

Jabari Dreams of Freedom

March 7 - 11, 2022



Written by
Nambi E. Kelley

Directed by
Daniel Carlton

Applause Series

Presented by the Lauridsen Family Foundation

Inquiry Guide

Dear Teachers,

Welcome back to another season of the Applause Series with Des Moines Performing Arts! We are so excited to invite you back to the theater and are eager to share Jabari's story with you and your students.

Understanding the history of Civil Rights and the importance of getting involved in issues important to you is at the core of Jabari's message.

This guide provides additional teaching materials to help deepen your experience, provide contextual information about the story, history and performers on stage and help connect the theater to the classroom.

Thank you for your commitment both to your students and to providing them opportunities to experience the arts. We are SO happy you are coming to visit us.

See you at the theater,
Des Moines Performing Arts

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Story
Page 2

Connecting the Past
Page 3

Vocabulary
Page 4

Healing In the Classroom
Page 5

INQUIRIES
1, 2, 3
Page 6-9

**Reflection &
Resources**

Thank you to our donors

SUPPORT FOR DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND THE APPLAUSE SERIES IS PROVIDED BY THE LAURIDSEN FAMILY ENDOWMENT AND MANY DONORS INCLUDING

Hollie Allen & Mandy Lechtenberg, Robert Angelici, William & Mary Bishop, Bravo Greater Des Moines, Mary Buckton, Greg & Sharon Chlebicki, Corteva Agriscience, Denise Daniels, Duane L. Gregg, Hy-Vee, Inc., Illuminated Marketing & Development, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Judith & Richard Jacavino, Mary Ann Juhl, Allaire Jutting, Dr. Amr & Karol Kamhawy, Steven & Jan Koch Household, Sam J. Kranovich, Judith A. Lindquist Fund, Roger G. & Donna M. Loof, Russ & Mary Marshall, Noel & Sheri Martinez, Mary Miller, Nationwide, Polk County Board of Supervisors, Prairie Meadows, Principal, Robert & Dianen Reed, Mary Scarpino, Matt & Jennifer Suhr, West Bancorporation Foundation, Inc., Gary Wiele, Myril & Jean Wiese Household, Windsor Charitable Foundation, and Catherine W. Yung & Jeffrey J. Webb and the Bob and Mary Lu Parks Endowment Fund

About the Story



10-year-old Jabari is growing up on the South Side of Chicago. He loves to draw and paint. Through his art and in his dreams, he is able to escape the reality of the turbulent world around him.

Young Jabari isn't trying to dream big. He's just trying to live free. After his friend has a violent incident with police Jabari is scared to step out his front door. He escapes to his dreams where Ruby Bridges, Claudette Colvin and other heroes of the Civil Rights Movement teach him what it means to be fearless. When he meets an impressionable seven-year-old Barack Obama, will Jabari have the courage to share the lessons he learned from the past to help ensure the future? Through rap, freedom songs, hip-hop dance and humor, *Jabari Dreams of Freedom* is history in the dreaming.

This play explores what it means to have courage in a time that calls for everyone to stand up for what you believe in. Whether you are 10 or 100, your voice matters!

About the Creators

DIRECTOR:

About Daniel Carlton:

Daniel Carlton is an actor, storyteller, playwright, poet, director, and award winning teaching artist who has appeared on New York, national, and international stages. His work has also been presented in schools, jails, homeless shelters, libraries, and every imaginable place to perform (except for outer space). Playwright credits include: *March On*, *Timeless Journeys*, and *A Whistle in Mississippi*.



PLAYWRITE

About Nambi E. Kelley:

Award-winning playwright and actress Nambi E. Kelley was chosen by literary legend Toni Morrison to adapt her novel *Jazz* for the stage. Nambi also penned an adaptation of Richard Wright's *Native Son*. Nambi is a writer on Showtime's *The Chi* and earned a BFA from The Theatre School at DePaul University and an MFA in interdisciplinary arts from Goddard College.

I think he learned that you don't have to be older or stronger to stand up, you can be any age to stand up to what [is] right. **You are the person you think you need to change the world!**
- Lennon D. audience member

Connecting the Past



The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s

Although enslaved Americans were freed as a result of The Civil War and were granted basic civil rights through the passage of the 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution, they struggled for protection of these rights into the next century. The fight to liberate Black Americans in the 1950s and '60s has special historical significance and is referred to as The Civil Rights Movement. Centering on nonviolent protest, this movement achieved the greatest breakthrough in equal rights legislation for Black Americans since the Reconstruction Era (1865-1877), including the desegregation of public areas in the South.

The Civil Rights Movement Continues

Though the Civil Rights Movement tends to refer to this period in the 1950s and '60s, the fight for civil rights is not over! Injustice against Black Americans continues, reaching through time into our current moment. In fact, it was the shooting death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin on February 26, 2012, that moved playwright Nambi E. Kelley to write JABARI DREAMS OF FREEDOM.

In response to Martin's murderer being found not-guilty of the crime in 2013, #BlackLivesMatter was founded. The mission of the movement is to "eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities." #BlackLivesMatter advocates for non-violent demonstrations to achieve this goal.

Today, we are living in a time when more people are learning about the deaths of innocent Black men and women like George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor. These deaths—many at the hands of police officers—have sparked protests across the nation. #BlackLivesMatter continues the work of rallying Americans in the fight for justice for these and all Black Lives.

Look for definitions for the underlined words on the next page. Add additional definitions if needed!



Civil Rights Vocabulary

What are Civil Rights?

Civil rights are basic rights that every citizen has under the laws of the government. In the United States the civil rights of each individual citizen are protected by the Constitution. Civil rights for every person means that regardless of gender, skin color, religion, nationality, age, disability, or religion, a person should not be discriminated against. Civil rights include the right to free speech, privacy, religion, assembly, a fair trial, and freedom of thought. The term "civil rights" comes from the Latin term "ius civis", which means "rights of a citizen." Anyone who is considered a citizen of a country should be treated equally under the law.

Enslaved:

An enslaved person is a human being who is legally owned by another.

The Civil War:

The war fought in the U.S. between northern states that wanted to remain a united country and southern states who wanted to form their own. The North was also fighting to end slavery, which the South wanted to keep. The war began in 1861 and ended when the South surrendered in 1865.

U.S. Constitution:

The highest law in the United States. Our Constitution guides how our government works.

14th Amendment:

The change to the Constitution that defined what it means to be a U.S. citizen and gave all citizens equal protection under the law.

15th Amendment:

The change to the Constitution that ensured the right to vote regardless of race.

Liberate:

To release or free.

Reconstruction Era:

The effort to rebuild the South and integrate 4 million newly-freed people into the United States after the Civil War.

Segregation:

The separation of people in their daily lives based on race; desegregation is a process to end this.

Discrimination:

When a person or group of people is treated unfairly because of some part of their identity, like their race.



Schapiro, 1963

Healing in the Classroom

Note from the Company of Jabari Dreams of Freedom to Teachers:

JABARI DREAMS OF FREEDOM is about fear, hope, and one's relationship to their community. As a company, we strive to assist teachers and students with the emotional processing of the show. **Trauma-Informed Care** is an approach in the human service field that assumes that a person is more likely than not to have a history of trauma. The Five Principles of Trauma-Informed Care are **Safety, Choice, Collaboration, Trustworthiness, and Empowerment**. Using these principles to guide your classroom discussions about the play lowers the risk of re-traumatization and promotes healing. Here are some helpful tips!

Safety: Create a physically and emotionally safe environment for students. Establish the opportunity to pass on a question or activity and give them the option to share confidentially.

Trustworthiness: Establish boundaries and adhere to them. Consistency builds trust, as does clarity. When students share their viewpoints, actively listen and ask curious questions!

Choice: The more choice and control the students have, the more likely they are to participate! Give them the autonomy to choose what they share and how.

Collaboration: The teacher/student relationship is one with a power dynamic built-in, and it's important to recognize that. Make students co-creators in the lesson plan or give them the opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness. Also, participate in the activities yourself!

Empowerment: Focusing on an individual's strengths and empowering them to build on those strengths promotes resilience. An atmosphere in which students feel validated and affirmed is key—Equal speaking time is an indispensable part of this empowerment.

Another excellent resource for creating an equitable learning environment is **The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning**. CASEL presents a framework with five Core Competence Areas: **Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision-Making**.

Self-Awareness: The ability to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.

Social Awareness: The abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts.

Self-Management: The ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.

Relationship Skills: The abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.

Responsible Decision-Making: The abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

These competencies can be taught, modeled, and practiced!

See the "Additional Resources and Further Reading" section for more about Trauma-Informed Care and Social and Emotional Learning.

Inquiry 01

How does society make changes?

What can we understand about the lives of the people speaking out for change, like the heroes of the Civil Rights Movement? What characteristics did they have?

How do systems (like courts or law enforcement) work with people to make changes? How can they work against change? Why?

JABARI DREAMS OF FREEDOM references many historical people and places from the Civil Rights Era and today – some of these people even appear as characters in the play! Below is a quick overview of some of the important historical events you'll hear mentioned on Jabari's journey through The Civil Rights Movement and beyond.

May 17, 1954 – Brown v. Board of Education is decided in the Supreme Court, effectively ending racial segregation in schools.

Aug. 28, 1955 – 14-year old **Emmett Till** is killed in Chicago, bringing international attention to the Civil Rights Movement.



Nov. 14, 1960 – Ruby Bridges is the first African American child to attend an all-white elementary school in Louisiana.

May 2, 1963 – Hundreds of students leave school to march in Birmingham, Alabama. **The Birmingham Children's Crusade of 1963** resulted in many arrests.



April 4, 1968 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated on the balcony of his hotel room in Memphis, Tennessee.

March 2, 1955 – Claudette Colvin is the first person arrested for resisting bus segregation in Montgomery, Alabama.



Dec. 1, 1955 – Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on the bus to a white man, prompting a year-long bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama.

Aug. 4, 1961 – Barack Obama is born in Honolulu, Hawaii to a black man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas.

Aug. 28, 1963 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech in front of more than 200,000 people in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial. He voiced his belief that all men could be brothers.

Jan. 20, 2009 – Barack Obama is inaugurated as the 44th and first African American President of the United States of America.



Research

Research one of the people or events featured on the timeline to the left and present your findings to the class.

Use the Research Graphic Organizer (page i) to guide your thinking.

Follow the link below to continue learning about the differences and similarities in the Civil Rights Movement and current rights for justice:

www.cnn.com/2020/06/15/us/civil-rights-protests-then-now/index.html

Inquiry 02

How can all people, regardless of age, use strong action in their communities to impact positive change?



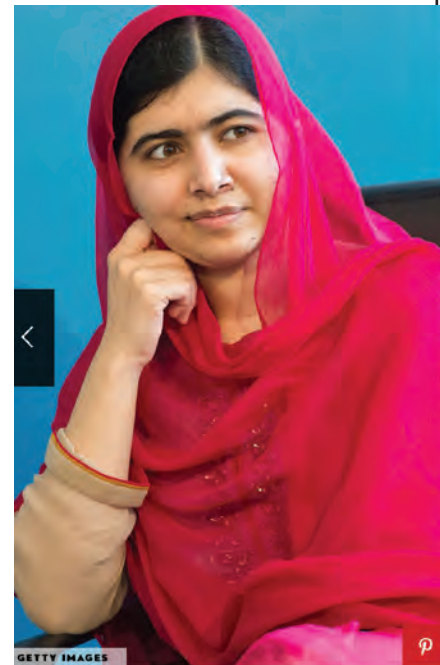
This production highlighted some of the young people in the Civil Rights Movement. Who else do you know that fought for someone else's rights?

Young people are still leading movements today, like Greta Thunberg for climate change and Malala Yousefzai for female education. These people are often called activists. An activist is defined as a person who uses or supports strong actions (such as public protests) in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue.

If you were to lead or join a movement, what would you fight for? What are the characteristics of an activist? Read about one of the 40 children featured below to get inspired!

www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/inspirational-stories/g5188/kids-who-changed-the-world/

Use the list of questions (page ii) to consider your own role as a change-maker! It starts with you!



Inquiry 03

How is music used to communicate powerful messages?

Read the lyrics on the following page and click to hear an excerpt of the songs.

Why do you imagine these were called “Freedom Songs?” What is your definition of “Freedom”?

How did the music in Jabari and in the clips make you feel? Did it feel hopeful? Exciting? Sad? Why?

Traditional Negro spiritual songs are about hope. What other song or songs inspire you? Why?

Traditional Negro Spiritual Songs

Jabari Dreams of Freedom opens with songs called spirituals. They are very important in the history of black America both in the church and in the community. Traditional Negro spiritual songs are influenced by culture. The first Negro spirituals were inspired by African music, and some of them were accompanied by dancing including hand clapping and foot tapping. Traditional Negro spirituals are still sung today, but new songs have also been added that are about religion and faith, community life, and personal improvement. Several also take inspiration from social issues like segregation. During the Civil Rights Movement, Negro spirituals like “We Shall Overcome”, “This Little Light of Mine”, and “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing” were sung to build hope among people. They are cries for liberation and affirmation. African Americans sing these songs to remind themselves that they can be and do anything!

Even though all the characters in Jabari’s story faced difficult times they also remained hopeful that things could get better.

Traditional Negro spiritual songs are often about hope and are also called “Freedom Songs.” Across all cultures and times, music is something that people use to inspire others in their community and, often, themselves.



Inquiry 03 cont.

Oh Freedom!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veiJLhXdwn8>

Oh, freedom, Oh, freedom Oh, freedom over me And before I'd be a slave I'd be buried in my grave And go home to my Lord And be free.

This Little Light Of Mine!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2kDsQGeoLU>

This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine (Hallelujah) This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine
Let it shine.

Woke Up This Morning

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OHNh73PHCQ&list=RD6OHNh73PHCQ&start_radio=1&rv=6OHNh73PHCQ&t=84

Woke up this morning with my mind Stayed on freedom
Woke up this morning with my mind Stayed on freedom
Woke up this morning with my mind Stayed on freedom
Hallelu-, Hallelu-, Hallelujah.

Lift Ev'ry Voice And Sing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHn2SSzZszU>

Sing a song full of the faith that the Dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the Present has brought us
Facing the rising sun
Of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won

Click below to read more about protest music in the classroom:

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2013/move-to-the-music>



Alper, 1963

Reflection After The Show

Listen to music while responding to these questions in whatever format makes sense to you - writing, drawing, recording a video or a responding with technology.

What did you see? What was your favorite part?

What did you hear? How could you draw it?

What did you imagine? What idea came to your mind?

What do you wonder about?

We love to hear from you. Please send any of your responses to the performance to us at education@dmpa.org. We'll share the responses with the artists and Applause Series donors.

Use this chart to connect the elements of theater to what you see on stage. Choose one aspect to focus on or take some mental notes to reflect on after the performance.

THEATER GLOSSARY

THOUGHT

The big picture of the play

GENRE:

relating to a specific kind or type of drama and theater such as a tragedy, drama, melodrama, comedy, or farce

GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES:

the underlying actions and events that have happened before the play, story, or devised piece begins

FOCUS:

a commitment by a participant to remain in the scope of the project or to stay within the world of the play

IMAGINARY ELSEWHERE:

an imagined location which can be historical, fictional, or realistic

THEME:

the aspect of the human condition under investigation in the drama; it can be drawn from unifying topics or questions across content areas

THEATRICAL CONVENTIONS:

practices and/or devices that the audience and actors accept in the world of the play even when it is not realistic, such as a narrator, flashback, or an aside

ACTION

The events of a play; the story as opposed to the theme; what happens rather than what it means.

CONFLICT:

the problem, confrontation, or struggle in a scene or play; conflict may include a character against him or herself, a character in opposition to another character, a character against nature, a character against society, or a character against the supernatural

OBJECTIVE:

a goal or particular need or want that a character has within a scene or play

PLOT:

a narrative as revealed through the action and/or dialogue; traditionally, a plot has the elements of exposition, inciting incident, conflict, rising action, climax, and resolution or falling action

CHARACTERS

These are the people presented in the play that are involved in the perusing plot.

BELIEVABILITY:

theatrical choices thought to be true based upon an understanding of any given fictional moment, interpretation of text, and/or human interaction

CHARACTER TRAITS:

observable embodied actions that illustrate a character's personality, values, beliefs, and history

GESTURE:

an expressive and planned movement of the body or limbs

INNER THOUGHTS:

the underlying and implied meaning or intentions in the character's dialogue or actions (also known as subtext)

MOTIVATION:

reasons why a character behaves or reacts in a particular way in a scene or play

LANGUAGE

The word choices made by the playwright and the enunciation of the actors of the language.

DIALOGUE:

a conversation between characters

IMPROVISE:

the spontaneous, intuitive, and immediate response of movement and speech

SCRIPT:

a piece of writing for the theater that includes a description of the setting, a list of the characters, the dialogue, and the action of the characters

MUSIC:

Music can encompass the rhythm of dialogue and speeches in a play or can also mean the aspects of the melody and music compositions as with musical theatre.

SPECTACLE

The spectacle in the theatre can involve all of the aspects of scenery, costumes, and special effects in a production.

NON-REPRESENTATIONAL MATERIALS:

objects which can be transformed into specific props through the imagination

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS:

technical elements selected for use in a specific production, including sets, sound, costumes, lights, music, props, and make-up, as well as elements specific to the production such as puppets, masks, special effects, or other storytelling devices/concepts

STAGING:

patterns of movement in a scene or play

Discuss

Use the glossary to select a few elements to focus on during the performance and then talk about what you saw on stage.

Graphic Organizer

Inquiry 1 (page 6)

What I want to know	What I learned	What I still wonder

Questionnaire

Inquiry 1 (page 7)

Have you have ever stood up for a friend? If so, how did you stand up for them?

Have you ever been afraid of something? If so, what? How did you conquer your fear?

Have you ever fought for something in which you believed? If so, what?

Have you ever made a new friend before? If so, what was that experience like for you?

Have you ever dreamed of something so big that you achieved? If so, what did you dream, and how did you achieve your goal?

What is your definition of bravery?

Who is in your community? How do you stay connected to them?

Guide Sources

Guide Adapted from Jabari Dreams of Freedom Guide

Bridges, Ruby. *This is Your Time*.

Random House Children's Books, 2020.

Chambers, Veronica. *Resist 40 Profiles of Ordinary People Who Rose Up Against Tyranny and Injustice*.

HarperCollins Publishers, 2020.

Levinson, Cynthia. *The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, a Young Civil Rights Activist*.

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2017.

The Children's Theatre Company. "Theatre as a Tool for Moral Reasoning." YouTube, uploaded by Wilmette Institute, 26 May 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THCvC54JjOU>.

Bell, Lee Anne et al. "The Storytelling Project Curriculum: Learning About Race and Racism Through Storytelling and the Arts." Racial Equity Tools, https://www.raciaequitytools.org/resourcefiles/stp_curriculum.pdf. Copyright 2008.

Derman-Sparks, Louise et al. "Children, Race, and Racism: How Race Awareness Develops." Teaching for Change, https://www.teachingforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/ec_childrenraceracism_english.pdf. 1980.

The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care. "What is Trauma-Informed Care?"

University at Buffalo, Buffalo Center for Social Research,

<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>. Copyright 2020.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. CASEL, 2020, www.casel.org

Read More!

Books about kids who make a difference!

