

“STRUGGLE FOR EDUCATION”

By
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Synopsis

Throughout the history of America, Black Americans have always struggled for equal access to education. This sketch recounts three major education struggles in the history of Black Americans: Freedom to Learn; Justice to Learn, and Funding to Learn.

Slogan: “A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste” UNCF (United Negro College Fund).

Ministry Lesson

Education has, and will always be, the key that opens the door of opportunity. Today, God is calling us to answer the prayers of our family and friends to help a child go to college. As we focus on Black History Month, let’s support the education of our youth. This sketch emphasizes the need for churches to raise funds for their Scholarship Ministry or to support Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Ministry Focus

Giving - Scholarship Fund

Genre: Drama

Cast

Narrator
Slave Mother
Slave Daughter (10-12)
Mrs. Bridges
Little Ruby Bridges (6-7)
Modern Day Mother
Modern Day Teen Girl (16-17)

Costumes

Slaves clothing - Slave mother and daughter
Year 1960 clothing - Ruby Bridges and mother
Modern Day clothing - Mother and teenager

Props

Lantern or candle
Old raggedy book
Hair comb
School notebook
School lunch bag
Kitchen table and 2 chairs
Financial Aid forms and college applications

Time: 10 min.

Director’s Note:

All three scenes are established on stage at the same time: Slave scene (stage right), Ruby’s scene (center stage), and Modern Day scene (stage left). The Narrator will begin (far stage right) and walk toward each scene as he/she introduces the scene. At the beginning of the sketch, all characters are “frozen” on stage. The characters in each scene “comes to life” as the narrator approaches and introduces their scene.

STRUGGLE - FREEDOM TO LEARN

INT. BARN

(Slave mother; slave daughter)

MOTHER HUDDLES NEXT WITH DAUGHTER WITH A CANDLE (OR LANTERN). THE YOUNG GIRL IS HOLDING AN OLD RAGGEDY BOOK

NARRATOR APPROACH SETTING

NARRATOR

In the year 1619, Africans were brought to America to serve as indentured servants and by 1641 the first American colonies established the institution of slavery . For over 200 hundred years, slaves were deprive some their rights and privileges in pursuit of life, liberty, happiness, and an education. Slaves owners believed the longer their slaves remained uneducated the longer they would accept their condition. Slaves were often punished for trying to learn to read, but that did not stop them.

DAUGHTER

(rubbing eyes) Momma, why we up so early?

MOTHER

(looking around nervously) Hush now, we gotta do somethin' secret. You can't let no one know. No one! You hear me child?

DAUGHTER

Yes, Momma

MOTHER RETRIEVES A BOOK FROM UNDER HER SWEATER AND HANDS IT TO HER DAUGHTER

DAUGHTER

What's this?

MOTHER

It's a learnin' book. Masta's wife gave it to me when I was a little girl. She taught me to read before she died. I been hidin' this here book for 20 years, so I can teach my chile to read too. But can't nobody know you learnin'.

DAUGHTER

Why I need to read?

MOTHER

(rubs daughter's hair) 'Cause I pray to God you will be free one day. So you must learn to read 'cause it will help you be free.

DAUGHTER OPENS BOOK. MOTHER BEGINS TO TEACH

FREEZE SCENE

NARRATOR

The time would come when God used great men to free us from the bonds of slavery. Though free, we were still not considered equal.

STRUGGLE - JUSTICE TO LEARN

INT. HOME

(Little Ruby Bridges and Mrs. Bridges)

MRS. BRIDGES IS PREPARING HER DAUGHTER FOR SCHOOL; COMBING HAIR AND STRAIGHTENING HER CLOTHES. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT AND HISTORIC FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR LITTLE RUBY.

NARRATOR APPROACH SETTING

NARRATOR

After slavery ended, colored folks still could not enjoy of all the freedom America offered to its citizens. We lived in a segregated society and although we now had access to public education, it was far from equal. But in 1960 God strengthen the parents of a little girl named Ruby Bridges. On November 14th 1960, Mrs. Bridges had a conversation with her little girl that help to change our nation.

MOTHER IS COMBING RUBY'S HAIR.

MRS. BRIDGES

Now, Ruby it's really, really important that you be nice in school today, okay?

RUBY

But why do I have to go to a new school?

MRS. BRIDGES

This school is much better school than your old school and it's only a few blocks away.

RUBY

Will all my friends be there?

MOTHER TURNS RUBY AROUND TO FACE HER.

MRS. BRIDGES

No baby, you will have to make new
friends. But I will be there with you
until you do, okay?

RUBY

Okay

mrs. bridges hands little ruby her notebook and lunch bag
and gives ruby a big hug

FREEZE SCENE

NARRATOR

That morning Federal Marshals escorted
little Ruby Bridges and her mother to
the William Frantz Public School, and
Ruby becomes one of the first color
girls to desegregated an all white
public school in New Orleans.

STRUGGLE - FUNDING TO LEARN

INT. KITCHEN TABLE
(Mother and Teen Girl)

MOTHER AND TEEN DAUGHTER ARE SITTING AT THE KITCHEN TABLE GOING OVER FINANCIAL AID APPLICATIONS. THEY ARE DESPERATELY TRYING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO PAY FOR THE DAUGHTER'S COLLEGE EDUCATION.

NARRATOR APPROACH SETTING

NARRATOR

Today, we as a people have come a long way. By the grace of God, we have survived slavery, endured segregation, passed laws for civil rights, honored a great African American with a national holiday, and elected the first African American as President of the United States. But these great achievements do not eliminate our need and our struggle to obtain a qualify education. This struggle continues.

TEEN GIRL

(searching through papers) Momma did you see the FAFSA letter?

MOTHER

What's that?

- End of Preview -

Education is the cornerstone of success; not just for African American youth but for everyone. This is a great sketch to use to underscore the importance of education to encourage others to support your Scholarship Committee.
