



The First Step: How One Girl Put Segregation on Trial by Susan E. Goodman

About *The First Step*:

Sarah Roberts deserved an equal education, and her family fought for change. They made history. Roberts v. City of Boston was the first case challenging our legal system to outlaw segregated schools. It was the first time an African American lawyer argued in a supreme court. These first steps set in motion changes that ultimately led to equality under the law in the United States. Sarah's cause was won when people--black and white--stood together and said, No more. Now, right now, it is time for change! Source: bloomsbury.com



About the author:

Susan E. Goodman is the author of more than thirty nonfiction books for children, including *How Do You Burp in Space?*; *See How They Run: Campaign Dreams, Election Schemes, and the Race to the White House*; *All in Just One Cookie*, an ALA Notable Book; and *On This Spot*, a *Washington Post* Top Picture Book of the Year. She lives in Boston, Massachusetts. The illustrator E.B. Lewis contributed his gorgeous art to this book. He is an award-winning artist for the use of his watercolors. He has contributed to more than 90 books.

Source: kidsreads.com

Tips for *The First Step*:

- This is a story not often covered in history. Ask questions such as: What is social justice? How and when have students put one step forward and sometimes two steps back? How to use peace in striving for change at home, school, or with friends?
- Discuss culture and diversity. Assign students to interview each other. What are their similarities and unique differences? Why are these important?
- Assign student a topic of research from the timeline of historical events found at the end of the book.
- With older students, discuss current events. How are schools addressing or not addressing racial segregation?

Additional resources:

- How can the students support one another? Pair with a fun activity where students may work together in accomplishing a task.
- The metaphor of the “march toward justice” is emphasized with illustrations of footprints. What other metaphors can your students accompany with an illustration?
- A very revealing conversation and perhaps writing will come from these questions. What other weighty topics can your class explore while you are doing a formative assessment by listening to their voices?
- Pair this text with *I Dissent* by Debbie Levy