



Title: Ron's Big Mission

Author: Rose Blue

Illustrator: Don Tate

Age Range: 7-10

Topic/Themes: Segregation, racial inequality, courage, civil rights

Vocabulary: Segregation

Items Needed for Center: **Device to show video**

See video of this book read aloud here: [Ron's Big Mission](#)

Volunteer readers should review the Author's Note at the end of the story for relevant background information beforehand.

★ 3rd Grade Common Core Reading Standard ★

Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

I. INTRODUCTION (PREP QUESTIONS)

- Ask students to share what they see in the cover illustration. Have them share their predictions as to what Ron's "big mission" might be, based on what they observed in the cover illustration.
- Tell students that this story happens back in 1959 and that many things were different then than they are today, and that the title character Ron was a real person who became a hero, showing us that people of any age can help to make the world a better place.

II. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

During Reading

- P. 1: Read; discuss examples of the author's use of "showing writing" (when an author "shows" the reader information about a character rather than tells the reader qualities about a character) and what we learn about Ron (he is very focused on what he wants to do because he doesn't even stop to eat breakfast).
- Pp. 2-3: Read; discuss examples of "showing writing" and what we learn about Ron (he's focused and organized because he's been thinking about his plan for a long time, etc.).
- Pp. 4-5: Read; discuss examples of "showing writing" and what we learn about Ron (he turns down a free doughnut; his mission is so important to him that he does not let anything distract him).
- Pp. 6-7: Read; discuss examples of "showing writing" and what we learn about Ron (he declines to play basketball; Carl is shocked that Ron doesn't want to play; reinforces that Ron's mission is deeply important to him that he does not let anything distract him).
- Pp. 8-9: Read just the first paragraph; have students share new predictions as to what Ron's "big mission" might be. Discuss examples of "showing writing" in this first paragraph and what we learn about Ron (his mission must be happening in the library; he really wanted to get

there because he walked fast; he's feeling nervous but he's brave and focused on what he plans to do, etc.).

Continue reading; discuss examples of “**showing writing**” in this first paragraph and what we learn about Ron (he is the head librarian's best customer so he spends a lot of time at the library, loves books and reading, etc.).

- Pp. 10-11: **Read just the first two sentences**; have students share their ideas on what it means when it says that, “He always looked for books that showed children who looked like him.”

Continue reading; have students infer *what* Ron was going to do, citing evidence from the text. Have students share their observations about the clothing in the illustration.

- Pp. 12-13: Read; discuss examples of “**showing writing**” and what it suggests (librarian is ignoring him because he is black, Ron understands what is happening and that he anticipated it so he has a plan; Ron is courageous and does not give up, etc.).
- Pp. 14-15: **Read just the first two sentences**; have students infer what they now think Ron's mission is, and why, citing previous text evidence. Continue reading. Have students share their feelings about blacks not being able to check out books, only whites. Discuss the meaning of **segregation** and how it was prevalent back in the 1950s, giving examples (restaurants, schools, etc.). Compare against examples of **equal rights** today.

Have students discuss Ron's response as an example of “**showing writing**” and what character traits we learn (he feels so strongly about his right to check out his own books that he is willing to risk a lot, courageous, etc.).

- Pp. 16-17: Read; discuss examples of “**showing writing**” and what it suggests (Ron still does not back down, even with the police, due to his strong belief in his right to check out books as a black child, etc.).
- Pp. 18-19: Read; discuss examples of “**showing writing**” and what it suggests (Ron's mother tells him he has to obey the rules because she has accepted them as the way of life for blacks; Ron refuses to obey his mom because of his strong belief that it is wrong, etc.).

Have students predict what they think the head librarian, Mrs. Scott, is going to do and why, citing evidence from the text.

- Pp. 20-21: Read; ask students to infer what she is doing.
- Pp. 22-23: Read; ask students *why* Mrs. Scott changed her mind (Ron was always in the library looking at books, loves to read, etc.). Ask students how Ron's mother must feel, and *why*.
- Pp. 24-25: Read; have students predict the rest of the sentence.

III. INTEGRATIVE STRATEGIES

Post Reading

- How does this story about Ron connect to the work of Dr. Martin Luther King? What does “equal rights” mean?
- Tell students that Ron McNair grew up to become an astronaut but that he tragically died in 1986 along with six others when their space shuttle, the Challenger, exploded shortly after its launch.
- What makes a hero a hero?

IV. SMALL GROUPS

- Read the “Author’s Note” to the students, stopping before the last paragraph.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGo8huJdtQE> (4:25)