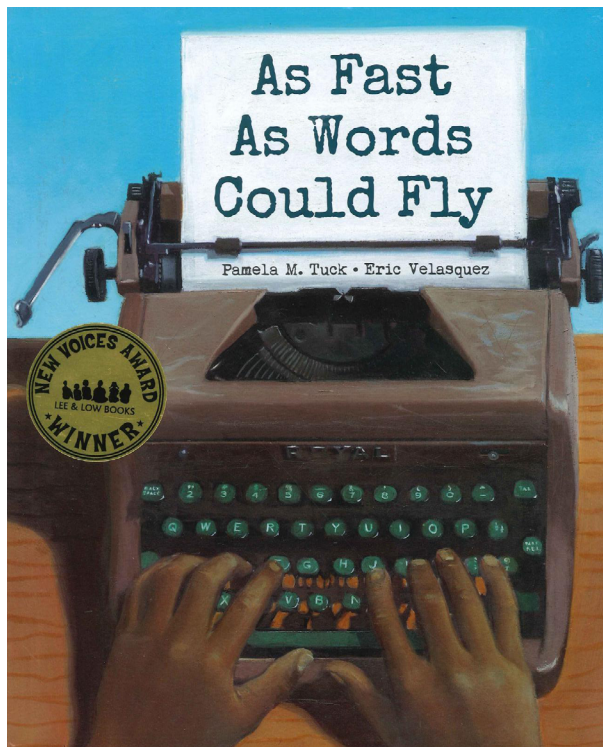




ACTIVITY GUIDE

ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN AGES 8-10



AS FAST AS WORDS COULD FLY

WRITTEN BY PAMELA M. TUCK

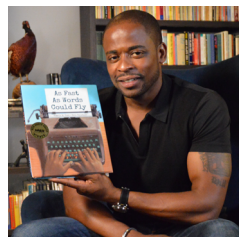
ILLUSTRATED BY ERIC VELASQUEZ

Watch the video of actor

Dulé Hill

reading this story at

storylineonline.net



ABOUT THIS STORY

SYNOPSIS

Young Mason Steele takes pride in turning his father's excited ramblings about the latest civil rights incidents into handwritten business letters. One day Pa comes home with a gift from his civil rights group: a typewriter. Thrilled with the present, Mason spends all his spare time teaching himself to type. Soon he knows where every letter on the keyboard is located.

When the civil rights group wins a school desegregation case, Mason learns that now he will be attending a formerly all-white high school. Despite his fears and injustice from the students and faculty, Mason perseveres. He does well in school—especially in his typing class. And when he competes in the county typing tournament, Mason decides to take a stand, using his skills to triumph over prejudice and break racial barriers.

THEMES IN THE STORY

History, Civil Rights/Discrimination, Overcoming Obstacles, Heroism, Conflict-resolution

TALK IT UP!

Use the following questions to discuss the themes of the story:

- In 1954, the US Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* that “racial segregation” of students in public schools was “unconstitutional”. Discuss “racial segregation”. Does segregation exist today? Give examples of how humans may be segregated by color, ethnicity, gender and/or religion.
- Ten years after school systems around the country were ordered to desegregate, there were still areas of the country that had not made changes. It took the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to strengthen enforcement and enable progress of desegregation. Discuss “civil rights”. Give an example of discrimination and describe how you would feel if you were treated poorly.
- Patrick and Daniel were friendly to Mason and his brothers when they were picking tobacco in the summer. When Mason and his brothers got on the school bus to Belvoir High, though, Patrick and Daniel ignored them. Why do you think they behaved this way? Have you ever experienced something similar? What happened? How did you react?
- Mason was the fastest typist in his class and selected to represent the school in a typing tournament. Mason was hesitant to accept, but then he heard Pa's words, “Somebody's got to make a change.” Explain what this phrase means to you. Why do you think it inspired Mason?
- When Mason was announced as the winner of the typing contest, no one cheered. Why did the audience respond that way? Would you have cheered? Why or why not?

TYPEWRITER KEYS MAGNETS

Mason practiced his typing every evening until he learned where every letter and symbol was located on the typewriter. Create your own alphabet magnets and learn to type just like Mason did!

MATERIALS* —

Sculpey Original Clay, Acrylic Clay Roller/Rolling pin, Small circle cut out (small circle cookie cutter), Circle magnets (be sure they fit your circle cut out), Black stamping ink, Letter stamps, Super glue

**Craft courtesy of Crafty Blog Spot. [Visit Crafty Blog Spot](#) for material recommendations and tips.*

PREPARATION TIME —

None

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

1 hour

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

Step 1: Condition the clay by working in your hands. Then, roll out the clay as evenly as possible.
For chunkier magnets, keep clay about ½" thick.

Step 2: Using circle cookie cutter, cut out 26 circles (more if you want to add numbers and symbols!)

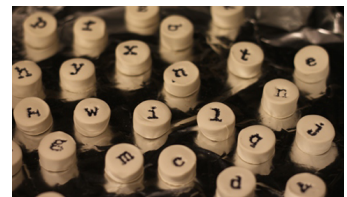
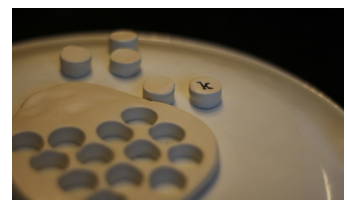
Step 3: Lightly press stamps into the ink. Be sure to only cover the top of the letter. Then, press the letter stamp into the clay.

Step 4: Bake per instructions on the package of clay (approximately 30 minutes).

Step 5: Remove from oven and let cool.

Step 6: Using super glue, paste magnets onto cooled, clay circles.

Step 7: Practice typing!



WRITING ACTIVITY: GREETINGS FROM GREENVILLE, NC

The book was inspired by the author's father's experiences growing up in the 1960's in a family of civil rights activists. Pamela M. Tuck put herself in her father's shoes to create Mason's story. Now, put yourself in Mason's shoes. What do you think it would have been like to be a young person living through the civil rights movement and experiencing the events firsthand?

MATERIALS —

Printable Postcard Template, pen, pencil, crayons/colored pencils, markers)

PREPARATION TIME —

5 minutes

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —


30 minutes

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

Imagine that you are Mason and just attended your first day at Belvoir High. Write a postcard to a friend telling him/her what happened. How did it feel standing at the bus stop and being ignored by the bus driver? Did it make you angry that Mr. Bullock did not help you find your way to class? How did it feel to be greeted by "cold stares and grimaces" when you entered class late? What was it like having to sit in the back corner of the room? Describe the people and the events to your friend.

COOKING ACTIVITY: OLD-FASHIONED ICE CREAM SODA

Mason broke all previous records with a typing speed of sixty-five words per minute! Not a single person applauded nor did Mason receive anything for his accomplishment. Celebrate his accomplishment with an Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Soda! In the 1960's, this popular dessert was sold at lunch counters in Woolworth for only \$.25!

 **Google It:** Search "Greensboro Four" to learn about the nonviolent protest at a lunch counter in Woolworth.

INGREDIENTS —

1/4 cup milk

3 tablespoons chocolate syrup

1 cup vanilla ice cream (or 1 large scoop)

Club soda (cold) or seltzer water (cold)

Optional: canned whipped cream

PROCEDURE —

Step 1: Pour the milk into one, tall 16-ounce glass.

Step 2: Stir in syrup.

Step 3: Add in ice cream and enough soda water or seltzer to fill almost to the top of glass.

Step 4: Top with whipped cream if desired

Step 5: Serve with a long spoon and a big straw.

Add a little math to your lunch counter conversation:

- Bethel Union High is twelve miles away from Mason's home. Belvoir High is only three miles away. What is the difference in miles? How many miles away from your home is your school? Is there a school closer to your home? What is the difference in miles?
- The Greensboro Four attended North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. How many miles is this school from your home? How many hours would it take you to travel by car to the school? By bus? By plane? On foot?

EXPERIMENT: INVISIBLE INK

Mason took notes while Pa rambled on about what happened at Whittaker's Restaurant. Only Mason could make sense out of what he had written. Keep your own notes secret with this Invisible Ink!

MATERIALS —

Half a lemon, water, spoon, bowl, cotton swab, white paper, lamp or other light bulb

PREPARATION TIME —

None

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

40 minutes

PROCEDURE FOR EXPERIMENT —


Step 1: Squeeze some lemon juice into the bowl and add a few drops of water.

Step 2: Mix the water and lemon juice with the spoon.

Step 3: Dip the cotton swab into the mixture and write a message onto the white paper.

Step 4: Wait for the juice to dry so it becomes completely invisible.

Step 5: When you are ready to read your secret message or show it to someone else, heat the paper by holding it close to a light bulb.

 **Google It:** Search "oxidize" to learn why the ink becomes visible.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Golden Frinks was a field secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization that coordinated nonviolent action to end segregation. Field secretaries interviewed people who complained about unequal treatment. Mr. Frinks demonstrated calm, reasonable, patient behavior, despite hearing that humans were treated unfairly.

TEMPER TANTRUM

Imagine that Mr. Frinks lost his cool. What would his Temper Tantrum look like?

MATERIALS —

None

PREPARATION TIME —

None

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

5 minutes

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

Have a fit for the fun of it! Flail, stomp, scream and jump until you tire yourself out. Then, try it again!

HEADSTANDS

Mr. Frinks organized marches, sit-ins and protests. What if he organized headstands? How long could you last?

MATERIALS —

Yoga mat

PREPARATION TIME —

None

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

15 minutes

HOW TO DO A HEADSTAND —


Start in a table top position. Clasp your hands and place the crown of your head on the floor with the back of your head against your hands. Lift your knees and hips up, lengthen your spine, and keep your elbows right under your shoulders. Walk your feet forward towards your arms so that your hips start to stack over your shoulders. Slowly lift one leg. Push onto the ball of your bottom foot and lift up through entire torso. Join your legs and stay for as long as you are comfortable.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a great way to make a real world connection to the story.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Hear first-hand from those who participated in the Civil Rights movement. [Veterans of the Southern Freedom Movement](#) provides a list of Freedom Movement veterans that are available for interviews.

 **Google It** and schedule an interview with someone in your community.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Use a “social justice lens” to assess your local museum, zoo or aquarium. Notice if the place is accessible, enjoyable and educational for ALL people? Is the place more accessible or interesting to some people than others? Who might feel more or less comfortable in this place? What aspects of the place might feel unwelcoming to some people? Whose stories or beliefs are represented by this place? What message is sent about fairness?

DO SOMETHING

Write a letter to the person that manages local museum, zoo or aquarium and explain the changes that could be made to make the place more accessible, interesting or educational to a wider range of people.

ABOUT US

ABOUT STORYLINE ONLINE

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation's children's literacy website *Storyline Online* streams imaginatively produced videos featuring celebrated actors to help inspire a love of reading. Storyline Online receives millions of views every month in hundreds of countries. Visit Storyline Online at storylineonline.net.

ABOUT THE SAG-AFTRA FOUNDATION

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation provides vital assistance and educational programming to the professionals of SAG-AFTRA while serving the public at large through its signature children's literacy program. Founded in 1985, the Foundation is a national non-profit organization that relies solely on support from grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual contributions to fund our programs. Visit sagaftra.foundation.

STORYLINE ONLINE BROUGHT TO YOU BY

SAG-AFTRA
FOUNDATION