



# Goin' Someplace Special

by Patricia McKissack, Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Teacher's Guide  
Written By Kathy Sammis

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## Synopsis

This book, although fiction, is based on author Patricia McKissack's experiences growing up in Nashville, Tennessee, in the 1950s, when Jim Crow segregation ruled society. Tricia Ann, an African-American girl about eleven years old, begs her grandmother, Mama Frances, for permission to go on her own to her favorite place in the world, which the girl calls Someplace Special. Mama Frances agrees to this first-ever solo outing. But she instructs Tricia Ann to remember "everything I've told you" and to "hold yo' head up and act like you b'long to somebody." Clearly, Mama Frances has concerns about the challenges Tricia Ann is going to face.

Tricia Ann eagerly bounds up into the city bus, then reluctantly walks to the back, behind the "Colored Section" sign. The back of the bus fills up; black passengers stand although some seats are empty up front. "It's not fair," Tricia Ann complains. "No, but that's the way it is, honey," replies a neighbor lady.

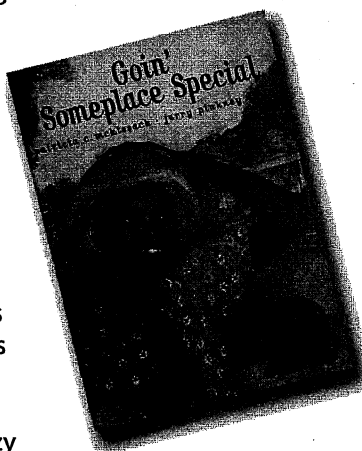
Off the bus, Tricia Ann makes herself dizzy while spinning around the park's Peace Fountain. But she can't use a nearby bench to steady herself; its carved sign says, "For Whites Only." Tricia Ann complains to Jimmy Lee, a street pretzel vendor, about not being able to sit and enjoy the fountain that her grandfather helped build. Jimmy Lee points to Monroe's Restaurant across the street with its "Whites Only" sign; his brother is the restaurant's cook. As Tricia Ann continues on her way, Jimmy Lee calls out, "Don't let those signs steal yo' happiness."

Next, a pop idol enters the Southland Hotel and a big crowd of his adoring fans sweeps Tricia Ann along with them into the hotel's grand lobby. The all-white crowd reacts with horror when they notice Tricia Ann, and the manager shoos her away angrily, declaring, "No colored people are allowed!" Crying, Tricia Ann runs into a walled garden, tended to by an elderly white woman called

Blooming Mary. This lady comforts Tricia Ann and helps her to recall Mama Frances's words about never giving up, about just keeping on.

With her self-confidence regained, Tricia Ann passes the Grand Music Palace, where a mean-spirited girl points out that colored people must enter by the back door and sit in the last rows of the upper balcony, nicknamed the Buzzard's Roost. At the next corner, Tricia Ann arrives at her Someplace Special—the imposing public library, with its message chiseled in stone across the front facing: PUBLIC LIBRARY: ALL ARE WELCOME.

An Author's Note at the end of the book explains how this story is based on the author's own experiences, including the special role the Nashville Public Library played in her young life.



## Timeline

All the events take place in about an hour.

Tricia Ann:

- leaves her home,
- boards the city bus,
- gets off at Capitol Square,
- goes through the Peace Fountain park,
- walks past Monroe's Restaurant,
- gets swept into the Southland Hotel,
- visits the walled garden,
- walks past the Grand Music Palace
- arrives at the public library.

### Author Sketch

Patricia McKissack is a popular and prolific writer who focuses on the African-American experience, often in collaboration with her husband Fredrick. Alone and with Fredrick, Patricia has written over one hundred biographies, histories, information books, and picture/story books for young readers, from elementary to young adult levels, garnering numerous awards along the way.



Patricia L'Ann Carwell was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1944, to a story-telling family. She moved to St. Louis, Missouri, as a small child, then returned to Nashville to live with her grandparents after her parents' divorce. At Tennessee State University in Nashville, Patricia renewed a childhood friendship with Fredrick McKissack. They were married four months later and graduated in 1964, sharing a love of literature and involvement in the civil rights movement.

While teaching junior high English, Patricia found little information on the poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar, so she wrote a biography of him for her students. She continued to write biographies and histories while working as a children's book editor. She became a full-time writer in the 1980s, and Fredrick switched careers from civil engineer/construction company owner to collaborate with her, often doing the research on projects. The McKissacks raised their three sons in inner-city St. Louis and now live in the suburb of Chesterfield, Missouri.

Patricia continues to achieve her goal of improving the self-image of African-American children through a knowledge of and pride in their heritage, while also encouraging an understanding of different cultures among all children.

### Illustrator Sketch

Jerry Pinkney is a highly successful and acclaimed illustrator and fine artist who has to date won five Coretta

Scott King Awards and five Caldecott Honor Book awards. He was born in 1939 in Philadelphia, where he grew up with his five siblings. A dyslexic child, he reveled in his ability to express himself through art, a talent that his parents encouraged. At the age of twelve, Pinkney operated a newspaper stand, sketching between customers. This attracted the attention of cartoonist John Liney, who befriended the boy and revealed to him the possibility of art as a career.

Pinkney studied commercial art at vocational school, where he met his future wife Gloria Jean, and then attended the Philadelphia Museum College of Art on a full scholarship. After marrying, the Pinkneys moved to the Boston area, where Jerry worked as a designer at Rustcraft Greeting Card Company and at Barker-Black and then opened a studio with two other artists. A few years later, he opened his own Jerry Pinkney Studio and moved with the family to New York. Today, he lives and works at his home in Croton-on-Hudson, New York.

Pinkney has illustrated over seventy-five children's books since his first one in 1964, focusing on multicultural and African-American themes. He has also had a number of one-man shows and designed, among other projects, eleven postage stamps for the U.S. Postal Service's Black Heritage series. Two of the Pinkneys' four sons are also successful children's books illustrators, and they, along with their father, often illustrate books that their wives have written.

### Critic's Corner

The numerous awards garnered by both Patricia McKissack and Jerry Pinkney demonstrate critics' continuing admiration for their work, including their informative, expressive, and sensitive portrayal of African-American culture. Of *Goin' Someplace Special*, *Horn Book* wrote, "McKissack and Pinkney strike just the right balance...: informative without being preachy, hopeful without being sentimental." *Publishers Weekly* called Pinkney's watercolors "luminescent" and added, "he captures every ounce of Tricia Ann's eagerness, humiliation and quiet triumph at the end." *School Library Journal* recommended the title as a "thought-provoking story for group sharing and independent readers." The book won the 2002 Coretta Scott King Award for illustration, making Pinkney the only illustrator to that time to have won that award five times.

## Selected Works by Patricia McKissack

### Sole author

- Who Is Who?* (1983)  
*Paul Lawrence Dunbar: A Poet to Remember* (1984)  
*Mary McLeod Bethune: A Great American Educator* (1985)  
*Flossie and the Fox* (1986)  
*Mirandy and Brother Wind* (1988)  
*A Million Fish—More or Less* (1992)  
*The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural* (1992)  
*Ma Dear's Aprons* (1997)  
*Can You Imagine?* (1997) (Meet the Author Series)  
*Run Away Home* (1997)  
*Color Me Dark: The Diary of Nellie Lee Love* (2000) (Dear America Series)  
*Nzingha: Warrior Queen of Matamba* (2000)  
*The Honest-to-God Truth* (2000)  
*Goin' Someplace Special* (2001)  
*Look to the Hills: The Diary of Lozette Moreau* (2004) (Dear America Series)

### With Fredrick L. McKissack

- Frederick Douglass: The Black Lion* (1987, 2002)  
*The Civil Rights Movement in America from 1865 to the Present* (1987, 1991)  
*Messy Bessey and sequels* (1987)  
*James Weldon Johnson: "Lift Every Voice and Sing"* (1990)  
*A Long Hard Journey: The Story of the Pullman Porter* (1990) (Coretta Scott King Award)  
*Great African Americans Series—Carter G. Woodson: The Father of Black History* (1991) (and many other titles in the series)  
*Sojourner Truth: Ain't I a Woman?* (1992) (Coretta Scott King Award)  
*Black Diamond: The Story of the Negro Baseball Leagues* (1994)  
*The Royal Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay: Life in Medieval Africa* (1994)  
*Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters* (1994)  
*Red-Tail Angels: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II* (1995)  
*Rebels Against Slavery: American Slave Revolts* (1996)  
*Black Hands, White Sails: The Story of African-American Whalers* (1999)  
*Miami Gets It Straight*, and sequels (2000)  
*Hard Labor: The First African Americans, 1619* (2004)

## Selected Works by Jerry Pinkney

### Illustrator

- The Adventures of Spider*, by Joyce Cooper Arkhurst (1964)  
*Femi and Old Granddaddy*, by Adjai Robinson (1972)  
*Song of the Trees*, by Mildred D. Taylor (1975)  
*Tonweya and the Eagles, and Other Lakota Indian Tales*, by Rosebud Yellow Robe (1979)  
*The Patchwork Quilt*, by Valerie Flournoy (1985) (Coretta Scott King Award)  
*Half a Moon and One Whole Star*, by Crescent Dragonwagon (1986) (Coretta Scott King Award)  
*Mirandy and Brother Wind*, by Patricia McKissack (1988) (Coretta Scott King Award, Caldecott Honor Book)  
*The Tales of Uncle Remus: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit, and sequels*, by Julius Lester (1988)  
*The Talking Eggs: A Folktale from the American South*, by Robert D. San Souci (1989) (Caldecott Honor Book)  
*Home Place*, by Crescent Dragonwagon (1990)  
*Pretend You're a Cat*, by Jean Marzollo (1990)  
*Drylongso*, by Virginia Hamilton (1992)  
*The Sunday Outing*, by Gloria Jean Pinkney (1994)  
*John Henry*, by Julius Lester (1994) (Caldecott Honor Book)  
*Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman*, by Alan Schroeder (1996) (Coretta Scott King Award)  
*Sam and the Tigers*, by Julius Lester (1996)  
*The Hired Hand: An African-American Folktale* (1997)  
*Black Cowboy, Wild Horses*, by Julius Lester (1998)  
*The Ugly Duckling*, retold by Jerry Pinkney (1999) (Caldecott Honor Book)  
*Albidaro and the Mischievous Dream*, by Julius Lester (2000)  
*Goin' Someplace Special*, by Patricia McKissack (2001) (Coretta Scott King Award)  
*Noah's Ark* (2002) (Caldecott Honor Book)

## Bibliography

### Patricia McKissack

- Children's Literature Review*, Vols. 23, 55. Detroit: Gale, 1991, 1999.  
*Contemporary Authors, New Revision Series*, Vols. 38, 96. Detroit: Gale, 1993, 2001.  
 Frederick, Heather Vogel, et al., "PW Talks with Patricia McKissack," *Publishers Weekly*, August 6, 2001 (topic: *Goin' Someplace Special*).

McElmeel, Sharron, "Patricia McKissack: Wordsmith and Avid Reader," *Book Report*, November/December 1999, pp. 36-37.

Silvey, Anita, ed. *Children's Books and Their Creators*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.

*Something About the Author*, Vols. 73, 117. Detroit: Gale, 1993, 2000.

### Jerry Pinkney

*Children's Literature Review*, Vol. 43. Detroit: Gale, 1997.

Darigan, Daniel L., "Sorting Out the Pinkneys," *Language Arts*, September 2002, pp. 75-79.

McElmeel, Sharron L., "Author & Illustrator Profile: The Pinkneys," *Library Talk*, May/June 1998, pp. 16ff.

Pinkney, Jerry, "The Artist at Work: Characters Interacting with the Viewer," *Horn Book Magazine*, March/April 1991, pp. 171-79.

"The Pinkney Family: In the Tradition," *Horn Book Magazine*, January/February 1996, pp. 42ff.

Silvey, Anita, ed. *Children's Books and Their Creators*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.

*Something About the Author*, Vols. 41, 71, 107. Detroit: Gale, 1985, 1993, 1999.

*Something About the Author Autobiography Series*, Vol. 12. Detroit: Gale, 1991.

### Reviews of Goin' Someplace Special

*Black Issues Book Review*, November/December 2001, p. 76

*Booklist*, August 2001, p. 2117

*Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, September 2001, p. 28

*Horn Book Magazine*, November/December 2001, pp. 736-37

*Kirkus Reviews*, September 15, 2001, p. 1362

*Language Arts*, March 2003, p. 314

*Library Talk*, March/April 2002, p. 44

*New York Times Book Review*, February 10, 2002, p. 20

*Publishers Weekly*, August 6, 2001, pp. 89-90

*School Library Journal*, September 2001, p. 199

### Internet

"Exclusive Interviews: Jerry Pinkney" (and Brian and Myles) [www.readingrockets.org/books/authorbio.php?ID=95](http://www.readingrockets.org/books/authorbio.php?ID=95)

"Exclusive Interviews: Patricia and Frederick McKissack": [www.readingrockets.org/books/authorbio.php?ID=240](http://www.readingrockets.org/books/authorbio.php?ID=240)

"Jerry Pinkney" [friend.ly.net/users/jorban/biographies/pinkneyjerry/index.htm](http://friend.ly.net/users/jorban/biographies/pinkneyjerry/index.htm)

"JerryPinkney": <http://www.harpercollins.com/authors.asp>

"Jerry Pinkney" (Children's Book Council) <http://www.cbcbbooks.org/contacts/>

"Patricia McKissack: Author Spotlight" [www.randomhouse.com/author/results.pperl?authorid=20049](http://www.randomhouse.com/author/results.pperl?authorid=20049)

"A Patricia McKissack Tribute Page" [www.patriciamckissack.com/](http://www.patriciamckissack.com/)

## General Objectives

1. To use discussion questions to recall details, interpret characters and events, read or listen critically, and respond creatively to the story and its illustrations.
2. To expand vocabulary through context clues and word study.
3. To expand responses to the book by completing a variety of related activities, some in other areas of the curriculum.
4. To exercise artistic, craft, and dramatic skills to help interpret reading.

## Specific Objectives

1. To identify the various Jim Crow rules that Tricia Ann encounters and must cope with on her trip to the library.
2. To understand both the hostile and helpful interactions with other people that Tricia Ann has during her outing.
3. To consider why Jim Crow laws existed, and why many white people in Tricia Ann's city were hostile toward black people.
4. To identify details that set this story in the past
5. To study the ways in which text and artwork reveal Tricia Ann's feelings.
6. To think about the ways in which the artist uses bright and subdued colors to highlight Tricia Ann's role in the story.

## The Importance of Setting

This story is set in a fictionalized Nashville, Tennessee, where author Patricia McKissack grew up during the segregated 1940s and 1950s. Events begin at the warm, inviting house where Tricia Ann lives with her loving grandmother. Tricia Ann then boards a segregated 1950s-era city bus and gets off in the heart of downtown Nashville. On her way to the public library, the girl visits and passes

by a number of the city's public places, all of which are segregated: the public park with the magnificent Peace Fountain surrounded by "For Whites Only" benches; Monroe's Restaurant, across from Jimmy Lee's pretzel stand, with a "Whites Only" sign on its window; the posh, spectacular, whites-only Southland Hotel, from whose grand lobby Tricia Ann is angrily ejected after being swept in by a crowd; the peaceful walled garden of the Mission Church ruins, where the elderly Blooming Mary comforts the very upset girl; and the Grand Music Palace, with black people restricted to its back entrance and back balcony. Finally, Tricia Ann arrives at her "Someplace Special," the Nashville Public Library. It is a massive, handsome building, built of brick and stone in the classic style, bathed in warm summer sun. Best of all, on its front facing the words PUBLIC LIBRARY: ALL ARE WELCOME are chiseled in stone.

### Cross-Curricular Sources

#### Stories of the Segregation Era

Evelyn Coleman, *White Socks Only*  
Freddie Williams Evans, *A Bus of Our Own*  
Amy Littlesugar, *Freedom School, Yes!*  
William Miller, *The Bus Ride*  
Margaree King Mitchell, *Granddaddy's Gift*  
Pam Munoz Ryan, *When Marian Sang*  
Debbie Wiles, *Freedom Summer*  
Jacqueline Woodson, *The Other Side*

#### Library Stories

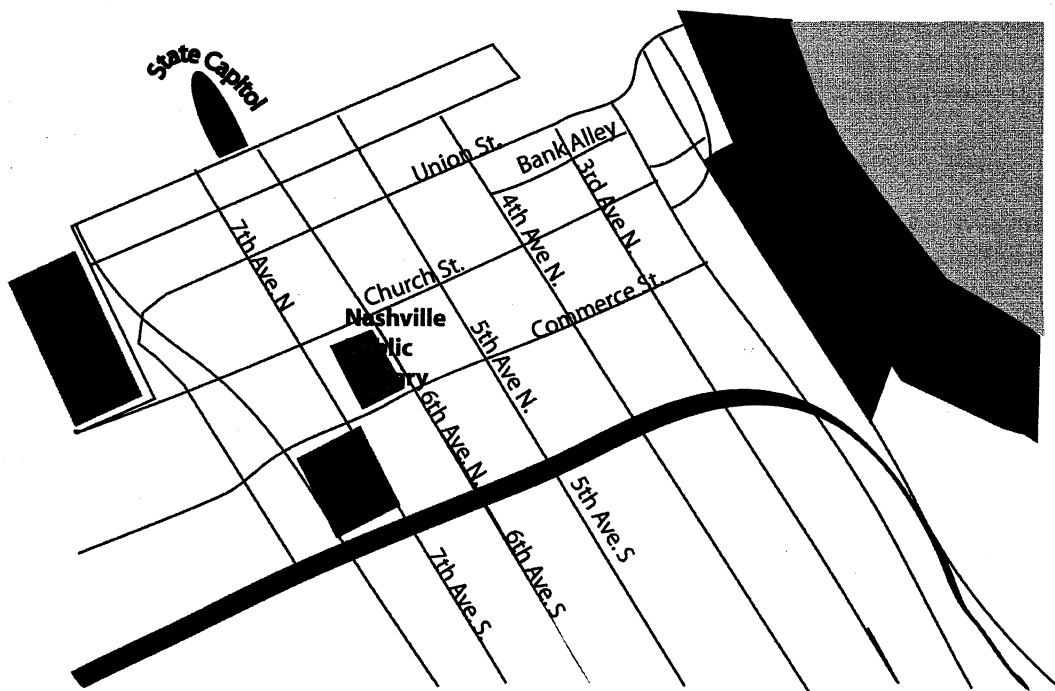
Cari Best, *Red Light, Green Light, Mama and Me*  
Alice K. Flanagan, *Ms. Davison, Our Librarian*  
Pat Mora, *Tomas and the Library Lady*  
Patricia Polacco, *Aunt Chip and the Great Triple Creek Dam Affair*  
Sarah Stewart, *The Library*

#### Books About Segregation and Civil Rights

Ruby Bridges, *Through My Eyes*  
Robert Coles, *The Story of Ruby Bridges*  
Tom Feelings, *Tommy Traveler in the World of Black History*  
Ellen Levine, *If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King*  
Doreen Rappaport, *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
Faith Ringgold, *If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks and My Dream of Martin Luther King*  
Mary Turck, *The Civil Rights Movement for Kids: A History with 21 Activities*

#### CD-ROM

*Blue's Reading Time Activities and Blue's Treasure Hunt* (Humongus Entertainment)  
*Jumpstart Artist* (Knowledge Adventure)  
*Reading Blaster: Ages 4-6 and Reading Blaster: Ages 5-6* (Knowledge Adventure)  
*Rosa Parks* (Nordic Software)



## Internet Sites for Students

"Black History 101" (lower-grade section of "A Black History Treasure Hunt")

[www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/TM/WS\\_black\\_history\\_101.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/TM/WS_black_history_101.shtml)

"Jerry Pinkney"

[coe.west.asu.edu/students/dcorley/authors/Pinkney.htm](http://coe.west.asu.edu/students/dcorley/authors/Pinkney.htm)

"Jerry Pinkney, Achiever of Dreams"

[www.quia.com/pp/1224.html](http://www.quia.com/pp/1224.html)

"Meet Jerry Pinkney"

[www.bookpage.com/0402bp/meet\\_jerry\\_pinkney.html](http://www.bookpage.com/0402bp/meet_jerry_pinkney.html)

"Meet the Author: Patricia and Fredrick McKissack"

[www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/mckissack.html](http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/mckissack.html)

"Meet the Illustrator: Jerry Pinkney"

[www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/jpinkney.html](http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/mtai/jpinkney.html)

"National Civil Rights Museum: Virtual Tour"

[www.mecca.org/~crights/cyber.html](http://www.mecca.org/~crights/cyber.html)

"Patricia McKissack"

<http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/authors/>

## Internet Sites for Teachers

"Examples of Jim Crow Laws"

[academic.udayton.edu/race/02rights/jcrow02.htm](http://academic.udayton.edu/race/02rights/jcrow02.htm)

"The History of Jim Crow"

[www.jimcrowshistory.org](http://www.jimcrowshistory.org)

"Remembering Jim Crow":

[americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/remembering/](http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/remembering/)

"The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow"

[www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/)

## Videos/DVDs

*Good Conversation! A Talk with the McKissacks*

(Tim Podell Prods.)

*Library Skills for Children* (Schlessinger Media)

*Martin Luther King, Jr.,*

(Colman Communications/Rainbow Educational Media)

*Our Friend, Martin* (Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment)

*Ruby Bridges* (Disney Educational Prods.)

*What If Everybody Was Purple?*

(Michelee Puppets/SVE & Churchill Media)

*White Socks Only* (Phoenix Film & Video)

## Themes and Motifs

Help students understand that the story deals with these main issues and situations.

### Themes

- prejudice, racism, discrimination
- civil rights
- pride, self-worth, self-respect
- supportive love and encouragement
- courage
- venturing out alone
- value of libraries
- inclusiveness

### Motifs

- Jim Crow laws
- grandmother/granddaughter relationships
- 1950s culture and life
- public places

## Meaning Study

Discuss with students the meaning of passages from the story.

1. "I trust you'll be particular, and remember everything I've told you."  
*(When Mama Frances tells Tricia Ann she must be "particular," she is telling the girl to be extremely careful in the way she behaves out in public on her own. Mama Frances is also reminding Tricia Ann to remember everything she has told her about dealing with the Jim Crow laws the girl will meet with. Readers/listeners won't know this yet, but they may pick up on the fact that Mama Frances has some concerns about Tricia Ann going out on her own.)*
2. "Hold yo' head up and act like you b'long to somebody." "Carry yo'self proud."  
*(Mama Frances is reminding Tricia Ann of the pride and self-respect she has taught the girl to have and to hold on to in the face of the rules of segregation. Mrs. Grannell echoes this advice as Tricia Ann gets off the bus. Again, students won't understand why Mama Frances gives this advice until later in the story as Tricia Ann keeps running into Jim Crow rules.)*

3. "...the Jim Crow sign that said: COLORED SECTION."  
*(Jim Crow was the informal name for the many, detailed laws that created and enforced segregation between the races in the United States. The name comes from an early black minstrel-show song. "Colored" was a term commonly used in the Jim Crow era to refer to African-Americans. Tricia Ann has to sit in the rear part of the bus, the section for "colored" people. Whites sat in the front part of the bus.)*
4. "My grandfather was a stonemason on Peace Fountain."  
*(A stonemason cuts stone to shape and uses it in building things, such as the Peace Fountain in the park. Because her grandfather helped to build that fountain, Tricia Ann is extra-mad that Jim Crow laws forbid black people from sitting on the benches set around the fountain.)*
5. "That man can't even now scald water."  
*(As an example of his brother's dreadful cooking skills, Jimmy Lee claims that Jesse can't even boil water.)*
6. Everybody said Blooming Mary was addled.  
*(People in town think of the old lady as muddle-headed and confused, probably because she is an eccentric and tends the old garden on her own, without pay. But Mama Frances correctly realizes that Mary is a kind and gentle person, so Tricia Ann is quite willing to accept Mary's wise advice and guidance.)*
7. "But don't study on quittin'."  
*(Tricia Ann remembers her grandmother's advice not to give up on reaching her Someplace Special, to keep on going in spite of the roadblocks she keeps running into. So she stops "studying"—thinking about—quitting and chooses to continue on to her Someplace Special.)*
8. ...the matinee performance ... the balcony  
*(People are gathered on the sidewalk outside the music theater for an afternoon—"matinee"—event. The author uses this to reveal to readers that black people had to sit in the upper balcony—the last rows of the raised section of seating at the back of the theater. Tricia Ann declares, with spirit, that she has no interest in sitting up there.)*

9. "...the message chiseled in stone across the front facing"  
*(A chisel is a metal tool with a sharp edge at the end of its blade. It is used to cut or shape wood, stone, or metal. Facing is a layer of extra material that decorates or protects part of a building. The words PUBLIC LIBRARY: ALL ARE WELCOME have been chiseled into the stone facing above the main entrance to Tricia Ann's much-loved library.)*

## Comprehension Study

Discuss the following questions with your students. You could ask students in higher grades to write their answers to the questions in their own words.

1. Look at the pictures in the book, without reading the story. Write or tell a few sentences about one or more of the pictures. Describe 1) what the people in the picture are feeling or doing at that moment and 2) what is happening in the picture. As you read or listen to the story, see if what you wrote or told about the picture(s) was accurate.
2. Look at the first illustration in the book, the picture that appears before the title page. What do you think this might be? Guess again about what this might be when you have read/listened to half of the book. Also halfway through the book, suggest what you think Tricia Ann's Someplace Special is. Do you think she will get there? Why or why not?
3. What details set this story in a past time?  
*(The pictures do most of all. The cars are very different, and so are the dress styles and the pop idol's and Hickey's outfits [1950s/early 1960s]. Some words in the text aren't used much any more, such as "filling station," which today is a gas station or a quick stop-type place, and "pop" for soda. And the Jim Crow segregation of public life is from the times that inspired the soon-to-come civil-rights era.)*
4. What Jim Crow—segregation—rules does Tricia Ann run into on her trip to the library?  
*(First, she has to sit in the Colored Section seats at the back of the bus. Black people have to stand back there when that sections' seats fill up even though empty seats are available in the whites' section. Next,*

*Tricia Ann can't sit on the benches around the beautiful Peace Fountain even though her own grandfather helped build the fountain. Then Jimmy Lee talks about how his brother Jesse can cook all the food in Monroe's Restaurant, but he and Jesse can't eat there because it's for "Whites Only." When Tricia Ann is swept by the crowd into the hotel lobby, she is ordered to leave, because all of the hotel is for whites only. Outside the theater, the little boy's sister states in a mean way that "colored people" have to enter the theater by a back door and sit up in the last few rows of the upper balcony, for which the whites have the nasty nickname "Buzzard's Roost.")*

5. What unpleasant encounters does Tricia Ann have with white people on her outing? What pleasant ones?

*(When people in the hotel realize Tricia Ann is in the lobby, they react with shock and outrage. The hotel manager shoos her out, and the young girl is afraid and embarrassed. Outside the theater, the little boy's sister is hostile and doesn't even speak directly to Tricia Ann, only about her as a "colored person." Even the white people on the bus and on the street look in the pictures to be unfriendly. But supposedly "addled" Blooming Mary treats Tricia Ann with gentleness and concern.)*

6. What is going on outside the hotel? inside the lobby?

*(While Tricia Ann seems unaware, a large crowd of young women and girls have gathered on the sidewalk outside the hotel. Then a pop idol arrives in a limo and his adoring female fans sweep after him into the hotel lobby—entrance hall— carrying Tricia Ann with them. The fans compete to get the idol's autograph—a person's name written in his or her own handwriting—while Tricia Ann is awed by the hotel's grand chandelier—an impressive hanging fixture with many lights on many branches.)*

7. How is Tricia Ann encouraged to continue on her trip to the library?

*(She starts with her grandmother's reminder to stay proud and confident. Her grandmother's friend Mrs. Grannell reminds Tricia Ann to stay proud, and to accept that Jim Crow laws are "the way it is." Jimmy Lee gives Tricia Ann the same advice, that she should not let Jim Crow laws "steal" her happiness. Finally, Blooming Mary helps Tricia Ann feel her grandmother's support even though Mama Frances isn't right there with her.)*

8. How does Tricia Ann feel as she heads out from home for Someplace Special? What words and pictures express this? How does she react to what happens in the fountain park? at the hotel? at the theater? at the library?

*(Getting ready to leave home, Tricia Ann is about to "burst with excitement" and she smiles very, very happily. She runs off looking and feeling confident. She bounds onto the bus—but turns back with an uneasy look at the white section as she walks back to the "colored section." She looks hopeful and happy as she gets off the bus. She is happy at the fountain, as the picture and words show, but she stops short in unhappy surprise at the "whites only" bench. The text tells us that she walks away on steady feet, turning her back and mind against the bench's message. The doorman at the hotel sees that Tricia Ann is upset about the Jim Crow laws she has had to deal with. The picture agrees: she has a (partly) smiling mouth, but overall her face looks not happy. When the hotel manager tells her she must leave right away, she looks unhappy and unsure, and she tries to stammer out an apology/reason. She runs into the garden, then shows her unhappiness with her bowed head and teary eyes. She tells Blooming Mary about her loss of confidence about going on to Someplace Special. Tricia Ann is defiant in her words and body stance outside the theater about not sitting in the demeaning back balcony and going on to her special place where she will be accepted. The final picture shows Tricia Ann feeling happiness and gratitude looking up at the library's welcoming words.)*

9. How does Tricia Ann, in the pictures, look compared with most of the people around her? (Tricia Ann wears a very brightly colored dress of blue, with bright yellow flowers on it. Her home with Mama Frances also shows warm, bright colors. Out in town, though, Tricia Ann mostly stands out from the people she is with. The bus riders are mostly in very quiet colors, and the people on the street as she gets off the bus are almost colorless. Tricia Ann's bright dress sets her out clearly in the hotel lobby, and she even stands out from the comforting Blooming Mary. She is vibrant outside the theater and library.)



10. What feeling do the illustrations give to this story, in your opinion?  
*(Answers will vary. Most critics noted how the artist emphasizes Tricia Ann's youthful spirit by drawing her in vibrant colors against the much more quiet colors of the people and places she interacts with. The pastel watercolors also set the story in its late 1950s/early 1960s time frame. These illustrations won the 2002 Coretta Scott King Award.)*

## Across the Curriculum

Invite students to complete any of these activities that are suitable for their grade and interest level.

### Art

1. Create an illustration of one of your favorite places in the world, a place that is "Someplace Special" to you.
2. This book won the 2002 Coretta Scott King Award for illustration. Find out more about this award, and create a class display of other King Award illustration winners.
3. Create a class display of other books illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Talk with classmates about things that are similar and things that are different about the artwork in these books.

### Language Arts

1. Research Patricia McKissack or Jerry Pinkney on the Internet. Then write a paragraph about her or him.
2. Write a story like this one about a time when you went on an outing to "Someplace Special," alone or with friends or family.
3. What other stories by Patricia McKissack have you read or listened to? Describe them, and how you felt about them. Are these books alike in some way(s)?

### Science

1. Create a growing guide for the zinnia, a popular and easy-to-grow garden flower. Try growing some zinnias yourself, with help from family members.
2. Explain why you get a dizzy feeling when you spin around, as Tricia Ann does by the fountain in the city park.
3. Use a visual diagram to explain how water fountains, like the one Tricia Ann visits, work.

### Mathematics

1. Calculate the distance from your home or school to a local library. What is the best way to get there? If you took public transportation, how much would the round-trip fare(s) be?
2. Calculate the total fares you would have to pay for the outing you plan in Student Involvement Activity #4 below.
3. How many public places in her community does Tricia Ann stop at after she gets off the bus? List and then count them.

### History and Social Studies

1. Find out more about Jim Crow laws. Read about kids' experiences dealing with these laws when they were in effect. What is the origin of the term "Jim Crow"?
2. Do some research, and make a timeline of the civil rights movement in the United States. You could illustrate your timeline with pictures of actual events from those times.
3. Locate Nashville, Tennessee, on a map of the United States. Then draw a map of Nashville and the surrounding area. Show main highways into and out of the city. Also show geographic features, such as rivers, plus any historic landmarks and special places of interest.
4. List the job duties of a bus driver, hotel doorman, street vendor, stonemason, gardener, or librarian. What might interest you in any of these jobs?
5. Read a story about the real-life experiences of a young African-American girl named Ruby Bridges during the 1960s. As you read, imagine yourself in her place. How might you have felt? How might you have coped?
6. Andrew Carnegie immigrated to the United States from Scotland as a young man. He then became very wealthy. He used a lot of his money to help build libraries in many communities across the country, such as the library in Nashville. Find out more about Andrew Carnegie and his library-funding passion.

## Student Involvement Activities

1. Using resources on the Internet, plan a family trip to Nashville, Tennessee. Decide how to get there, where to stay, how long to stay, and what to see while you're there. You could also try to figure out about how much this trip would cost.
2. With classmates, act out some scenes based on incidents in this book. Add your own extra dialogue and action.
3. Have a "Fifties Day" in your class when you and your classmates dress in some ways as school kids did in the 1950s. You could act out the scenes from the novel while you're dressed for the parts.
4. Plan a trip from your home or school to a place in your community using public transportation, like a bus or subway.
5. Describe a time when you found yourself in a place where you were not welcome, when people wanted you (or told you) to leave. Why were you not welcome? How did that make you feel? What did you do?
6. Create a class display of pictures of your and classmates' individual "special places." Each picture should briefly explain what this place is and why it is special.
7. Find a neglected local public garden spot. See if you can get permission to fix it up and tend to it, along with helping adults.
8. Jimmy Lee sells big, soft pretzels on the street. With some classmates or friends, learn to make this kind of pretzel. Share results with classmates and family.
9. *[Teacher-directed activity]*: Divide students into two groups. Then conduct a few classroom activities in which Group A kids get special treatment while Group B kids get obviously second-class treatment, and then vice versa. Afterward, discuss with students how they felt—both as favored and as unfavored group members.

Depending on student ability level, have the students write their responses to one of these assessment vehicles or simply discuss their response with you, individually or in a group setting.

1. Explain what the pictures add to this story, or how the pictures fill out the story's words.
2. Describe the way the people in the book treat Tricia Ann, and explain why you think they act this way. Tell how this makes Tricia Ann feel, and explain how she reaches her goal of arriving at "Someplace Special."

### Alternate Assessment

## Vocabulary Test

Read each sentence. Below the sentence, find the answer that could be used in place of the word in boldface (dark) type. Write the letter of the answer in the blank in front of the sentence.

- \_\_\_ 1. Crossing her fingers and closing her eyes, Tricia Ann **blurted** out her question.  
a. whispered  
b. said suddenly  
c. coughed
- \_\_\_ 2. "May I go to Someplace **Special** by myself, today?"  
a. different in a good way  
b. scary  
c. common and everyday
- \_\_\_ 3. Tricia Ann spoke really **confident**-like.  
a. scared  
b. slow  
c. certain
- \_\_\_ 4. A bus came to a **jerky** stop.  
a. smooth  
b. pretend  
c. sharp and uneven
- \_\_\_ 5. Tricia Ann **bounded** up the steps of the bus.  
a. tripped  
b. leaped  
c. shuffled
- \_\_\_ 6. Tricia Ann strutted away on **sober** legs.  
a. steady  
b. wobbly  
c. racing
- \_\_\_ 7. The Rosemont Hotel was as **spectacular** as a palace.  
a. old and run-down  
b. hard to see  
c. making a special display
- \_\_\_ 8. The manager **shooed** Tricia Ann away with his arms.  
a. shoved  
b. guided gently  
c. drove off
- \_\_\_ 9. PUBLIC LIBRARY: ALL ARE **WELCOME**  
a. accepted with pleasure  
b. kept out  
c. known to many people

## Comprehension Test A

### Part 1: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

- \_\_\_ 1. The author of this book is  
a. Patricia Polacco.  
b. Patricia McKissack.  
c. Virginia Hamilton.
- \_\_\_ 2. Someplace Special is the  
a. public library.  
b. movie theater.  
c. park with fountains.
- \_\_\_ 3. Tricia Ann's dress is  
a. red.  
b. green.  
c. blue.
- \_\_\_ 4. Tricia Ann lives with her  
a. aunt.  
b. grandmother.  
c. brother.
- \_\_\_ 5. The rules that keep people apart in Tricia Ann's city are called  
a. Jim Crow.  
b. Robin Hood.  
c. Blue Laws.
- \_\_\_ 6. On the bus, Tricia Ann  
a. sits up front.  
b. meets some school friends.  
c. gives up her seat.
- \_\_\_ 7. Tricia Ann's grandfather helped to build the  
a. public library.  
b. Peace Fountain.  
c. middle school.
- \_\_\_ 8. Monroe's Restaurant has a sign that says  
a. "Whites Only."  
b. "All Are Welcome."  
c. "No Children."
- \_\_\_ 9. A white manager orders Tricia Ann to leave the  
a. hotel.  
b. theater.  
c. public garden.
- \_\_\_ 10. Tricia Ann carries what she needs with her in a  
a. backpack.  
b. plastic shopping bag.  
c. pocketbook.

## Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

### Part 2: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Find the person on the right who matches the description. Write the letter of the name in the space in front of the description. Use each name only once.

- |                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| a. Mr. John Willis | b. Blooming Mary |
| c. 'Tricia Ann     | d. Hickey        |
| e. Mama Frances    |                  |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. 'Tricia Ann's grandmother.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Travels on the bus alone for the first time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The doorman at the downtown hotel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Old woman who takes care of a downtown garden.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Six-year-old boy who is going to the music show.

### Part 3: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a T if it is true or an F if any part of it is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The author of this book also painted the book's pictures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. 'Tricia Ann is not bothered by the "Colored Section" sign on the bus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. This story is based on the author's own life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. This is the first time 'Tricia Ann has gone into town by herself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. This story takes place out in the country away from sidewalks and cities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. 'Tricia Ann is excited to get onto the bus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The downtown park has a fountain with many water spouts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. 'Tricia Ann and Jimmy Lee share a sandwich and soda at Monroe's Restaurant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The people in the hotel welcome 'Tricia Ann.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The young white boy outside the theater is friendly to 'Tricia Ann.

### Part 4: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

1. What problems does 'Tricia Ann have to deal with on her way to the library?
2. What helps 'Tricia Ann cope with the problems she encounters on her way to the library?

## Comprehension Test B

### Part 1: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

- \_\_\_ 1. The artist who created the pictures for this book is  
a. Jerry Pinkney.  
b. Eric Carle.  
c. Patricia McKissack.
- \_\_\_ 2. Someplace Special is the  
a. Mission Church garden.  
b. Southland Hotel.  
c. downtown public library.
- \_\_\_ 3. Tricia Ann gets from her home to downtown by  
a. walking.  
b. taking a bus.  
c. riding in a car.
- \_\_\_ 4. Tricia Ann makes herself dizzy by spinning at the  
a. playground.  
b. Peace Fountain.  
c. library lobby.
- \_\_\_ 5. "Whites Only" is carved into the  
a. park benches.  
b. library's front facing.  
c. downtown sidewalks.
- \_\_\_ 6. Tricia Ann admires the hotel's  
a. big-screen TV.  
b. public dining room.  
c. red-carpeted lobby.
- \_\_\_ 7. Blooming Mary takes care of  
a. a garden.  
b. day-care kids.  
c. stray dogs and cats.
- \_\_\_ 8. Black people must sit in the theater's  
a. first row.  
b. top balcony.  
c. basement.
- \_\_\_ 9. Jimmy Lee gives Tricia Ann a  
a. bagel.  
b. chili dog.  
c. pretzel.
- \_\_\_ 10. The person at the hotel who is friendly to Tricia Ann is the  
a. housekeeper.  
b. doorman.  
c. manager.

## Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

### Part 2: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Find the person on the right who matches the description. Write the letter of the name in the space in front of the description. Use each name only once.

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| a. Jimmy Lee     | d. Mrs. Grannell |
| b. Blooming Mary | e. Mama Frances  |
| c. 'Tricia Ann   |                  |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Allows 'Tricia Ann to go downtown alone for the first time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Wears a blue dress with yellow flowers on it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Sells pretzels at a sidewalk stand.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Kind, gentle woman who tells 'Tricia Ann to listen to her granny.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. 'Tricia Ann gives her seat on the bus to this person.

### Part 3: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a T if it is true or an F if any part of it is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. One person wrote the words for this book, and a different person painted its pictures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. 'Tricia Ann lives with her grandmother.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. This story takes place now, in the present time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Black people are not allowed to sit on the bus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. 'Tricia Ann's grandfather helped to build the beautiful public fountain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. No one notices 'Tricia Ann in the middle of the big crowd in the hotel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. 'Tricia Ann gives up on going to Someplace Special, for a while.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. 'Tricia Ann recalls her grandmother's words when she is in the public garden.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The front steps of the library say "Whites Only."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The young boy and his sister outside the theater are both friendly to 'Tricia Ann.

### Part 4: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

1. What public places does 'Tricia Ann visit and pass by on her way from home to the library?
2. What examples of Jim Crow laws does 'Tricia Ann have to deal with on her trip to the library?

## Answer Key

### Vocabulary Test

- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. b | 6. a |
| 2. a | 7. c |
| 3. c | 8. c |
| 4. c | 9. a |
| 5. b |      |

### Comprehension Test A

#### Part 1: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. c  |
| 2. a | 7. b  |
| 3. c | 8. a  |
| 4. b | 9. a  |
| 5. a | 10. c |

#### Part 2: Matching (10 points)

- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. e | 4. b |
| 2. c | 5. d |
| 3. a |      |

#### Part 3: True/False (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T  |
| 2. F | 7. T  |
| 3. T | 8. F  |
| 4. T | 9. F  |
| 5. F | 10. T |

#### Part 4: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.

### Comprehension Test B

#### Part 1: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. a | 6. c  |
| 2. c | 7. a  |
| 3. b | 8. b  |
| 4. b | 9. c  |
| 5. a | 10. b |

#### Part 2: Matching (10 points)

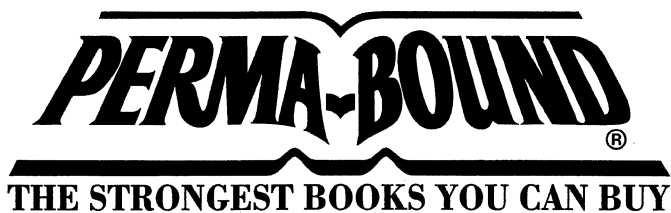
- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. e | 4. b |
| 2. c | 5. d |
| 3. a |      |

#### Part 3: True/False (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. F  |
| 2. T | 7. T  |
| 3. F | 8. T  |
| 4. F | 9. F  |
| 5. T | 10. F |

#### Part 4: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.



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