



# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## One Million Men and Me

**Written by Kelly Starling Lyons**

**Illustrated by Peter Ambush**

Published by Just Us Books

Target Ages: 4-8

### BOOK DESCRIPTION

The Million Man March was a movement like no other. It brought Black men together for a day of inspiration and empowerment and it captured the attention of media across the U.S. and the world. Now, this heartwarming picture book shares the story of the March in a new light. In *One Million Men and Me*, experience the strength, unity, determination and legacy of that powerful day through the eyes of a little girl who was with her daddy the day Black men made history.

#### Themes:

Father-daughter relationships; empowerment; men's movement; Black history

#### Pre-Reading Questions:

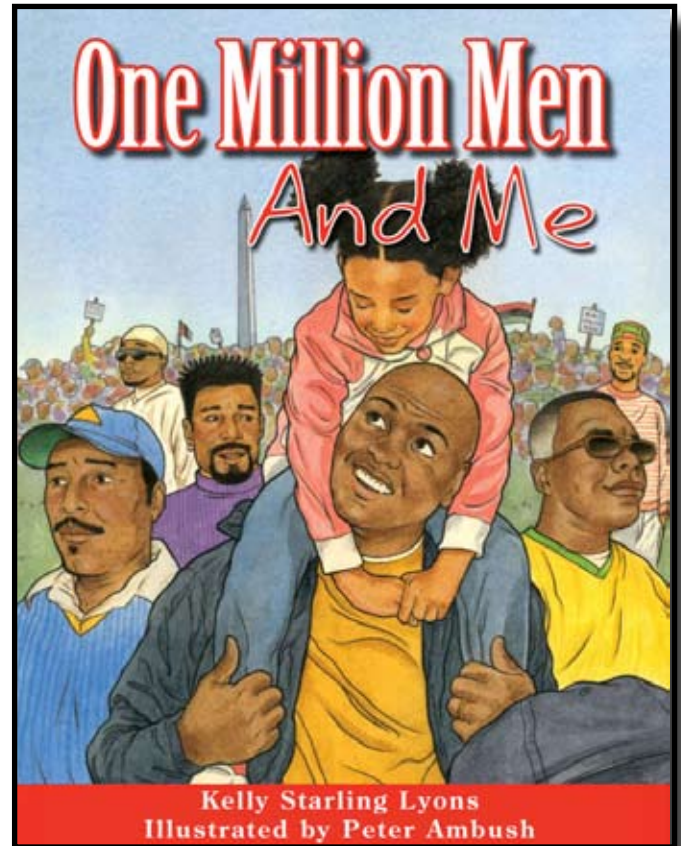
- Look at the cover. What do you think the story is about?
- Have you ever heard of the Million Man March? If not, guess what it is. If so, tell what you've heard.
- Have you ever gone someplace special with your dad or a father-figure? What was that day like? What smells, sights, tastes, do you remember?

#### Discussion Questions:

- Why did the men go to the Million Man March?
- Why was the Million Man March important?
- Why did men take their children?
- What was the day like for Nia? How do you know? How did Nia's father react to what he saw?
- Do you think this day will change him? Why?
- What do you think Nia wished for when she looked at the Reflecting Pool?
- What were the most special moments for Nia?
- Look at the expressions on Nia's face/her dad's face? Can you tell what they're feeling? How?
- Why did the illustrator portray the men in royal African clothes? Is that really how they dressed?
- How do you feel looking at that picture?
- The last photo shows a wide-eyed Nia leaning in to her dad's chest. What do you think she's thinking about on the way home?
- Read the Author's Note. What did you learn about the March that wasn't in the story? What did you learn about the author? Why was it important for her to write this book?

#### Define the following words/phrases:

**responsibility      purpose      peace      March on Washington      unity      movement**



Kelly Starling Lyons  
Illustrated by Peter Ambush

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**[www.justusbooks.com](http://www.justusbooks.com)**

*One Million Men and Me* is part of CCBC Choices 2008, Cooperative Children's Book Center's best-of-the-year list. Quizzes are also available for it on Accelerated Reader and Scholastic Reading Counts!.

### WRITING/LANGUAGE ARTS

**A.** Write about the most special day you spent with your father or a father-figure.



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### WRITING/LANGUAGE ARTS con't

- B.** Interview someone who attended the Million Man March. Write a story about that person's experience.
- C.** Look at the book and choose one of the men in the illustrations to write about. Imagine why he came to the March, what his experience was like, and write about it.
- D.** Imagine what the bus trip home was like for the men who went. What did they talk about?
- E.** Did they sing songs/play games? How did these things change them?

### ART

- A.** Have students create collages that express why men were going to the march. Ask them to incorporate their interpretation of words like freedom, justice, purpose, prayer.
- B.** Ask students to make signs like the ones some men held at the March, incorporating slogans that are important to them.
- C.** Show children photos from the Million Man March (using sites such as <http://photo2.si.edu/mmm/mmm.html> or <http://www.time.com/time/special/million/p1.html>). Ask them to write captions to go with the photos.



illustration copyright 2007 by Peter Ambush.

**HISTORY** Introduce students to the 1963 March on Washington. Have them compare that event to the Million Man March. How were the events similar? How were they different?

**MUSIC** Freedom songs were sung in the civil rights movement and some men sang them on the way to the Million Man March. Teach your students a couple of freedom songs, "This Little Light of Mine," "I Woke Up This Morning (With My Mind on Freedom)" "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "We Shall Overcome." Ask students to discuss what the songs mean.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES** Nia listened to the sounds of the men at the March and heard everything from slaps of hello to the boom of laughter. Open the window of the classroom and ask students to listen to the sounds outside. Encourage them to describe/write about what they hear.



**About the Author** For Pittsburgh native, Kelly Starling Lyons, the love of writing started as a child. Her grandparents read her stories after school and her mom made up tales with her younger brother and her as the stars. Lyons started her writing career as a journalist who specialized in feature stories about relationships, family, personal struggles and communities of color. Now a freelance writer and children's book author, she lives in Raleigh, North Carolina with her husband and children. Her mission is to transform moments, memories and history into stories of discovery.



**About the Illustrator** An accomplished fine artist and illustrator Peter Ambush was born in Frederick, MD and attended the Maryland Institute College of Art where he earned a B.A. in Fine Arts, specializing in illustration and graphic design. His professional experience includes 11 years with the Star Ledger newspaper in Newark, NJ. He has illustrated book jackets and works as a freelance artist and teacher. Ambush lives with his wife and daughter in Stroudsburg, PA.

For more discussion questions, visit the author's web site, [www.kellystarlinglyons.com](http://www.kellystarlinglyons.com). Additional classroom resources are available at the Teacher/Librarian Center of [www.justusbooks.com](http://www.justusbooks.com).

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