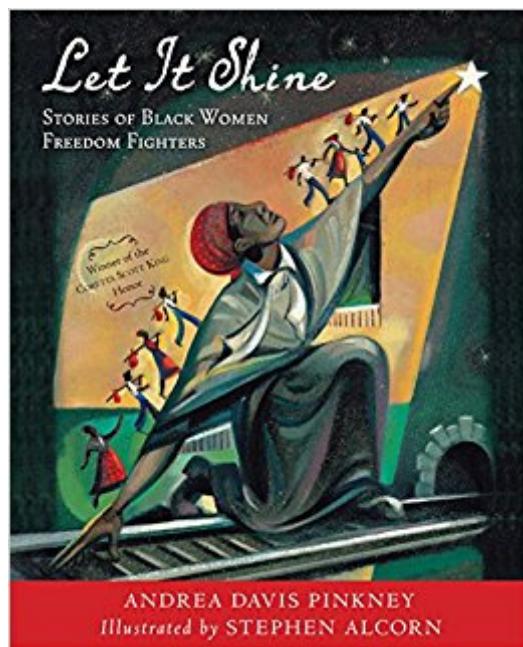


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# Let It Shine: Stories Of Black Women Freedom Fighters



## Synopsis

Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus and sparked a boycott that changed America. Harriet Tubman helped more than three hundred slaves escape the South on the Underground Railroad. Shirley Chisholm became the first black woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. The lives these women led are part of an incredible story about courage in the face of oppression; about the challenges and triumphs of the battle for civil rights; and about speaking out for what you believe in--even when it feels like no one is listening. Andrea Davis Pinkney's moving text and Stephen Alcorn's glorious portraits celebrate the lives of ten bold women who lit the path to freedom for generations. Includes biographies of Sojourner Truth, Biddy Mason, Harriet Tubman, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary McLeod Bethune, Ella Josephine Baker, Dorothy Irene Height, Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Shirley Chisholm.

## Book Information

Paperback: 120 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (January 8, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0547906048

ISBN-13: 978-0547906041

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.3 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #124,258 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #63 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Political #163 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Women #224 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

## Customer Reviews

Pinkney (Silent Thunder) presents eloquent portraits of 10 intrepid African-American activists for the causes of abolition, women's rights and civil rights. Exploring these individuals' childhoods as well as their accomplishments as adults, the author smoothly distills biographical information so as to hold the attention of young readers. Her selection of subjects includes the prominent (Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks and Shirley Chisholm) as well as such lesser-knowns as Fannie Lou Hamer, an indefatigable campaigner for African-Americans' right to vote. Pinkney's writing is

spiced with colloquialisms ("She didn't shy back for nobody," she says of Sojourner Truth) and useful imagery (describing this same crusader's delivery of her renowned "Ain't I a woman?" speech, the author notes, "She was the only black woman in the place, and when she stepped to the pulpit, some folks looked at her like she was a stain on their purest linens"). Featuring creatively skewed perspective and proportion, Alcorn's (*I, Too, Sing America*) oil paintings offer allegorical interpretations of his subjects' lives. Ages 8-up. (Sept.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 4-7-Engaging text and glorious art are combined in this collection of sketches celebrating the contributions of 10 women who moved forward the cause of civil rights in America. Following a preface that describes her own family roots in the civil rights movement and their influence on her, Pinkney presents her heroines chronologically, from Sojourner Truth to Shirley Chisholm, in verbal portraits that capture the subjects' spirit and personalities amid biographical highlights. Blending straightforward narrative with a lively storytelling style, the author balances the hardships and racial injustice that these women faced against their faith, strength of character, and determination. They include Harriet Tubman, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Rosa Parks, as well as Biddy Mason, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Ella Josephine Baker, Dorothy Irene Height, and Fannie Lou Hamer. The book includes many quotes, incidents, and details that lead readers down their personal paths to historical recognition. However, it is Alcorn's vibrant, inspired oil paintings that make this book a standout. A full-page stylized portrait appears opposite the first page of each story; it is filled with symbolic details that are elucidated in the text. A brilliant example is a larger-than-life Harriet Tubman balanced on one knee over a railroad track with arms diagonally outstretched, bridgelike, as tiny travelers make their way up the steep height toward the freedom star. Smaller paintings appear within the stories, carrying the message further. Line, color, and canvas texture give the pictures depth and dynamism, vastly enriching the reading experience. This excellent collection is a must for every library. Marie Orlando, Suffolk Cooperative Library System, Bellport, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

What a wonderful book about female heroes in African-American history! Not just dry facts, but told from an intimate perspective with the author's feelings about the characters shining through. An example: I've read many stories about Harriet Tubman and a couple biographies too, but *Let It Shine* showed her to be a real person, a person of bravery, a person with backbone, a person with a

caring heart--more so than any other reading I'd experienced. This is a children's/young adult's collection, so it does not dwell on the warts that all humans have, but it exalts in what makes the characters stand out as examples to follow.

Great book.

I woul reccomend this book to parents and Teachers an easy read and it has some very important women in the book

Cute but too small

I love the way the author gives us a vivid illustration into the history of these women. Reading about the women is like gleaning a glimpse into each of their personalities. I'm sad to not have known them, but happy to have read about their lives. I also appreciated the author's background to know what her upbringing was and the legacy given to her by her parents. I didn't particularly like the illustrations, but it's nice to have them there, to see the women from another's viewpoint.

This collection of biographies is masterfully written and illustrated for middle grade or advanced lower grade readers. Each story tells about a dynamic woman who was instrumental in gaining freedom from slavery, Jim Crow, segregation, or sexism. From the most recognizable women like Sojourner Truth to the more obscure Freedom Fighters like Biddy Mason, "Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women" presents in detail the challenges and successes of ten women. Andrea Davis Pickney again delivers a great read with clarity and a hefty dose of pride. Buy the book for your home library.

"Let It Shine: The Stories of Ten Black Women Freedom Fighters" is an amazing, entertaining, and educational journey back through time for both children and adults alike. The stories accurately depict the changing face of America for all people. The author, Andrea Davis Pinkney, uses a combination of oral stories and historical facts to re-create the lives of ten African American women "freedom fighters" (a.k.a. civil rights activists.) The descriptive language Pinkney uses keeps the style of the text upbeat and enjoyable. Among the list of women are Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks. However, there is also a presence of many unknown women, such as Shirley Chisholm, an inspirational politician, and Biddy Mason, a one-time slave with never ending generosity. The stories

are quite diverse, spanning a history of nearly the entire 20th century. Some of these historical references include the signing of the emancipation proclamation, the peaceful demonstrations of the civil rights movement, and the Democratic Convention of 1968. There is one common, underlying goal of each story- inspiration. From Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad to Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat, there is a subtle undertone that promotes and requires action. These women learned that justice comes from not only speaking, but doing. Their stories and successes encourage people of all ages to get up and fight against inequality. The combination of descriptive oral stories and historical facts, along with the colorful illustrations, keep readers of any age interested in this text.

What do Rosa Parks, Mary McLeod Bethune and Shirley Chisholm all have in common? They're three of the ten extraordinary African American freedom fighters in Andrea Davis Pinkney's marvelous collection, *Let It Shine*. These are strong women who didn't just sit back and accept the status quo, but met challenges head on and took action to change the world and make it a better place. These ten dynamic women were never silent, even when they thought no one was listening, faced discrimination, inequality and racism, triumphed in their battles against oppression and for civil rights and inspired those who followed in their footsteps. Told in easy to read, conversational style, each chapter is rich in both anecdotal and historical detail and accompanied by Stephen Alcorn's beautiful and bold oil painting illustrations. Perfect for youngsters 10 and older, *Let It Shine* also makes a wonderful read-aloud book the entire family can share and enjoy.

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