

NOTES TO EDUCATORS AND FACILITATORS

Though lesson activities and resources in this curriculum guide are labeled as being aimed at certain K-12 students or other community groups, these designations are merely suggestions. Our hope is that many of these activities and materials might be used in a number of ways by K-12 teachers, university professors, adult educators, and community-based organizers and facilitators. We know that as educators in a wide range of settings who are consulting this guide, you are the best judges of how to bring *Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story*, as well as activities to supplement and expand on it, to your classroom or community.

NOTES ON “QUESTIONS TO GUIDE READING & DISCUSSION OF MARTIN LUTHER KING AND THE MONTGOMERY STORY”

Note that the comic book, published in 1957, uses the terms “negro” and “colored” to refer to Black people. These were not used as racial slurs in the comic book, but today they are understood as unacceptable and disrespectful ways to refer to African Americans.

The final section of the comic book, “How the Montgomery Method Works,” emphasizes and clarifies a Christian understanding and application of nonviolence. But it is also important to remind students or community members that Gandhi’s leadership of the movement for Indian independence was rooted in principles that, while compatible or shared with some Christian ethics and values, actually came from the faith traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. One especially important principle was “ahimsa,” which literally means “lacking any desire to kill”. In sum, for the protestors in Montgomery, their Christian faith informed their activism in fundamental ways -- *and* they embraced lessons from Gandhi, many of which they (and Rev. Dr. King) learned through the tutelage of Bayard Rustin.

When exploring this section, especially in a public school in the United States, it may be important to reiterate that the comic book reflects the values of the Montgomery boycotters and of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which has always been a spiritually-rooted movement for peace and justice. The comic book can be a valuable resource for teaching about the civil rights movement, including the role of many people’s Christian faith in it. But the book also sought to inspire and provide tools for people of other religious backgrounds, and it has continued to do so. (See, for example, the section of the [comic book background reading](#) that tells the story of Dalia Ziada, the Muslim human rights activist who spearheaded translating the comic book into Arabic and sharing it widely in her native Egypt during the Arab Spring).