spy: The Story of Sarah Edmonds, a Civil War Hero by Marissa Moss, illustrated by John Hendrix (picture book biography)

You Want Women to Vote, Lizzie Stanton? by Jean Fritz (biography)



WORDS WITH WINGS

by Nikki Grimes

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SUMMARY: Gaby daydreams to tune out her parents' arguments, but when her parents divorce and she begins a new school, daydreaming gets her into trouble. Her mother scolds her for it, her teacher keeps telling her to pay attention, and the other kids tease her...until she finds a friend who also daydreams and her teacher decides to work a daydreaming-writing session into every school day. With a notebook "thick with daydreams," Gaby grows more confident about herself and her future. This verse novel poignantly celebrates the power of writing and the inspiration a good teacher can deliver. (From *Wordsong*)

Grade Levels: Grades 5-8, but accessible to many 4th grade students.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STANDARD:

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Writing: Gabby's Name and Your Own

How did Gabby get her name? Ask students to find the poem that describes why she was named Gabriella. Now, ask students to write their own narrative about how they were named. It can be factual or fictional. Students can talk to a family member or imagine how and why they were given their name.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE STANDARD:

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Creative Drama: Words with Wings

Words gave Gabby wings, some words by reminding her of the seasons. Have students find those poems. Working in pairs or small groups, each team or individual chooses one poem to act out without using words, dramatizing the word so that the other team can guess the word and the season. Teams can also try writing down words that call to mind a season, and dramatizing them.

MORE BOOKS ABOUT STRONG WOMEN AND STRONG FRIENDSHIPS BY NIKKI GRIMES: A SELECT LIST

Bronx Masquerade – Poetry and an open mike give voice to the students in Mr. Ward’s high school English class (fiction/poetry)

Meet Danitra Brown, illustrated by Floyd Cooper – a series of short poems relate the special friendship between Danitra and Zuri (picture book)

Planet Middle School – Joylin finds her way in middle school gradually figuring out that basketball isn’t the only thing about herself that she can embrace (fiction/poetry)

Rich: A Dyamonde Daniel Book and other books about spunky, contemporary, and creative Dyamonde and her friends include: *Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel*; *Halfway to Perfect*; and *Almost Zero* (fiction)

The Road to Paris – Paris is a resilient girl who finds her strength in family, faith, and music even while in foster care (fiction)

Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman, illustrated by E.B. Lewis – Bessie Coleman, an early African American aviator, is remembered by friends and family in a series of poems (picture book/biography)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following lists additional resources from themes that grow out of Nikki’s books, including the role of stories and storytelling in our lives. There are many forms of sharing, such as drama, art, and poetry.

Digital Storytelling

<http://www.digitalstoryteller.org/>

<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/>

<http://edtechteacher.org/tools/multimedia/digital-storytelling/>

Visual Storytelling

<http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2011/10/25/visual-storytelling-gestalten/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_narrative

Traditional Storytelling

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storytelling>

<http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/echo07.lan.stories.lporaltrad/storytelling-oral-traditions/>

Friends and Friendship (developing empathy and more)

<http://www.opheliaproject.org/teaching/LetsBeFriends.pdf> (elementary school)

<http://www.opheliaproject.org/GirlsRA/GirlsMS.pdf> (middle school)

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/links/advisors/ms-lesson-plans.html>