

Guess the title?

What can we tell from the picture?

What do you think this story is about?

Vocabulary Development

- Screen
- Spitfire
- Mischief
- Washington
- Indianapolis
- Preacher

It is the capital of the United States.

Washington D.C.



Indianapolis

- Capital of the U.S. State Indiana

Most famous fighter aircraft during World War Two

The name **spitfire** was taken from an old English word meaning someone of strong or fiery character



Preacher

- A person who preaches (spreads the word), usually a minister of religion

Mischief

- Playful misbehaviour, especially on the part of children

Use this card after each paragraph.

<p>Stop-and-Think Card</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do I understand what that was about?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Were there any parts I did not understand?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Could I explain what I have just read to someone else?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What might the next part be about?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are there any questions I need to have answered?</p> <p>Congratulations! Read ON!</p>

Syllabification

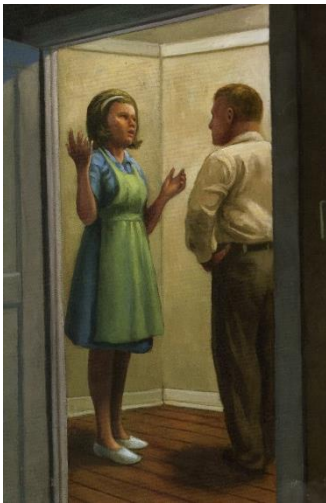
- **Wash – ing – ton**
- **Ac – cid – ent**
- **Mis – chief**
- **In – di – an – ap – ol – is**
- **Fav – our – ite**
- **Kenn – ed – y**
- **Walk – er**
- **Luth - er**

Riding to Washington

By Gwyneth Swain

I know why they're putting me on that bus to Washington. It's 'cause I get in trouble. 'Trouble with a capital T,' Mama always says. Most times she says it with a smile in her eyes. Other times, like when I slam the screen door by accident and wake up the twins – well, those times I have to look hard to find the smile.

Daddy doesn't want me to go with him on that bus to Washington, but it sounds like I'm going anyhow.



"A whole lot of people are going to hear Dr. King speak," he told Mama one night late when he thought I was sleeping. "I don't like the idea of taking Janie. She's a spitfire."

You know what *spitfire* means? I think it must mean I spit fire. Guess that's Daddy's way of saying I'm trouble.

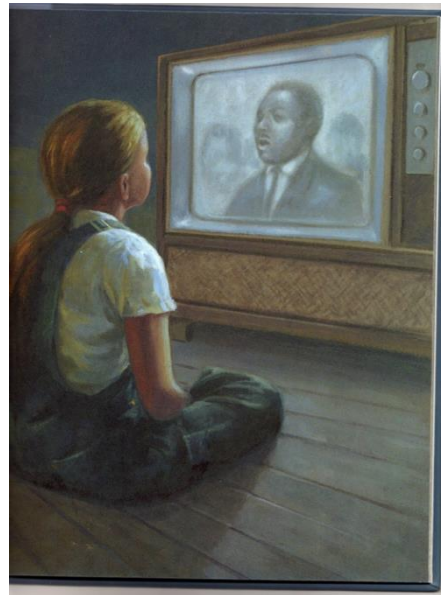
"Honey," Mama told Daddy, "that girl makes more mischief than I can bear, what with the twins teething."

So, that's how I ended up riding to Washington, hundreds of miles from home. I knew why I was going, I just wasn't so sure why Daddy was.

We don't have coloureds, or black folks, living in our part of Indianapolis. I don't see many at all, except on TV. Blacks on TV live mostly in the South. They get sprayed at with fire hoses and nipped at by police dogs. But Daddy knows a whole lot of colouredd here from work.

I think that's why Daddy's going to Washington to hear Dr. Martin Luther King speak. Because he thinks we should all work together. But Daddy says, "We'll see history, Janie. History."

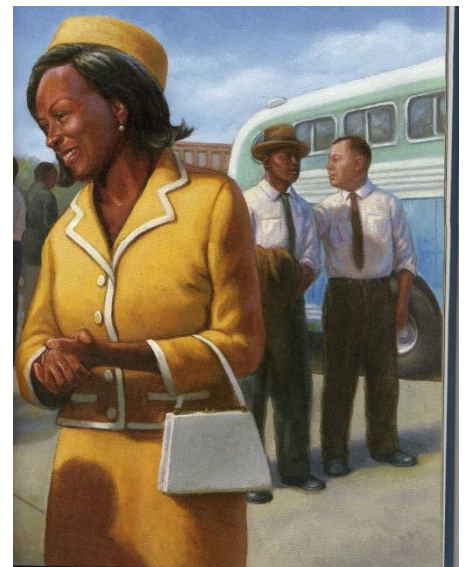
I study history at school, and believe you me it's not exciting. Neither was leaving Indianapolis.



On Tuesday, at the Walker Theatre downtown, a bunch of old buses waited for us. They had names on them like *Crispus Attucks School* and *Rollins Grove AME Church*. And everyone getting onto them was dressed like it was the first day of school or Easter Sunday. I figured I was in trouble again, wearing my favourite overalls but Paul Taylor, from Daddy's painting crew smiled at me.

"Nice to meet you," said his wife. She had a hat like Mrs. Kennedy wears and a suit to match. "Your overalls look comfy," she said, winking at me. She was right.

There was old people mixed with young people. Preachers mixed with farmers. And me and Daddy and just a few other whites mixed in with a whole bunch of coloureds. More than I'd ever seen in one place.



I was glad to see it was finally time to get on the bus. I pressed close to Daddy, even in the heat.

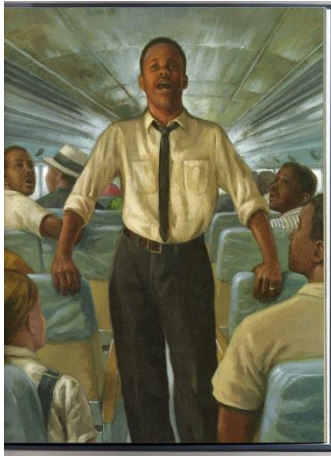
We all brought picnic lunches, but by nighttime, we were all hungry again. We stopped one, two, three times. Each time Paul Taylor and the driver went inside a restaurant. And each time they came back shaking their heads.

"No service for mixed crowds," Paul explained.

"Why can't we go in?" I whispered to Daddy. "You and me aren't mixed."

“Would you want to eat where others can’t?”

I was so hungry I’d have eaten almost anything, almost anywhere. But maybe



Daddy was right. Maybe it was best to stick together. Still, I wondered about the coloureds. They didn’t act like troublemakers – and I know a lot about trouble.

To keep our minds off food, Paul Taylor started singing. I stumbled and fumbled over words everyone else seemed to know:

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine...

Riding to Washington

1. What was the girl’s name in the story? _____
2. Why did her parents call her a spitfire? _____
3. Where did she live? _____
4. Why were they going to Washington, D.C.? _____
5. When did Janie stand up for what was right? _____
6. Who is the author of the book? _____

Is it hard to be brave?

Why do you think Janie was brave in this story?

Do you think it was fair that the restaurants did not allow ‘mixed groups’ to eat? Why/Why not?
