

PS 39 Diversity and Inclusion Book of the Month: February
Theme: Black History

Book Title: *Hidden Figures (Young Readers' Edition)* by Margot Lee Shetterly

Grade Level: 4th / 5th

Discuss:

1. What parts of the book do you remember most, and why?
2. This story took place during a time in the United States when black and white people were segregated, and black people were treated unfairly.
 - A. How were Katherine, Mary, Dorothy, and their co-workers challenged by discrimination? How did they succeed anyway?
 - B. How did the white people in the book react to segregation?
 - C. What practices in our current day remind you of the segregation in the book? Have you been treated unfairly because of your race and/or gender? Have you seen someone else treated unfairly because of their race and/or gender? What did you do or say? Would you act differently in the future?
3. How does the math you are studying now connect to this work? What is a "computer"? How has our use of that word changed?
4. How has the experience of women and people of color working in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) changed since the 1960s? What kinds of jobs do you think were usually available to women then? Was it the same for white women and women of color?
5. Mary Jackson showed great perseverance as she tried to get the opportunity to earn her engineering degree. In court, she argued "someone has to be the first." Have you ever felt you were first to do something? Why is being first at something both exciting and scary? Why do you think Mary fought so hard to get her engineering degree?
6. Dorothy Vaughan stood up for herself and for other women several times in the book. When did you notice Dorothy being an example of what it means to be part of a sisterhood of women?
7. When did you notice other people standing up for Dorothy, Katherine, and Mary? Why was it important for them to have male allies (supporters) and white allies?
8. What was the role of friends and family members in supporting Katherine, Dorothy, and Mary? How did they support each other? Why is having a support system important?
9. What would you do if you were told you could not pursue a career or job because of how you look or who you are?
10. What can you, as a student, parent, or ally, do to help others, especially young people, break barriers as Katherine, Mary, and Dorothy did?