



## Maggie's Civics Corner

### Special Lesson – The Art of the Protest

#### Maggie Says...

*In these difficult times, as our nation and the world pull together, it is more important than ever to understand our role as a citizen.*

The world has witnessed the death of George Floyd. Protests have erupted throughout our nation and well beyond. Protests call attention to an event or cause with the goal of encouraging change. The following is a read-aloud and lesson designed to support our youngest citizens and future change agents to understand the art of a peaceful and meaningful protest. As leaders throughout our country gather to develop an action plan for change, we hope they will include the voices of our children.

The first step in this lesson is to have the children \*listen to *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights* by Rob Sanders. (\*There are several read-alouds of this book on YouTube.) The book is skillfully designed to give meaning to a complex social issue through an accessible picture book. Enjoy the book and then join the children in your home, zoom, etc. in having a rich and safe discussion.

1. Lots of people who are peacefully protesting in our streets would embrace the quote that begins the book *Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights*. Think about the quote: ***Every voice matters, no matter how small. It's time to make a difference.*** How do you think the protestors can make a difference? What would you tell them that they need to do?
2. There are two different groups who are protesting in our streets. There are those who are peacefully making their point that our country is in need of change. On the other hand, there are those who are just at the protests to cause trouble by destroying property and looting stores. Which group do you think is more likely to encourage change for the positive in our country? Be prepared to support your answer.
3. In the book, there are many action verbs to describe some of the things we can do ***to promote peaceful fights for equal rights***. One of the words is ***question***. Do you think active citizens question authority; that is, do active citizens of all ages question an adult, a teacher, a police officer, a community leader, if they do not think something is right? Why or why not?
4. Let's take a look at some of the action words in the book. After you look at the list, put them in what you think is their order of importance. Then, if you can, share your order with others.
  - a. Assemble – gather together
  - b. Make buttons, banners, and bumper stickers
  - c. Educate – Tell others about your cause
  - d. Give time
  - e. Join others
  - f. Take a knee
  - g. March
  - h. Speak out
  - i. Vote
  - j. Be nonviolent
  - k. Develop an Action Plan
  - l. Volunteer – Willingly perform a service without pay

5. Do you think our youngest citizens should sit at the table with our elected officials, clergy and community leaders when they talk about action plans to address the current protestors' concerns about social injustice? Be prepared to support your answer.
6. A protest can start a conversation that could lead to change. What ideas for change would you suggest to the elected leaders, clergy, and community leaders who will address the social injustices that sparked the current protests?

**For additional lessons on First Amendment Rights and the Art of the Protest visit our website at:**

**<https://www.rendellcenter.org/teachers-tools-2/>**