

PLANTING SEEDS

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF FANNIE LOU HAMER



Written by Maegan Parker Brooks

Illustrated by Shelby McConville



Fannie Lou was once a child like you.

She loved to play, to read, count and spell.
Poems, songs, and stories, she'd learn and retell.



But her family was hungry and treated unjust,
so leave school and work the fields she must.

Alongside her mother, father, and nineteen sibling crew,
Fannie Lou became a farmer too.

She watched as they planted seeds, row by row.
She marveled at how the cotton did grow.

The stubborn white fiber surrounded by thorny stalk,
her small brown fingers would diligently pluck.



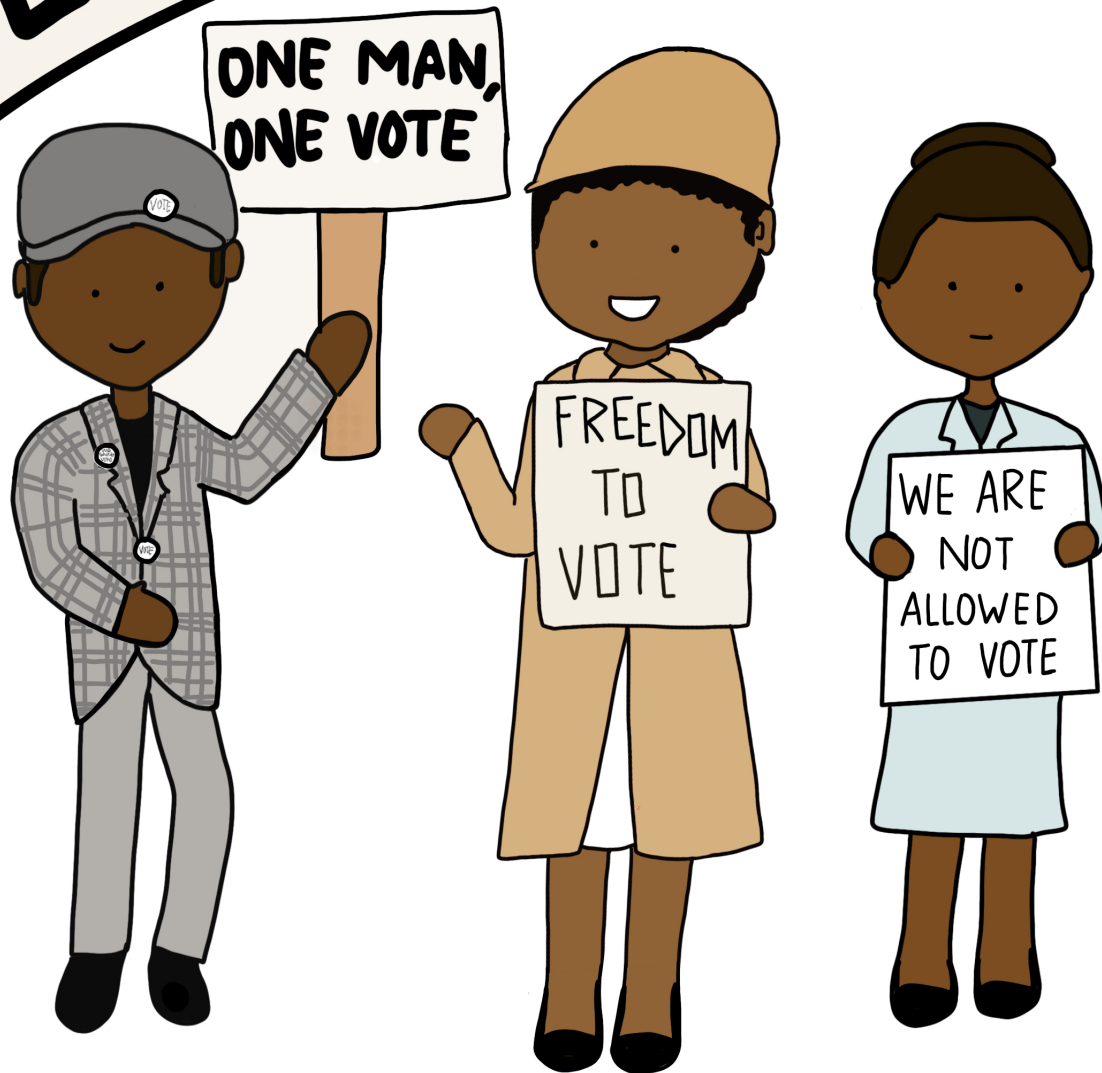
Each day her family worked in Mississippi's blazing sun, little food to eat, tattered clothes to put on.

From her family's labor, the landowner grew rich. Young Fannie Lou dreamed their lives could switch.

But her mother told her the white landowners were wrong, "Respect your Black self, grow up to be strong."

Fannie Lou listened and learned throughout her life: the solution was equality, not a reversal of strife.

EQUALITY NOW



As an adult, Fannie Lou learned she could vote.
That forbidden knowledge filled her with hope.

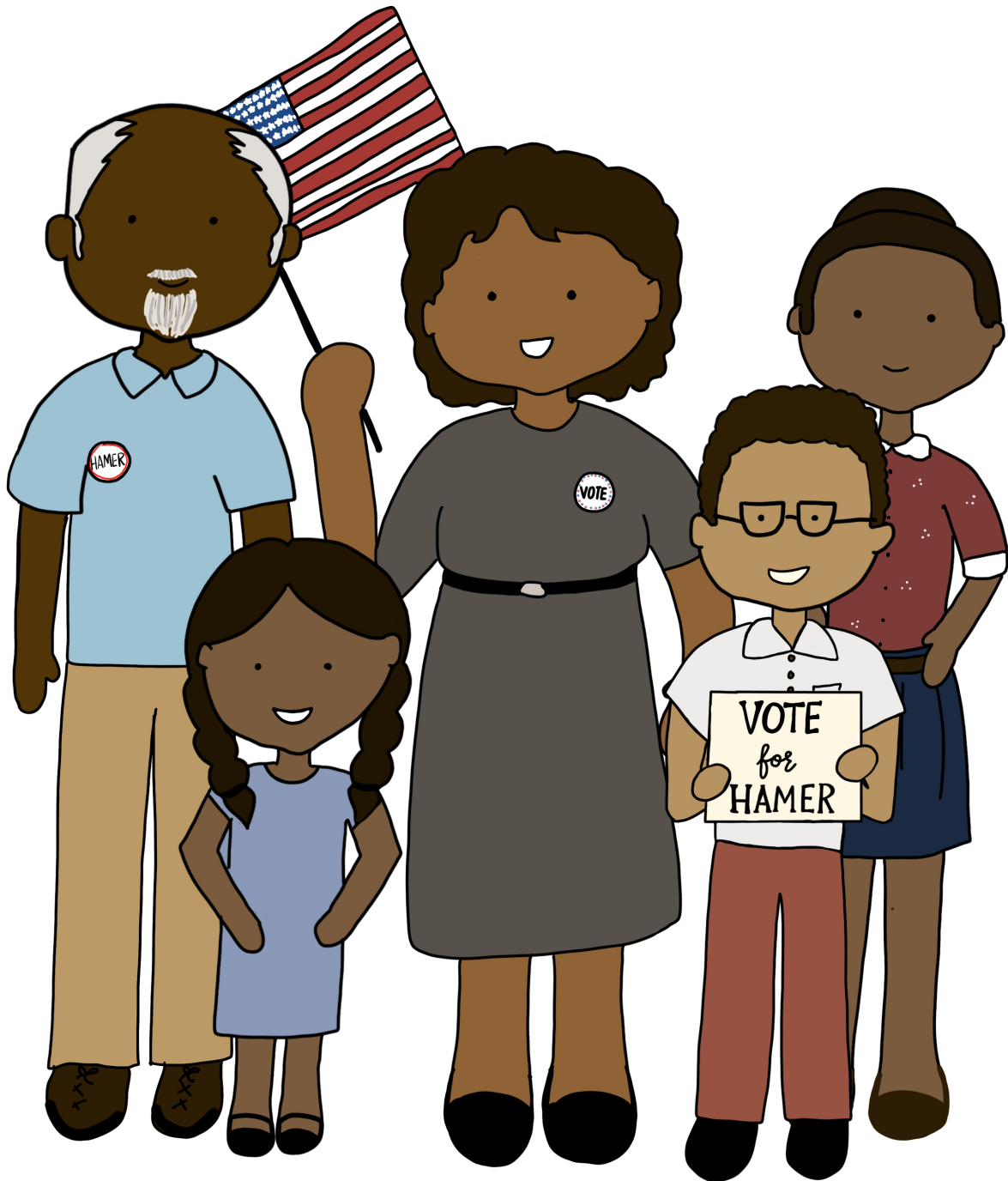
Reflecting courage and dignity,
Fannie Lou fought for equality.



She was violently punished for demanding her rights.
Injustice weakened her body, but strengthened her might.

The stands Fannie Lou took were bold.
“Slow down, be patient, compromise,” she was told.

But Fannie Lou respected herself and valued others too.
She believed including all voices helps democracy ring true.



Her strong example planted seeds of resistance.
Fannie Lou fought for our country's existence.

Fannie Lou stood up for children, women, and men.
Three times she campaigned to represent them.

Fannie Lou's campaigns inspired thousands to register.
People traveled across the country to support her.



She never forgot her neighbors, family and friends.
Fannie Lou worked her whole life to help them meet ends.

She planted seeds and started Freedom Farm,
providing food, clothes and houses so warm.



Out of the seeds Fannie Lou planted did grow...

senators and teachers,
doctors, lawyers, and preachers

integrated schools and protection from the law,
creative solutions to the problems she saw.

Now that you've learned what Fannie Lou grew,
what seeds will you plant and tend to?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR 🌿

MAEGAN PARKER BROOKS, PHD



Brooks is a professor at Willamette University. She earned her PhD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she wrote a dissertation about Fannie Lou Hamer. Her dissertation became a rhetorical biography of Hamer, *A Voice that Could Stir an Army: Fannie Lou Hamer and the Rhetoric of the Black Freedom Movement*. Brooks also co-edited the first collection of Hamer's speeches, *The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer: To Tell it Like It Is* (with Davis W. Houck). Her third book, *Fannie Lou Hamer: America's Freedom Fighting Woman*, will join Rowman & Littlefield's *Library of African American Biography* in February 2020. Brooks is a board member of the Fannie Lou Hamer Statue and Education Fund Committee, a lead researcher for the film *Fannie Lou Hamer's America*, editor of the *Find Your Voice* K-12 curriculum, and the director of the Find Your Voice: Online Resource for Fannie Lou Hamer Studies website. Brooks has two elementary-aged children and loves volunteering in their classrooms.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR 🌿

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McConville is a freelance illustrator with an occupational background in primary education and early childhood studies. Since obtaining her M. Ed. in elementary education, she has maintained an integral role as an educator within the West Linn-Wilsonville School District in Oregon. Inside her classroom, McConville utilizes various written, illustrated, and melodic art forms to optimize educational time. These novel methods of instruction give students the opportunity to explore deeper into modern-day learning objectives, as well as our society's complex and conflicted history.