Cesar Chavez Day 2023

Grades 3-5

CESAR CHAVEZ FOUNDATION
INSPIRING & TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1, RL.4.3, SL.4.1

Community Circle

What do you know about Cesar Chavez? What do you wonder?

I know Cesar Chavez was…

I am wondering…

Unity Clap

César Chávez

Let's Read!

Pages 17-22

[YouTube Read Aloud](#)
Option (5:54 to 7:51)

Yet Cesar had never forgotten his old life in Arizona and the jolt he'd felt when it was turned upside down. Farmwork did not have to be this miserable.

Reluctantly, he started paying attention to the outsiders. He began to think that maybe there was hope. And in his early twenties, he decided to dedicate the rest of his life to fighting for change.

Again he crisscrossed California, this time to talk people into joining his fight. At first, out of every hundred workers he talked to, perhaps one would agree with him. One by one—this was how he started.

At the first meeting Cesar organized, a dozen women gathered. He sat quietly in a corner. After twenty minutes, everyone started wondering when the organizer would show up. Cesar thought he might die of embarrassment.

"Well, I'm the organizer," he said—and forced himself to keep talking, hoping to inspire respect with his new suit and the mustache he was trying to grow. The women listened politely, and he was sure they did so out of pity.

But despite his shyness, Cesar showed a knack for solving problems. People trusted him. With workers he was endlessly patient and compassionate. With landowners he was stubborn, demanding, and single-minded. He was learning to be a fighter.

In a fight for justice, he told everyone, truth was a better weapon than violence. "Nonviolence," he said, "takes more guts." It meant using imagination to find ways to overcome powerlessness.

More and more people listened.

One night, 150 people poured into an old abandoned theater in Fresno. At this first meeting of the National Farm Workers Association, Cesar unveiled its flag—a bold black eagle, the sacred bird of the Aztec Indians.

La Causa—The Cause—was born.

Turn and Talk (pg.21-22)

In a fight for justice, he told everyone, truth was a better weapon than violence.
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What does this mean? Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

Justice

The quality of being just; fairness.

National Farm Workers Association

A group of farmworkers who come together to fight for change and justice.

Map of California

Fresno

Los Angeles

Let's Read!

Pages 23-26

[YouTube Read Aloud](#)
Option (7:51 to 8:51)

It was time to rebel, and the place was Delano. Here, in the heart of the lush San Joaquin Valley, brilliant green vineyards reached toward every horizon. Poorly paid workers hunched over grapevines for most of each year. Then, in 1965, the vineyard owners cut their pay even further.

Cesar chose to fight just one of the forty landowners, hopeful that others would get the message. As plump grapes drooped, thousands of workers walked off that company's fields in a strike, or *huelga*.

Grapes, when ripe, do not last long.

The company fought back with everything from punches to bullets. Cesar refused to respond with violence. Violence would only hurt *La Causa*.

Instead, he organized a march—a march of more than three hundred miles. He and his supporters would walk from Delano to the state capitol in Sacramento to ask for the government's help.

Strike or *Huelga*

to stop work in order to force an employer to comply with demands

Strike or *Huelga*

Turn and Talk

How does a strike help fight for change?

How would this impact the landowners?

What risk are the farmers taking by doing this?

Map of California

Sacramento

Delano

Stop and Jot

"The company fought back with everything from punches to bullets."

pages 25-26

Explain this quote. What does it mean?

What was Cesar's response? What did he plan to do, and how do you think this helps fight for change?

Imagine you are joining a strike or protest.

Create your own sign to carry. What would it say?

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