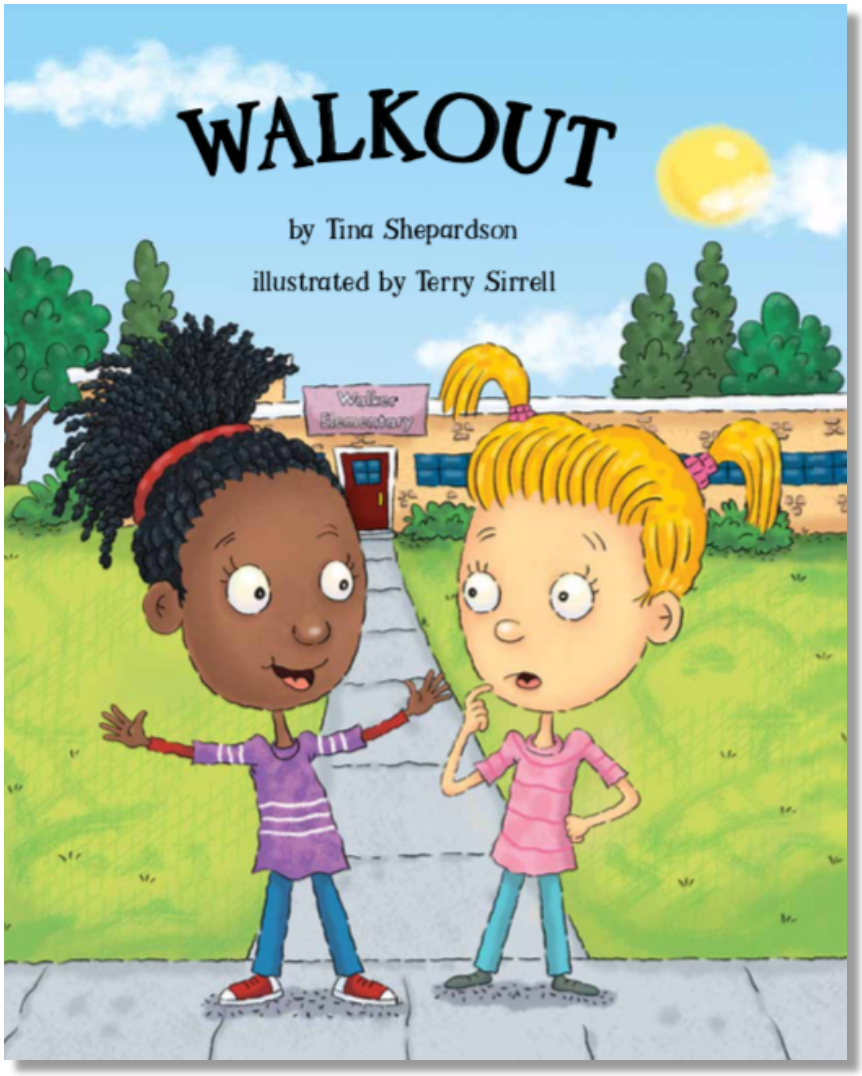
Walkout

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen
based upon the book
written by Tina Shepardson and illustrated by Terry Sirrell



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Tina Shepardson
Author, *Walkout*

As an award-winning teacher for 32 years, Tina Shepardson has shared thousands of books with children. As a passionate advocate for children and reading, she finds her best stories are inspired through her favorite roles in life: mother and teacher. Find her in Upstate New York with her family, enjoying the latest snowstorm with her Akitas. Learn more at www.tinashepardson.com.

Terry Sirrell
Illustrator, *Walkout*

Cartoonist and illustrator Terry Sirrell has been embedding his images in the American psyche for many years. You may have seen his work on the back of Cap n' Crunch and Kellogg's Corn Flakes cereal boxes. His cartoons and characters also have appeared in the advertising of numerous corporations and in dozens of publications including *Reader's Digest*, *Newsweek*, *Highlights Magazine*, *Clubhouse Magazine*, *Boys' Life*, *Girls' Life*, *Woman's Day*, *National Geographic Kids*, *Family Fun/Disney*, *The New York Daily News*, and *The Chicago Tribune.* Terry also illustrates children's books, cartoon maps, and jigsaw puzzles. You can see more of his work at www.tsirrell.com.

Marcie Colleen, Curriculum Writer

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English education from Oswego State and a MA in educational theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit her at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

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How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Walkout* is designed for students in kindergarten through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Walkout* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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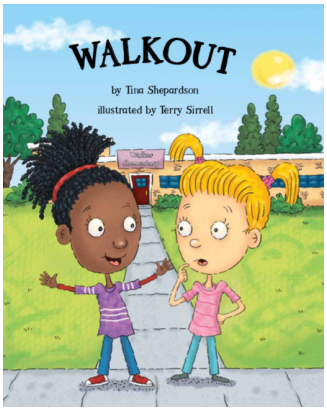

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Illustrator: Terry Sirrell
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Brief synopsis:

Inspired by a true story, *Walkout* shows democracy in action as Maddie organizes a safe school's anti-violence walkout. Other kids throughout the States are walking out. But Maddie's principal has announced that only older grades can participate. At the same time, Maddie's best friend Stella is too scared to help. Can Stella find her courage and join Maddie in walking out?

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Walkout,*

Look closely at the Front Cover ~

- Describe what you see.
- Who are the characters? What are the characters doing?
- Imagine you are the kids in the illustration. How do you think each of them feels?
- Where is the setting of the story? What clues on the cover tell you this?
- Can you guess what the story might be about? What are some clues that tell you what is inside?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- How does Maddie want to show her support for safe schools?
- How might a walkout lead to safer schools?
- How does Stella feel about participating in the walkout? What is she worried or scared about?
- Do you think it's fair that the principal said only older grades could go on the anti-violence school walkout? Why might the principal have made this decision?
- Do you agree that only older grades should walk out? Why or why not?
- Stella asks Maddie, "What if we get in trouble?" Maddie says, "We might." Why do you think Maddie is not concerned with getting in trouble?
- How do Maddie and the other kids prepare for the walkout?
- What are some of the messages the kids write on their signs? What would you write on a sign if you were participating?
- Stella's decision to not participate in the walkout causes Maddie to question whether she is doing the right thing. Do you think Maddie is doing the right thing? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Stella finally decides to join everyone outside during the walkout?
- What do you think it means to be "stronger together?"

Let's talk about who made *Walkout.*

- Who is the author of *Walkout*? What does an author do?

- Who is the illustrator of *Walkout*? What does an illustrator do?

Like the kids in *Walkout*:

- Create your own anti-violence signs.
- Use *Walkout* as a mentor text.
- Share and display the finished pieces for the class.

Who is Maddie? Who is Stella? ~ Character Study

How a character acts and what a character says can tell readers a lot about who the character is.

Read *Walkout* paying close attention to the character of Maddie and Stella. Scene by scene, record your thoughts, in a chart like the one below.

What she does	Why do you think she does what she does?	How would you describe her?	What might she say?
Example: Organizes a walkout among the younger grades.	She feels strongly about anti-violence and safe schools.		

- Can you find at least five similarities between you and Maddie? What are they?
- What about you and Stella? What are at least five similarities between you and Stella?
- What are differences between you and Maddie?
- What are some differences between you and Stella?
- Imagine you were to meet Maddie:
    - What would you ask Maddie?
    - What would you want to tell her about yourself?

    - How would you want to spend your time with Maddie? What is something you both might enjoy doing together?
- Imagine you were to meet Stella:
    - What would you ask Stella?
    - What would you want to tell her about yourself?
    - How would you want to spend your time with Stella? What is something you both might enjoy doing together?

Critical Thinking

In fiction stories, a character usually changes in some way. Do you think Stella changed in the story? How? *(analyzing, inferring, giving support to an idea)*

How would the story be different if Stella had not decided to join Maddie on the walkout? *(predicting, cause and effect)*

What do you think is the message of this story*?*

<u>Writing Activities</u>

Stella's Point of View

Walkout is written in third-person point of view, meaning that the story is told by a narrator (not named in this book), who is watching the events unfold.

But what would the book be like if it were told in first-person point of view, from the perspective of Stella?

Either as a class or individually, explore *Walkout* from the point of view of Stella.

How does Stella feel on each page? Why does she act out like she does? What does Stella really want? What is bothering her?

Advanced classes will be able to actually re-create *Walkout* from a different point of view. However, a simpler approach is to have the class create captions and thought bubbles for Stella for each illustration.

Additional Challenge: Imagine that you can interview each of the characters from *Walkout* and ask them about the events of the book. How would the following characters describe the walkout:

- Maddie
- the principal
- the other students
- the teacher.

Dear, Principal: Writing a Persuasive Essay

Stella is worried about taking part in the walkout because the principal decided to only allow older grades to do so. If Stella wants to participate without the fear of getting in trouble, she will need to *persuade* the principal to change their decision.

Ask your students if they know what "persuade" means. If not, can they make any guesses?

Discuss:

- What it means to persuade
- Times you might want to persuade someone (e.g., persuade your parents to let you stay up late, persuade your teacher to not give a test)

Writing to persuade tells the reader what you believe, gives the reader at least three reasons why you believe it, and has a good ending sentence. You want to try and convince the reader to agree with you.

Pretending to be Stella, have students write a persuasive essay to the principal stating why you think younger grades should be allowed to participate in the anti-violence walkout.

Use the following TREE structure:

T = Topic sentences	The topic sentence tells the reader what you think or believe. Example: *I am writing to you because I believe the entire student body should be allowed to participate in the walkout if they personally choose to.*
R = Reasons	The reasons why you believe what you believe. Write at least two to four sentences supporting three reasons. Use evidence directly from the text.
E = Ending	Wrap it up with a conclusive sentence.
E = Examine	Look closely. Do you have all of your parts?

Share your essays with the class. Which is the most persuasive? Why do you think so?

Who are the Heroes in Your Neighborhood?

Every day we are surrounded by people who quietly fight for the common good or stand up for what they believe is right. These outstanding individuals show what the power of one can accomplish in our neighborhoods and communities.

Who are the unsung heroes in your neighborhood?

Interview and write a report about someone in your own community who you think makes a positive impact. Topics to include:

- Why you believe this person to be a hero to the neighborhood and community.
- Describe the person activity/activities that significantly benefitted their neighborhood.
- How long has the hero contributed to the neighborhood? What was their most recent activity?
- Describe the creative and innovative methods used by the hero to benefit their neighborhood.
- Include any other interesting information relevant to the hero's activities.
- What is this hero's impact to the neighborhood and/or community at large?

Include documentation such as pamphlets, articles, presentations, photographs, news clippings, letters of support, etc. if applicable.

Present these reports to the class. Invite the hero's for a "Neighborhood Hero" celebration.

Speaking and Listening Activities

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some ways to bring *Walkout* to life in the classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills.

Choral Reading

Turn *Walkout* into a script. Read the script out loud together. Emphasize memorization of the students' parts as well as good vocal expression.

Feelings

The characters in *Walkout* experience lots of different emotions. There is power in being able to name your emotion.

Post the names of feelings in different colors for everyone to see. Use the talking stick (see below) and let children choose a feeling to make a sentence about that feeling.

"Today I feel excited because we have pizza for lunch."

"Last week I felt lonely because my brother went away."

"Yesterday I felt worried because I lost my jacket."

Talking Stick

In its simplest form, participating in democracy simply means allowing all voices to be heard. Just like the voices of the children in *Walkout*. Talking sticks are used in many indigenous cultures and are helpful communication tools in the classroom. (See First Nation Talking Stick Protocol: https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/first-nation-talking-stick-protocol)

Create a talking stick for the classroom by decorating a 12-inch length of dowel or branch.

With students sitting in a circle, explain that only the person who is holding the talking stick can talk. When the talking stick is put down again, the teacher/classmates respond to that student, then the stick moves to the next person to talk (a volunteer or the former talker can pull a name from a basket).

Use the talking stick for sharing sentences or personal stories about the events of the book.

Drama

Create a TV commercial to encourage people to help make a difference in the fight against violence in schools or to read *Walkout.*

Language Activities

Vocabulary Detectives

Walkout contains a few protest-centric words that may be new to students. Encourage the students to use context clues from both the text and illustrations to infer the meanings of any unfamiliar words.

support	walkout	march
courage	democracy-in-action	anti-violence

Additional Exploration:

- While they read, ask students to look carefully for words they do not know. As soon as they come across a new vocabulary word, they should jot it down.
- Look up the unknown word in the dictionary. (Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.) Read the definition.
- Use the new word in a sentence.
- Come up with a way to remember what the word means. Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.

New Vocabulary: Courage

Stella "marveled at her friend's courage." What is courage?

Look up 'courage' in the dictionary. (Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.)

  - Read the definition.
  - Then, define 'courage' in your own words.

After better understanding courage, discuss whether the following examples are 'courageous' or not.

- Trying a food that you've never tried before.
- Engaging in a new experience.
- Standing up for someone who is being picked on.
- Asking for help.
- Helping out a person or animal in need, even if it might put you in a little bit of danger.
- Taking a stand against an unfair social or economic practice.

Discuss:

- Can you think of a time when you were courageous?
- Something that you can do today to be courageous.
- Was Maddie courageous? How so? Explain.
- Was Stella courageous? How so? Explain.

Metaphors and Similes

Tina Shepardson used many metaphors and similes in the writing of *Walkout.* A metaphor is a literary comparison that compares two objects, but does not use like or as. A simile is a literary comparison that compares two objects, but uses like or as. Can you find the metaphors and similes in *Walkout*?

Example:

Metaphor: "She looked at the sea of orange."

Simile: "My days would be as dark as rain clouds…"

Guide students through writing metaphors or similes about themselves.

1. How do you feel?
   Example: I feel as lazy as a cat on a hot summer's day.

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. How do you look?
   Example: My hair is like porcupine quills.

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. How do you act?
   Example: I am a rabbit, hopping fast across the grass.

- _____
- _____
- _____

4. Pick one of your metaphors or similes and explain its meaning. What are you comparing yourself to? Why did you choose this particular thing to compare yourself to?

Math

Word Problems

For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems. Note to teachers: Use the word problems below as inspiration to write your own, based on *Walkout* or any other book of study.

1) Maddie and her classmates anxiously looked at the ticking clock. There were five minutes until the walkout. Then, the clock hand moved forward one more minute. How many minutes left until the walk out.

(5 – 1 = ?)

2) Maddie makes four signs to carry in the walkout. A classmate of hers makes three more signs. How many signs are there for the walkout?

(4 + 3 = ?)

3) Maddie counted six orange t-shirts in the box. She gives five students t-shirts because they don't have anything orange to wear in the walkout. How many orange t-shirts does Maddie have left in the box.

(6 – 5 = ?)

4) When the time for the walkout arrives, two students quickly make their way to the door. One more student joins them. How many students make their way to the door?

(2 + 1 = ?)

A Democracy-in-Action Pie Chart

Conduct a survey about whether or not students would participate in a walkout. The survey can be in the classroom or across a grade level or the entire school.

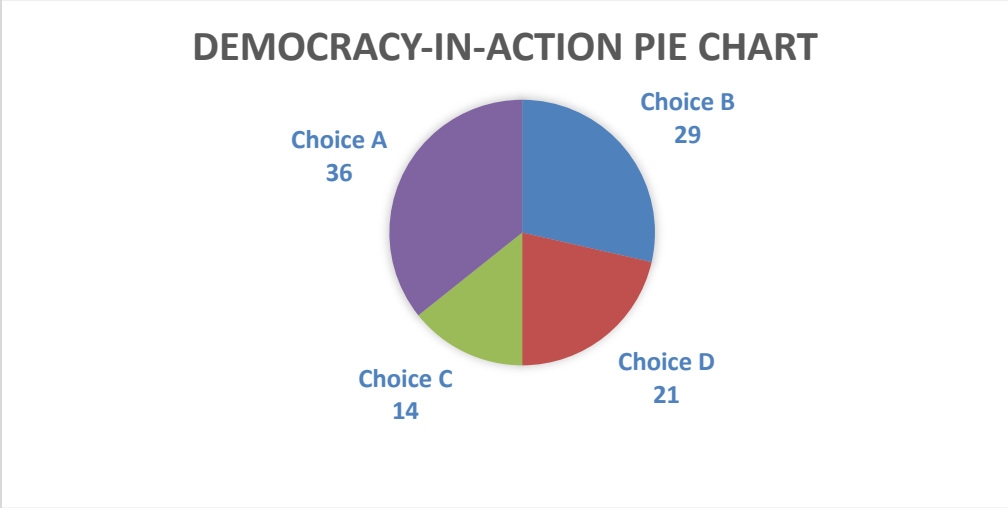
Ask students to choose the statement that best represents their opinion:

A. I would participate in a walkout if the principal said it was ok.
B. I would participate in a walkout even if I didn't have permission.
C. I would never participate in a walkout even if I believed in the cause.

D. I would never participate in a walkout.

Create a pie chart to present the results of the survey.

- Which statement was chosen most?
- Which statement was chosen least?



Display the pie chart and its gathered data in a bulletin board display. Use the results to start a conversation about students desires and hesitations about raising their voices for change.

Social Studies

Kids Can Make a Difference!

While school violence seems to be on the rise, the good news is, we have the power to stop it. We need to make sure that the our schools remain safe to attend.

Here are some ways your students can make a difference.

1. Raise Awareness – Spread the word in your communities about the issue of school violence. Create a poster or flyer campaign to educate people about the issue.
2. Create a school or community mural to motivate difference and action.
3. Support safe schools organizations – Raise funds through bake sales or car washes so that these organizations can educate people about school violence and help pass legislature to keep everyone safe. Contributions and patronage to these organizations help ensure future endeavors and possibilities for generations to come.

4. Take Action – Organize your own walkout or civil protest to raise awareness and make your voice heard.

For other ways to help, check out the following organizations dedicated to safe schools.

The Sandy Hook Promise www.sandyhookpromise.org

Wear Orange www.wearorange.org/take-action/

Moms Demand Action www.momsdemandaction.org

Your Neighborhood Watch

We can work together with our communities to make sure that where we live is safe for all people.

Brainstorm as a class how they would like to see their own neighborhood increase it's safety.

Then, generate some action steps to make these ideas come true and create flyers to hand out to members of the neighborhood to promote better habits and a better place to live.

"Stronger Together" Public Mural

Throughout history, art has been used to transform public spaces into places of beauty and reflection. Most importantly, these pieces of public art are used to bring about tighter community.

Look up examples of public art on the Internet: examples in subways, under bridges and in parks. Be sure to find examples of traditional murals painted on walls, but also sculptures and knit-bombing.

How can art be used to foster community?

- Bring people together to create it
- Reflect all people in the community in the artwork
- Create a space that people will want to visit and hang out in

Students can make their own piece of public art for the school community!

1. Choose a space within the school that could use some brightening or some inspiration.
2. Brainstorm a mural or other piece of temporary art called "Stronger Together" that can be created in this space.
3. Brainstorm how this mural can build community.

4. Involve as many people as possible in the creation.

Notable Walkouts in History

A walkout is the act of leaving a place of work, school, a meeting, a company, or an organization as an expression of protest or disapproval. Throughout time, peaceful protests have changed history.

Assign a notable protest for students to research in the library and on the Internet. A list of 10 are below, but do not feel limited to those on the list.

- The Women's March
- The March for Science
- Gandhi's Salt March
- The Boston Tea Party
- South Africa's National Day of Protest
- March on Washington
- Tiananmen Square
- Berlin Wall Protests
- Vietnam War Protests

Possible sources for information:

- Nonfiction books
- Library research
- The Internet

Take notes and gather as much information as possible on the following five topics about your inventor:

- The reason for the protests
- Where it took place
- Who organized it
- Legacy
- Other fun facts

Once the information is gathered, work to create either an illustrated poster or booklet of the findings.

Ask Your Principal

Invite your principal to your class to talk to you about school safety.

What plans does your school already have in place to make the environment safe? Is there a plan in place for if danger does occur? Write a list of questions ahead of time and provide them to your principal.

During the visit, practice taking notes and creating follow up questions.

After the visit, draft a written report and present what you learned and how you can support the safe schools measures already in place.