

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

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

PRE-QUESTIONS:

Select one of your favorite things to do (skiing, golf, movies, roller coasters, basketball, reading, etc.)

- Now, imagine having this joyful experience taken away from you simply because of *the color of your hair*.
- Write about what you would think and how you would feel.

Define “discrimination.” (*prejudiced or prejudicial outlook, action, or treatment*)

Define “prejudice.” (*Preconceived judgment, opinion, or action, formed without just grounds, or without sufficient knowledge*)

Define “stereotype.” (*a standard mental picture assigned to members of a group, that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment*).

- Do any of these still exist in today’s world?
- What?
- Where?
- How?
- Explain.

Describe anything you’ve seen or heard that you find discriminating.

- Thinking back, what *did* you do, or *could* you have done, to stop it?

Is there something that *can* be done to stop discrimination and prejudice?

- If so, what?

**Read Story**

POST- QUESTIONS:

What did Clifton in 1959 have in common with Dondre in 1991?

What does Abraham Lincoln have to do with either of them?

“. . . *freedom is not free.*” What is meant by this quote?

Discuss effective and ineffective ways to fight the battle for freedom.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Research the Civil Rights Movement, choose a famous hero of this time, and write a one-page report telling what make him/her a “hero” (Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., etc).