

# JOLLE@UGA®

JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

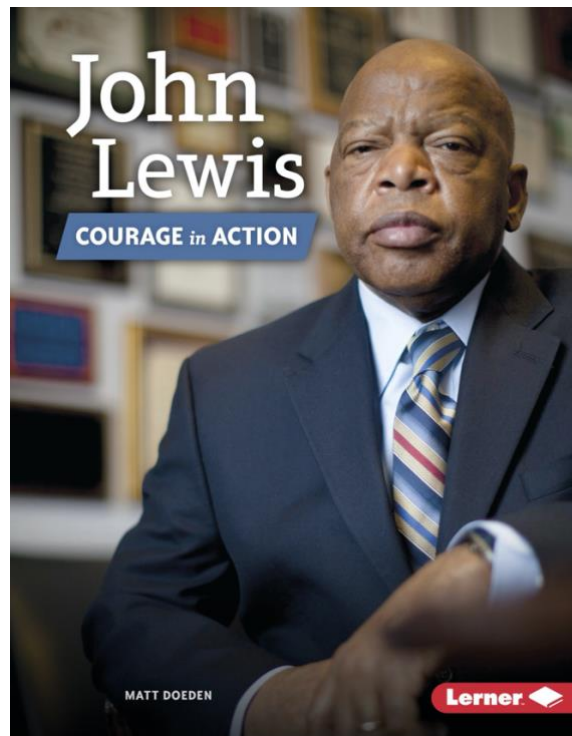
## **Review of *John Lewis: Courage in Action***

Written by Matt Doeden

**Adult/Educator Reviewer:** Brian Todd Davis

The University of Georgia, Athens, GA

**Student Reviewer:** Hannah Cate, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade



Doeden, M. (2018). *John Lewis: Courage in action*. Lerner Publications.

ISBN: 9781541512382

**Adult Review: Brian Todd Davis**

*John Lewis: Courage in Action* is a book about the civil rights leader and longtime politician John Robert Lewis. Born in 1940 and growing up under the racist Jim Crow laws of the Deep South, Lewis came to realize that Black Americans were viewed as second-class citizens by many White Americans. The book explores how Lewis came to be involved in the civil rights movement, how he met his wife and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., his tremendous courage to stand up for his community's rights in an era when many Black Americans were afraid to do so, and the methods civil rights icons used to generate positive change. The book emphasized Lewis' resilience and steadfast commitment to nonviolent protest in the face of angry-and even violent- pushback by White supremacists.

I chose to review this book because I always admired Lewis' role in the civil rights movement but wanted to learn more about him. It has always been my opinion that nonviolent protests are more effective than violent protests, and the great gains in civil rights in many countries in the twentieth century seem to lend evidence to that belief. Doeden's book will appeal to people who admire brave individuals who fight for equal rights for their community in a nonviolent fashion. Such a book seems like an important read in an era of increased polarization in the United States, when people might feel fighting against prejudice is useless or that it cannot be achieved through peaceful means.

Educators could have a couple of concerns about Doeden's book. One concern is that there are some challenging words in this book and ideas that might be somewhat hard to grasp for children of a certain age. I would recommend that teachers provide some supplementary material to help them better understand what is happening in the book, such as a movie. Additionally, learning about this subject could be a challenge for ESOL students because they are learning history, culture, and language at the same time. This would be especially challenging for newcomers.

**Student Review: Hannah Cate**

John Lewis grew up during a time when racism kept people separated. Black people and White people could not be friends or sit together in restaurants. He was not allowed to go to the library even though he was very smart and loved books. John Lewis saw how wrong racism was and joined the Civil Rights Movement to fight for justice. He joined the Freedom Riders and other peaceful groups who worked to fight injustice. Some people got angry with these groups and would hurt them or put them in jail. John Lewis did not give up even when these things happened to him. After a hard fight, many laws were changed to give everyone the same rights. John Lewis knew we are all equal and we should love each other. This book shows that no matter what, Love will win.