

A New Day

CCSSR1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

I visit my grandparents in Mississippi in the summers. It is hot there, but it is fun. And it was hot in Chicago, too. I liked the change. I listen to my grandfather tell stories about the way things were. He had met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He tells about the marches he joined. He tells about the changes he had seen.

My grandmother says to me, and my cousins, “Your grandfather was a hero. He stood up for civil rights. It was dangerous. But he went to the marches. He was one of the first African Americans to register to vote in this county. At first I was so worried that I would start to cry if he was not home by nighttime. But I joined him. I marched, too.”

My grandfather is humble, though. He doesn’t take credit for being brave. He says, “It was Dr. King who was the hero. We all did it together. He was the man who brought all the change. He inspired the freedom marches.”

When I went to last summer, my grandparents kept us busy. They took me, and my cousins into town every day. We would go door to door to check that people were registered to vote. If they weren’t registered, we would ask if we could get them to register. If they said yes, then my grandfather would come to drive them to the office to register. Everyone said yes. So we got a lot of people to register.

When we came back to Chicago, there were signs all over about the election. It was exciting. My teacher said that this was an unprecedented time. Never before had an African American been nominated by a major political party to be President of the United States. I felt proud that I had been part of the election.

Then it was election day. We were watching the news on the TV. One by one the states were counting the votes and reporting who won. It was getting clear that Barack Obama was going to be elected.

At 9:00 pm, my grandfather called from Mississippi. He said, “Jerome, now it is a new country. We have made the really big change.” I heard my grandmother in the background. She was crying. I asked if she was sad. “No,” he said, “those are tears of joy. We have overcome.”

These are questions you can ask and answer about any story. Write your answers on another page.

1. Sequence: Which event happened first? Which happened last?
2. Character Traits: Name one character. What is one trait you infer that character has? Explain why you think that.
3. Motive: What is something that person does? Why do you think that person does that?
4. Summarize: Summarize the story in four sentences. Tell about the characters and what they do.
5. Main Idea: What do you think is the main idea of the story?