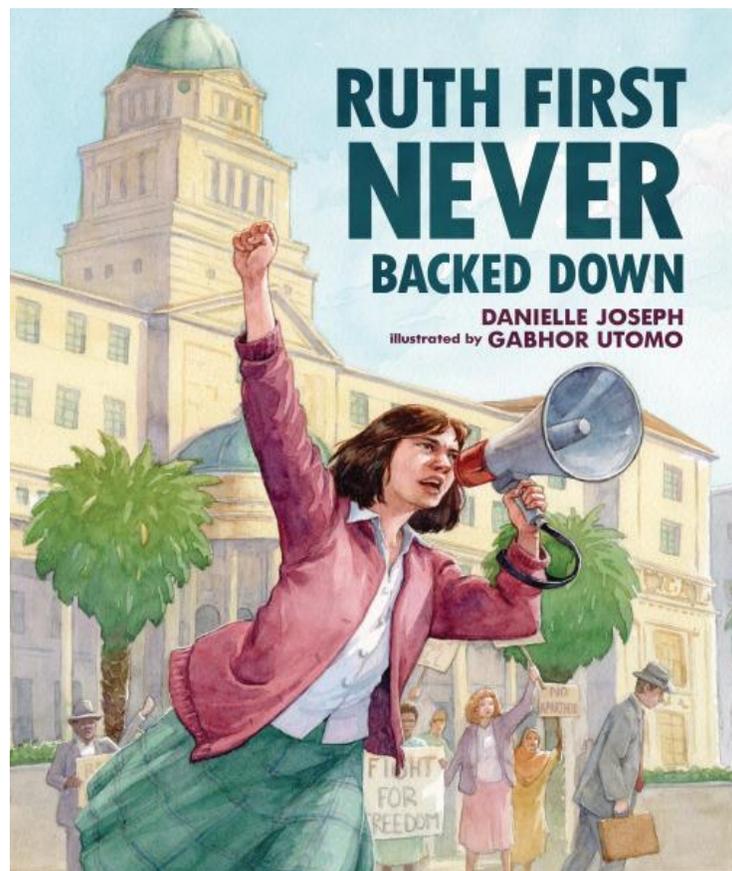


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Educator Guide



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Lesson Plan by Danielle Joseph
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About the Author

Danielle Joseph is an award-winning picture book, middle grade, and young adult author. She was born in Cape Town, South Africa and has always been inspired by the freedom fighters that fought for equality. She enjoys research, travel and visiting as many beaches as she can. Danielle loves visiting schools and libraries and is former middle school creative writing teacher. She currently lives in Maryland with her family, including a dog named Ringo.

About the Illustrator

Gabhor Utomo was born and raised in Indonesia. He received his degree from Academy of Art University in San Francisco. He lives with his wife and twin daughters in Portland, Oregon.

Educational Description: Literary non-fiction, biography.

Informational back matter: Timeline, Other Leaders in the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Themes: Social Justice, Social Activism, Determination, Women's History, Jewish History

Short Summary

Ruth First was born in South Africa, where her Jewish family fled from danger in Europe in the early 1900s. South Africa was a safe place for Jews, but not for Black people. Inspired by her parents' example, a teenage Ruth started a secret book club with her friends to talk about inequality, but she knew she also had to speak out in public. In college, she protested with other students, including Nelson Mandela, and wrote stories for the newspaper about racial injustice. Although she was arrested and forced to leave her country, she continued to speak out and write about the horrors of apartheid all her life. Ruth First never backed down.

Vocabulary

Apartheid	Beacon	forbade
Immigrant	Inequality	Injustice
Investigative journalist	Liberty	Protest

Racism

Solitary confinement

Pre-reading:

Before reading *Ruth First Never Backed Down*, look at the title of the book and study the cover. Notice the setting of the book. How is it the same or different from where you live?

Then predict what happens in the book.

Look at South Africa on a map. How far is it from where you live?

During the Reading:

1. The book starts off talking about Ruth's grandparents. What do we learn about them?
2. As a child what does Ruth do to stand up for others?
3. How does Ruth use her voice throughout her life?

After Reading Questions:

1. How close was your prediction about what happens in the book?
2. What are some adjectives that you'd use to describe Ruth?
3. How did Ruth's job as a journalist help her in the fight against apartheid?
4. What do you think is the most important thing that Ruth did in her career?
5. Ruth made a difference in South Africa because she fought for freedom of others. Can you think of a person where you live that has made a difference in history fighting for equality?

Older readers: Why do you think the author chose to personify Mother Africa in this book?

Get Involved! Extended Activities:

What do you think you could do to improve the community where you live? Draw a poster or sign that you would use to get others to join you in your cause.

Think about who were some of Ruth First's role models in her life. Then think about someone who is a role model in your life. Write a thank you letter to one of your role models.

Research one of the other anti-apartheid activists in the back of the book and write a paragraph about them or draw a picture of them in action.