The Last Black King of the Kentucky Derby

A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Themes: Black History, Sports, Determination
Grade Level: 3rd to 5th grade
Book Brief: This book tells the true story of Jimmy Winkfield, the last Black jockey to win the Kentucky Derby.

Author: Crystal Hubbard
Illustrator: Robert McGuire

TIME TO READ!

Before reading, build background: Find out what your child knows about the Kentucky Derby. What does a jockey do?

While reading, pay attention to the pictures: Notice how small Jimmy looks next to his horse. An average race horse is 16 hands (64 inches) high. How tall do you think Jimmy was?

After reading, ask questions:
◆ Why did Jimmy want to be a jockey?
◆ What do you want to be?
◆ How did Jimmy’s hero inspire him? Who inspires you?
◆ How did Jimmy overcome his challenges? What would you have done?
◆ Why do you think there are so few Black jockeys?
◆ Have your child retell the story in their own words.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

KENTUCKY DERBY PIE
Ingredients: 1 pie crust, ½ c. melted butter, 2 eggs, 1 c. sugar, ½ c. flour, 1 tsp. vanilla, ¼ c. chocolate chips, ¼ c. chopped pecans or walnuts
Combine all ingredients and mix well. Pour mixture into unbaked pie crust. Bake at 350° for about 45 minutes. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream. Enjoy!

OUT AND ABOUT
Hold your own Kentucky Derby! Set up races in your neighborhood or with your family. Make the races fun—try running backwards or carrying an egg in a spoon. You could also gallop like a horse, waddle like a duck, hop like a bunny, etc. Be creative! Form teams and have relay races. Give your teams funny names like race horses have.

HANDS-ON ART
Materials: non-toxic paint, brush, paper, markers
1. Have your child paint their palm and then make a handprint (or handprints) on the paper.
2. Turn the paper in different directions. What does the handprint look like?
3. Let your child use markers to turn the handprint into a picture. How many different pictures can you make out of a single handprint?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR
Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl’s Baseball Dream (2010), Game, Set, Match, Champion Arthur Ashe (2010).
This book tells the true story of Jimmy Winkfield, the last black jockey to win the Kentucky Derby. Born into an African American sharecropping family in the 1880's, Jimmy loved horses. The power and strength of horses encouraged Jimmy to think big and go for his dreams. This book is part of the Read for Success collection. To learn more about Read for Success, click here.