

Little People, BIG DREAMS™

TEACHERS' GUIDE



Kamala Harris

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Kamala Harris was born in California to a mother from India and a Jamaican father. Her whole family fought together for equal rights and justice. As an adult, Kamala continued this fight as a prosecutor, a district attorney, and finally, the attorney general of California. When she was elected to the U.S. Senate, she continued working for civil rights and against climate change. Now, Kamala is the first female, first African-American, and first Asian-American Vice President of the United States. While she is the first, Kamala is always working to ensure she is not the last and that others can dream big and realize their dreams, just like she does.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. How did Kamala's two cultural identities influence her life?
2. Who are some important members of Kamala's family?
3. What are some of the important jobs that Kamala has had?
4. What were the historic firsts that Kamala achieved when she was elected Vice President of the United States?
5. Why is Kamala Harris a dreamer whom we should all know and admire?

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. When they were kids, Kamala and her sister had to ride a school bus across town, and it gave them a chance to make new friends (p. 4). Pair students up and have them practice introducing themselves. They can even sit side-by-side and pretend they're on a school bus just like Kamala! Depending on the level of your students, practice asking a variety of "Getting to Know You" questions and other conversational moves.
2. Kamala knew she wanted to be a lawyer from the first moment she really helped a friend in need (p. 6). Ask the students what they want to be when they grow up and why. If they aren't sure yet, guide the conversation to be about things that matter to them and tie them to possible careers.

Refer back to the text and discuss how it was an event in Kamala's life that helped her decide, so the same might happen for them.

3. On p. 11, we see that Kamala's slogan on her posters was "Kamala Harris: For the People." Ask the students what they have learned about Kamala to support that she is "for the people." If necessary, refer back to parts of the book that show instances when she was supportive or helpful to others.

4. Kamala went from running against Joe Biden for the presidential nomination to running with him as the vice presidential candidate (p. 12). Ask the students who they would choose to be their partner for such a big job. The person can be someone they know in real life or someone they do not know personally, like a famous person. What qualities does the person have? Why do they think the person would be a good teammate?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Some of Kamala's favorite memories were conversations on the beach in India with her grandfather. Have a Beach Day in the classroom. Invite the children to dress up like they're going to the beach and decorate the classroom to look like the beach in the story. Invite the students to have conversations with each other about things that matter to them, just like Kamala did with her grandfather.

2. As a prosecutor, Kamala was trained to get the truth out of witnesses and defendants (p. 8). Have a discussion with the students about truths and lies before leading them in a game of "Two Truths and a Lie." Generate a list of possibilities for students to use if needed. Model your own example first and then play the game as a whole class or in pairs or small groups.

3. Kamala's aunt in India lined up 108 coconuts to send her good luck on her run for attorney general because that number is important in Hinduism. Have the students create a project representing their favorite number. For example, if their favorite number is 12, they could draw 12 of their favorite animals. Another option would be that they could decorate a large bubble number of their favorite number. Allow them to be creative and represent their favorite/good luck number however they would like.

4. Firework Art: On p. 13, readers see Kamala's name lit up with fireworks in the shape of the letters in her name. Provide a variety of art supplies for students to create their own name fireworks. What occasion would they choose to celebrate with their name in fireworks?

5. Kamala always dreamed of being the first to do things, but she wanted to lead the way for others to do them as well. Have the students dream big about something they want to be the first one to do. Take a photograph of each child and have them create a portrait using their head from the photograph but drawing the rest of themselves to match their dream.

