

## 4th and 5th Grade Discussion Guide

### As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom by Richard Michelson

Begin by...

- Asking students to take out a notebook or lined paper and a pencil
- Show students the cover and ask them:
  - What does the title, As Good As Anybody mean?
  - Do you recognize any of the people on the cover? What do you know about them?
  - The other person on the cover is Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, an important figure during the Civil Rights Movement.

Begin reading, stopping to ask questions to clarify students are understanding the text along the way. In addition to checking in on comprehension of the story, after reading the book, here are some themes you might consider discussing in small groups or as a class ---

- **Discrimination:**
  - Ask students to write a personal definition of the words *discriminate* and *discrimination*. Based on students definitions, write key words and commonalities on the board. Build a final definition for each word that the whole class can refer to.
  - How did King and Heschel personally experience discrimination in their lives?
- **Injustice:**
  - After being forced to leave Germany, Heschel discovers that no one will hire Jews. He decides to leave for the US because, "In America, everyone was treated fairly." Do you think what he heard about America was true?
  - What injustices did he face in the US after he had settled there?
  - What did he do to make his new country a more fair and just place for all people?
  - Discuss what Heschel meant when he said, "G-d did not make a world with just one color flower."
- **Social Action:**
  - Both Dr. King and Rabbi Heschel were men of words - words that inspired thousands of people. But they backed up their words with action.
  - What does *social action* mean? Examples of social action include petitions, protests, marches, writing to government leaders, boycotts, etc.
  - Rabbi Heschel said, "It is important not only to protest evil, but to be seen protesting." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?
  - What does "*power in numbers*" mean? How does it apply to the events in the book?
- **Honoring their Legacy:**
  - What does it mean to honor someone's legacy?
  - What is Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy? What values and ideas were most important to him?

- As a Jewish person living in America, how are your values similar to Martin Luther King Jr.'s?
- What are ways that we can carry on Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy?

Some additional resources to teach about Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement:

<https://sn4.scholastic.com/pages/text-sets/the-civil-rights-movement.html>