

Orchard School Steps Up Project

January 2022

Rational:

As part of this month's Reading to Raise Anti-Racists series as well as in honor of Martin Luther King Day, students will have the opportunity to show what they want to take a stand for. **The idea is that standing up for a worthy cause, sometimes even in the face of adversity, can help bring about change- and many times it starts with one small step.** Classes will discuss what it means to stand up for your beliefs and each student will create footsteps to show the ways in which they are "taking a stand." This project will replace the Morning Meeting share-out for the January book on February 4.

Project:

Using both Martin Luther King, Jr's quote, ***"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step"*** and the book "The Power of Her Pen" as jumping off points, classes will discuss what they want to take a stand for. Depending upon grade level, time you can allow, etc, here are a few ways students can create their footsteps for the project.

Option 1: After a class discussion, the class decides what they want to take a stand for as a group. Students decorate individual footsteps and the teacher displays the class' statement in the hall near their footsteps. Variation: The teacher writes the class' statement on one footstep and photocopies the template- the students then decorate their own with the class's statement already on it.

Option 2: After a class discussion, students come up with individual ideas of what they want to take a stand for, write their statement on their footsteps, and decorate.

Possible Discussion Prompts:

- a. In whose footsteps are you following, and why?
- b. When did you or could you "take a stand"? What first step would you take?
- c. If your footsteps could talk, what story would they tell of a way in which you have walked for justice?
- d. Ethel used her pen and her voice to report on issues that were important to her. What issues would you report on?
- e. Ethel asked thoughtful questions that helped bring about change. What questions could you ask that might change people's minds?

Making it Visible:

The footsteps will be displayed around the "loop" (Lobby, K-1, Library, and Cafeteria hallways). Teachers will receive two copies of the footstep template- one with lines and one without. Teachers may also decide if students color/write on one step or two. Finished and cut out footsteps may be dropped off at the Library for DEI Team members to hang. We are asking that all footsteps be dropped off at the Library by **Friday, January 28.** Templates are attached to this email and master copies are also available at the Library.

*This project was adapted by the DEI Committee from Deborah Menkart's lesson called "Big Shoes to Fill: A Teambuilding Lesson" which can be found in the book Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching, published by Teaching For Change.