

TITLE: A Mason-Dixon Memory

BOOK: Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul

PAGE: 127

TIME TO READ: 10-12 minutes

TOPICS: **Making a Difference,**
Living and learning
Friendship and community
Bias issues—racial

AGE LEVEL: Grades 5 and up

SYNOPSIS: This consists of two interwoven stories of racial prejudice in the South. In 1959, classmates turned down a trip to an amusement park to support their black friend. In 1991, teammates forfeited a golf tournament in support of their African-American friend.

NOTES TO TEACHER:

While this is one of the longer *Chicken Soup for the Soul* stories, it is one of the most powerful in showing friendship overcoming discrimination.

With all age levels, it is important to go over some of the vocabulary prior to reading this story aloud, including the use of the word “nigger.”

For a related story on discrimination from someone who is Jewish, read “The Eyes Have It,” page 258 in *Chicken Soup for the Volunteer’s Soul*

Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul
A Mason-Dixon Memory

HIGH SCHOOL:

PRE-QUESTIONS:

If you could totally end discrimination or prejudice in the world, where would you start?

- What would you do?

Read Story

POST-QUESTIONS:

Can you name any more recent examples than 1991, of racial discrimination?

- Do you have any personal examples that you are willing to share?

Why do you think this continues after all these years?

What can *you* do to change this?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Examine the part that teenagers and children played in the Civil Rights Movement. (Read or listen to audio book entitled, ***The Children***, by David Halberstam, a reporter assigned to cover one of the early sit-ins. NY, NY: Random House, 1998.)

Set up a classroom scenario where brown eyes are superior, and blue eyes are the bottom of the social system for one day. Switch roles the next day. Discuss what happened. (There was some social research done that deliberately established discrimination by eye color in small groups. Look up the results of this profound study.*)

How does this study compare to the activity done in class?

What are the implications of this for societal life today?

*Watch "A Class Divided" to see the details of this extensive experiment (for purchase at PBS.org.)