

P.S. 131 February 2026
Book of the Month
with Activities!

Quote of the Month:

“The time is always right to do what is right.”

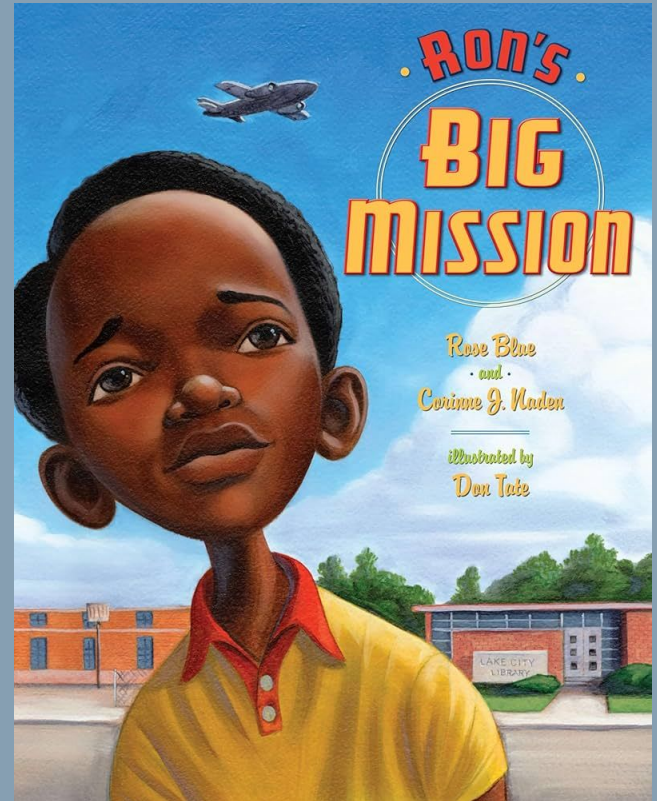
-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



February Book of the Month:

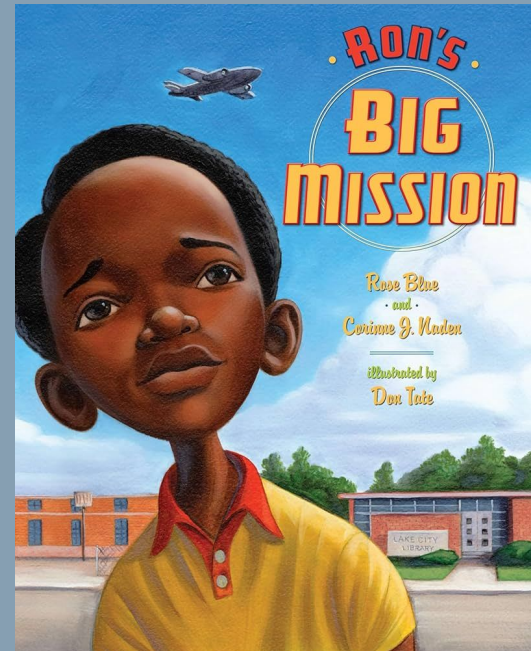
Ron's Big Mission

by Rose Blue and
Corinne J. Naden



Book Summary:

In honor of Black History Month, “Ron’s Big Mission” tells a story from the childhood of Ron McNair, African American scientist and astronaut. As a young boy, Ron loved to go to the library to read books about airplanes and flight. However, Black people in his South Carolina town in the 1950s were not allowed to borrow books to take home. Based on a true incident, this book describes how, by refusing to leave the library and protesting peacefully, Ron was able to integrate the library. This inspiring account reminds us how we can all stand up for justice and make positive changes in our world.



Read-Aloud Video



Click for Related Book Activities!

**Reading
Is Fundamental**
until every child reads

**Ron's Big Mission
Discussion Guide**
Grades 1-3

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Discuss the importance of standing up for what you believe in, at any age.
- Before reading, have a class discussion to activate prior knowledge about Ron McNair. Do you know anything about him? Do you know about discrimination laws in the 1940s-60s that kept Black people from having the same freedoms & rights as white people? Make a list of student generated responses on an anchor chart or whiteboard.
- Frontload vocabulary: library card, discrimination, protest, astronaut, Space Shuttle

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- Why do you think Ron McNair was so determined that particular day to get a library card?
- Are the illustrations helpful in understanding Ron and the situation at the library? Why?
- How did young Ron's determination help him to strive to become an astronaut? What connections can you make to this?

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

Think about what young Ron went through in getting his courage up to ask for a library card. Can you think of a time when you had to be courageous? How might you have handled that situation yourself?

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.

Reading Guide

Ronald McNair A Comprehension Companion

Ron's Big Mission
By Rose Blue & Corinne J. Naden

Discussion Cards

Multi-Purpose Discussion Cards

WORDS BLUE: RON'S BIG MISSION

RON'S BIG MISSION

AUTHORS: ROSE BLUE & CORINNE J. NADEN

ILLUSTRATOR: DON TATE

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

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

Nine-year-old Ron loves going to the Lake City Public Library to look through all the books on airplanes and flight. Today, Ron is ready to take out books by himself. But in the segregated world of South Carolina in the 1950s, Ron's obtaining his own library card is not just a small rite of passage. It is a young man's first courageous mission. Here is an inspiring story, based on Ron McNair's life, of how a little boy, future scientist, and Challenger astronaut distinguished his library through peaceful resistance. ([mission.com](#))

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

A former teacher and Headstart program worker in New York City who began her writing career penning fiction for young readers, Rose Blue has become a prolific author of nonfiction written with collaborator Corinne J. Naden that includes biographies of contemporary newsmakers and U.S. state and regional profiles, as well as books that span American social and political history. "I knew I wanted to be a writer since Miss Higgins called on me to read my stories to the first grade while she marked papers." ([biography-junk.org](#))

Corinne J. Naden has worked as an editor and journalist and has written many books for children. She lives in Westchester, New York. Together with frequent coauthor Rose Blue,

RON'S BIG MISSION

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Civil Rights
- Segregation
- Courage

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

Discussion Guide

Theme of the Month: Equity and Equality



Equity and equality is the idea that everyone gets treated fairly. It means that everyone has the same chances to succeed, no matter what they look like or where they're from.

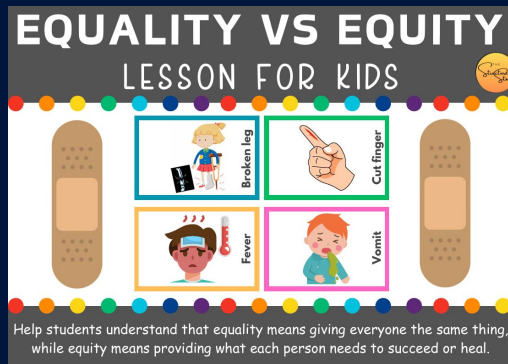
Theme of the Month Activities



Equity vs
Equality Lesson

Fairness
Classroom
Activities

Equity and
Equality Video

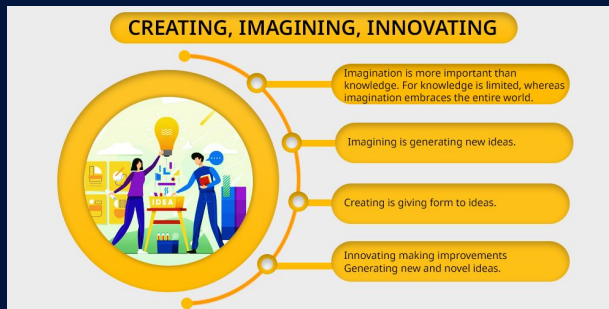


Fairness
Classroom Guidance Lesson

Habit of Mind: Creating, Imagining, and Innovating

8 CREATIVE-THINKING ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS TO BUILD CRITICAL-THINKING SKILLS

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY



Creating, imagining, and innovating describes when you are able to make new things, or come up with a new solution to a problem. This habit is about when you push the limits of what is possible! In “Ron’s Big Mission”, Ron wanted to borrow books in his local library, and he found a new, and creative solution to his problem so that equality could be a reality. This month, what are some ways that you can create something original, or introduce a new idea in your life?

Executive Functioning Focus: Self-Control

USING SELF-CONTROL	
Name: _____	
Read each scenario and then answer the questions below about the character and yourself.	
During math class, Charlie gets really distracted by looking at the kids playing outside at recess.	
What can Charlie do to help himself focus better?	How can you stay focused when you get distracted?
On the bus, someone kept interrupting Harriet when he was talking to a friend. She's getting really frustrated.	
What are three different choices Harriet could make? Underline the best one.	What is a situation you get in where you have different choices you can make?
1.	
2.	
3.	

It can be difficult to stay in control of your emotions, especially when you're dealing with a problem or challenge. However, when we have **self control** and manage our feelings calmly like Ron did in "Ron's Big Mission", we can focus more, make smarter choices, and feel better. How can you practice self-control this month?



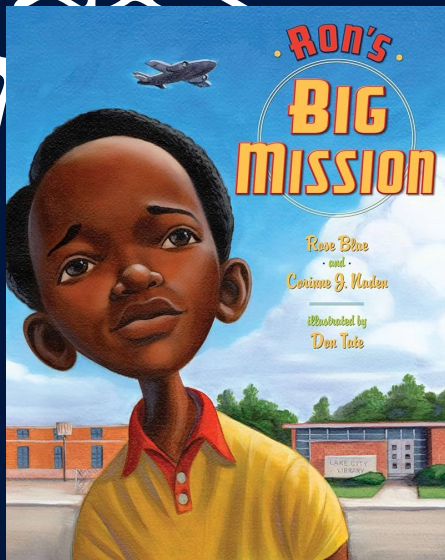
Black History Month!

Our school is excited to celebrate Black History Month with a schoolwide Gallery Walk! Each class is collaborating on a trifold board project highlighting significant Black figures who have shaped our world. To ensure a diverse representation of history, we have assigned specific themes to each grade level.

Each project should consist of a **trifold board** that includes the figure's name, key biographical facts, and their lasting impact. Every class is also encouraged to create a **3D visual or "artifact"** to display alongside the board, to bring history to life for students walking through the gallery!

The Gallery Walk will take place on Friday, February 27th. Thank you for your creativity and for helping our students engage deeply with these important stories!





Limited print copies of
“Ron’s Big Mission” are
available in the school
library (Room 212).
Please reach out to Ms.
Keiser at
dkeiser@schools.nyc.gov
if you would like to
borrow a copy.