

# Focus on Common Core – **Literature: Craft and Structure**

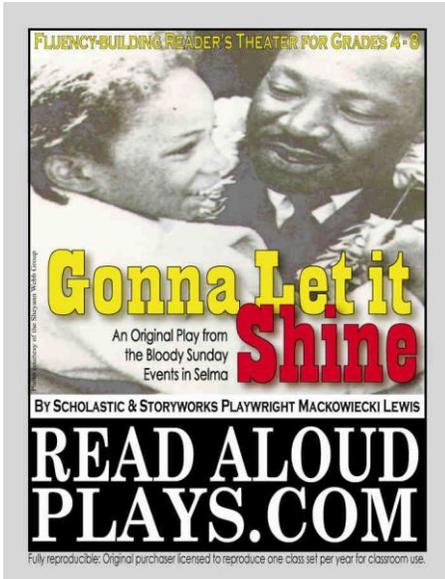
*Gonna Let it Shine: The Selma to Montgomery March (Play) by Mack Lewis*



Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**1**

**Vocabulary Warm-up:** Work with a partner to match the word on the left with its meaning on the right. Review the play to see if your selections make sense.



- |               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| register      | angered                  |
| publicity     | firmness of purpose      |
| determination | to sign-up               |
| descend       | containers               |
| canisters     | a paper on which to vote |
| outraged      | to move downward         |
| ballot        | news                     |

**Other words to know:** access, gun-toting, non-violence, decency, footage, persistence,

*Work with a partner and use evidence from your reading, performing, or viewing of the play to answer the questions. Use complete sentences.*

**2**

In this play, Sheyann is both a **character** (as a child) and a **narrator** (as an adult). Why do you think the **author** set it up that way? Is the story more or less believable as a result? Why? (RL.#.6)

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**3**

In addition to “Adult Shey,” the author also used a **traditional narrator**. Can you recognize any **differences** in their tone or in what they say? (RL.#.6)

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Near the beginning of Scene Eight, Shey uses the word **triumph**. What clues in the this sentence or scene give clues as to the meaning of this word? (RL #.4)

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Sheyann **quotes** Dr. King saying, “If you can’t vote, you ain’t free.” How does that **apply** to you? Can you vote?

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How do the **scenes** in this play fit together to tell the story? Put the “summary sentences” in order by marking them 1 through 8. Be prepared to explain, using evidence from the play, to say how each fit the given scene and how one **leads to the next**. (RL #.5)

- \_\_\_ *When the protesters try to march to the state capitol, their worst fears are realized.*
- \_\_\_ *After marching to the capitol, they here Dr. King encourage the massive crowd.*
- \_\_\_ *All appears lost, but the people are re-inspired by a freedom song.*
- \_\_\_ *Sheyann finds out what she’d been fighting for.*
- \_\_\_ *The people in power use dirty tricks to keep African-American citizens from voting.*
- \_\_\_ *Sheyann and her friend Rachel take an interest in the Voting Rights Campaign.*
- \_\_\_ *The President won’t let the people be bullied, so he sends troops to protect the marchers.*
- \_\_\_ *Fear kept the newly-freed slaves from exercising their rights, says Mrs. Webb.*



### **Additional Questions for Discussion (Key Ideas & Details; Grades 4-7):**



The image on page 6 shows the children of the Rev. Ralph Abernathy participating in the march to Montgomery. In what ways did Sheyann make it possible for them to march? (RL.#.2)  
*Answers will vary; Sheyann (and often Rachel), demonstrated that they could overcome their fears to stand up for the rights of other. Consequently, other participants overcame their own fears about letting their children march.*



How was Sheyann's great great granmomma an inspiration to her? (RL.#.3)  
*Answers will vary; African-Americans like her great granmomma had been freed from slavery, but they were unable to overcome their fears. Sheyann understood that overcoming fear was a key to succeeding.*



How does the scene about Great Great Granmomma establish one of the themes of the play? (RL.#.2)  
*A major theme in the play is overcoming fear.*



In Scene 5, what do Rachel and Sheyann say that shows they understood the seriousness of the events? What do they mean by these words? (RL.#.1)  
*They talk about attending a funeral...a funeral for the entire Voting Right Campaign.*

### **Answer Key (Grades 4-7):**

**Vocab:** register/to sign-up; publicity/news; determination/firmness of purpose; descend/to move downward; canisters/containers; outraged/angered; ballot/a paper on which to vote

1. The Narrator merely provides information to advance the story, but Adult Sheyann colors her information with her impressions, feelings, and personal experience from having been an actual witness to the events. The author uses this device to make the story more believable.
2. Adult Sheyann's tone is more personal, as if she's sharing with the audience, while the narrator's tone is distant.
3. Both the meaning and structure of the sentences links the word *triumph* to the word *victory*.
4. Answers will vary. Students will have to wrestle with the concept of being "free" as opposed to being a "minor."
5. The correct order is as follows: 4, 7, 5, 8, 1, 2, 6, 3

### **Opportunities to Meet Additional Strands (Grades 4-7):**

Meet CCS RL.#.7 (**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**) by having the audience complete the worksheet and discuss following a classroom performance of the play.

Meet CCS RL.#.9 (**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**) by pairing *Gonna Let it Shine* with other plays in the *ReadAloudPlays.com* series such as *We Shall Overcome* or *MLK's Freedom March*. Have students make comparisons by writing or discussing.

Meet RL.#.10 (**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**) by having students read and practice independently when not meeting in a performance group.