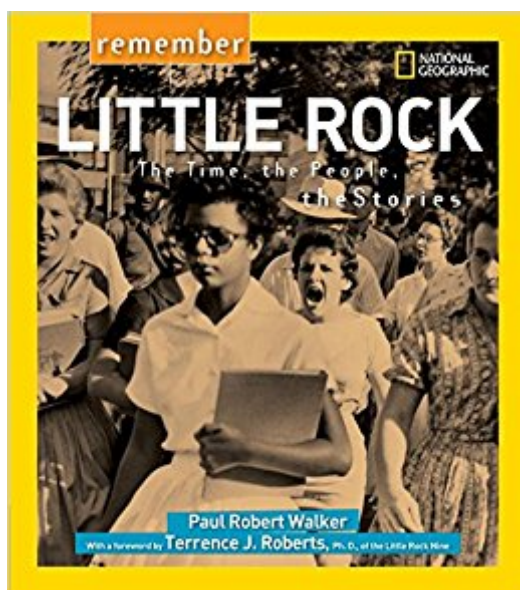


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# Remember Little Rock: The Time, The People, The Stories



## Synopsis

Just over 50 years ago, in Little Rock, Arkansas, nine brave black students stood up for their rights and made history. The integration of Central High School in Little Rock changed the course of education in America forever, and became one of the pivotal points in the Civil Rights Movement. In Remember Little Rock award-winning author Paul Robert Walker uses eyewitness accounts and on-the-scene news photography to take a fresh look at a time of momentous consequence in U.S. history. Here, we get the story from all sides: the students directly involved; their fellow students, black and white; parents on both sides; military, police, and government officials. The author uses personal interviews with many of those who attended the 50th anniversary celebration in 2007, and explores what happened, what's changed, what hasn't, and why. This latest addition to National Geographic's popular Remember series also includes a timeline of the Civil Rights Movement, selected postscripts, a guide to resources, and an extensive index. The foreword to this inspiring book is written by Terrence J. Roberts, Ph.D., one of the Little Rock Nine. National Geographic supports K-12 educators with ELA Common Core Resources. Visit [www.natgeoed.org/commoncore](http://www.natgeoed.org/commoncore) for more information.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1150 (What's this?)

Series: Remember

Paperback: 64 pages

Publisher: National Geographic Children's Books; Reprint edition (July 14, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 142632247X

ISBN-13: 978-1426322471

Product Dimensions: 9.1 x 0.1 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #738,057 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #239 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Government](#) #523 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > 1900s](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 5 "This thoroughly researched and carefully documented look at a pivotal civil rights battle offers fresh insights into the people and events that played out over the course of one school year. What motivated nine black teenagers, commonly referred to as "the Little Rock Nine," to integrate an all-white school in Little Rock, AR, in September 1957 is presented along with the politics of the community, the state, and the nation. The book begins as Elizabeth Eckford prepares for what she believes will be the first day at her new high school and ends nine grueling months later when Ernest Green, the only senior in the group, graduates. Specific students, teachers, members of the military, and other adults are identified and where possible quoted either from primary sources or from background interviews by the author. An introduction by Terrence J. Roberts, PhD, one of the nine students, adds further credence to the material. Carefully selected archival photographs support and clarify the text. An epilogue describes Little Rock's ongoing school integration efforts. An annotated time line of the Civil Rights Movement, selected postscripts on key participants, and quote sources complete this thought-provoking and handsome book." Carol S. Surges, McKinley Elementary School, Wauwatosa, WI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Based on interviews with many participants as well as a wide array of published sources, Walker's day-by-day account of the struggle to integrate Little Rock's Central High School in 1957 offers readers an authoritative review of events as well as an engrossing narrative that highlights the episode's high emotions, its historical significance, and the courage of those nine intrepid students and their supporters. The author includes a harrowing look at the continuing harassment that the Little Rock Nine and their families suffered well beyond the next year, then closes with an overview epilogue, a civil rights time line, and a set of postscripts for major figures. Illustrated with an array of news photos and yearbook portraits, and distinguished from most other versions documenting these events by its tempered treatment of the usually villainized Arkansas governor, Orvel Faubus, this thought-provoking study makes an excellent alternative for younger or less-able readers to Judith Bloom Fradin's more detailed *The Power of One: Daisy Bates and the Little Rock Nine* (2004). Grades 4-7. --John Peters --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This photo is seared in my brain for all time. The hate jumps out from the paper its on, looking at the faces of the white folks. I bought this book not only for the story but for this one photo alone. I know there's a God above because He protected 15-year old Elizabeth Eckford from this evil, vicious

crowd. And He led a kind-hearted white woman to help this girl to safety.

I use this book in my classroom, and my students find it very informative. The photography hooks them and the story keeps their attention, as my school is only about 50% white. They can't imagine not being able to go to the same school as their friends, or having to fight for an equal educational opportunity.

The book was written like a documentary and captured this period in our nations history very well.

"When asked what the white students thought of her, [Minnijean] gave an interesting and thoughtful reply: 'They are anxious to find out what we are like. They are torn between their parents and their own minds. They just don't know what to do.'"

"On Thursday, October 3, a group of white students -- organized by the Mothers League -- staged a walkout to protest the presence of the black students in their school. Although approximately 150 left, about half circled back and reentered the school when they realized that fewer students walked out than expected. The rest crossed Park Street to a vacant lot at the corner of 16th Street. There they hung a straw-filled dummy of a black student from a big oak tree... They danced around it, kicking it, punching it, stabbing it, and setting it on fire. As one boy stabbed the effigy with a penknife, a photographer at the scene asked another boy standing nearby what he was thinking. 'Oh, if that were only a real one!' he said. The boy who said it, Jim Eison, grew up to be a historian for two Little Rock museums. Forty years later, at a time when there were many public apologies for the events at Central, he offered an unusual but honest perspective: 'I was a product of my day and time, and I was acting from my early upbringing... The sentiment was true.'"

REMEMBER LITTLE ROCK is a powerful story largely told through the voices of the black and white students who were at the center of the integration of Little Rock's Central High School in 1957. It is filled with photos of the characters and incidents that were, for several months, the epicenter of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. Some photos are iconic images while many others I had never before seen. As evidenced by the testimony of these students, there is much to be learned here about thinking for oneself and coming to understand the need to develop one's own moral compass. In researching for the book, Paul Robert Walker learned that, "Day after day, the Nine faced insults, threats, and physical violence. They endured punching, shoving, and kicking. They had spitballs, rubber bands, and paper clips shot at them, their heels stepped on by white students walking behind them, ink sprayed on their clothes, knives flashed in their faces, and their heads and clothing shoved into toilets. Glue and tacks and glass were placed on their seats, and their gym

showers were turned to scalding hot. Their lockers were broken into and their books were stolen or destroyed so often that many of them stopped carrying books to school. These were everyday events. Some days were worse than others. "And yet, the classroom could become a sanctuary from the ignorance and violence. Ernest Green, the one high school senior in the group of nine recalled, '...Of all the things that have happened at Central, the most significant was the friendly attitude that students showed toward me the day of the rioting.'" The type of thing that was going on outside, people beaten, cursed, the mob hysteric and all of this going on outside...we inside the school didn't realize the problems that were occurring and continually students were befriending us. I remember one case in particular in my physics class. I was three weeks behind in my assignments [by time the legal wrangling finally permitted me and the other eight to attend Central High], and a couple of fellows offered to give me notes and to help me catch up the work that I had missed. I was amazed at this kind of attitude being shown toward the Negroes." Reading the recollections of the participants, it is clear that lives are forever changed through one's being a witness to or participant in social change. REMEMBER LITTLE ROCK illustrates how it was that teenagers in the midst of creating and recreating their own personal identities stood at the epicenter of this pivotal event in 20th century American history. It is a book that makes it so easy for today's readers to imagine being there, and to take what they learn from those who were involved in the drama of Little Rock and transfer that knowledge to the 21st century social issues that their own generation faces. "I felt very special at that moment," remembered Terrence Roberts. "I was aware that something momentous was taking place that morning although years would pass before I would truly grasp the overall significance of what had happened. This was the first time since Reconstruction that federal troops had been ordered into the South to protect the rights of African Americans. On that morning, however, my primary thought was that maybe now I would not be killed for simply trying to go to school." "I love this sort of informational book! Sixty-four compelling pages -- half of them photographs -- and readers can so easily cruise right through it and get so much out of it. Some readers will undoubtedly be interested in going on to read Melba Pattillo Beals' WARRIORS DON'T CRY. Here in California, where American history is studied in the fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades, students of all three ages will be engaged and enlightened by this outstanding, well-researched book about a group of nine teens who, in their day, changed the world.

Nine young people prepared to go to school on September 4, 1957. Never in a million years would they have guessed what horror awaited them that day. Seven of the young people had received a call telling them where to meet. They would travel to Central High School together, but two,

Elizabeth Eckford and Terrence Roberts, were somehow left out of the mix and were not informed of the plan. The mob had begun to gather and churn, but the National Guard was there. Terrence said later that "he believed the National Guardsman were there to protect him." He couldn't have been more wrong. They were there to keep them from integrating the school. It was a horrifying, pivotal moment in the lives of nine talented young men and women, one in which they would never forget. In 1957 it was still the "Jim Crow South." Much as some people would like it, "separate and equal" didn't apply to schools. There was an uproar in the South and Little Rock, Arkansas was no different. Nobody messed with their way of life and things like "The Southern Manifesto," which claimed the Supreme Court had no right to interfere with education in the states," could have been their mantra. An application process selected the best and the brightest. Seventeen were chosen to attend Central High, but only nine would actually attempt to integrate. Mary Thomason filed suit to postpone segregation. It wasn't her cup of tea. The suit was denied. The nine young people started off to school. The mob began to churn . . . Elizabeth and Terrence soon realized they were in trouble. The description of the plight of these young people struggling to get an education, especially that of Elizabeth Eckford, was so incredibly poignant that tears began to roll down my cheeks when I read about them. This book is seamlessly written and brings the reader back to a point in history that many in this nation would sooner forget than pore over in detail once again. When I read it, I felt as if it was a current event rather than a historical look back. The thoughts of several of the Little Rock Nine were very interesting. There were numerous sepia-toned photographs that fully illustrated the seriousness of the conflict. In the back of the book, some very interesting postscripts, and a civil rights timeline.

Thanks!

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