

# THE RAINBOW FLAG

A Symbol of Love, Hope,  
and Pride



## A Timeline

- 1978**  
Harvey Milk has the idea for a flag to represent the fight for equal rights for gay men and women.  
Gilbert Baker creates the flag with about thirty volunteers, who dye and sew together two versions. The flag has eight stripes at first, but as the years go on, it will only have six.
- June 25, 1978**  
The flag makes its first appearance in the Gay Freedom Day Parade in San Francisco. Harvey rides in the parade.
- 1979**  
Gilbert Baker arranges for the Paramount Flag Company to mass-produce the flag. Hot pink is removed from it, and indigo is changed to royal blue.  
The San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade committee decides to use the new flag in its parade to honor Harvey. The committee wants an even number of stripes, so turquoise is removed.
- 1994**  
Ten thousand people carry a thirty-foot-wide, mile-long Rainbow Flag through Manhattan during New York City's Pride celebration. *The Guinness Book of Records* confirms that it is the world's largest flag.
- 2004**  
Gilbert Baker unveils a re-creation of the eight-striped flag during the Key West Pride Festival in Florida.
- June 26, 2015**  
The Supreme Court rules that gay couples have the right to get married. The White House and other buildings across the United States are lit with the colors of the Rainbow Flag.

## PRIDE: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag

Written by Rob Sanders • Illustrated by Steven Salerno

# PRIDE: An Educator's Guide

## About the Book

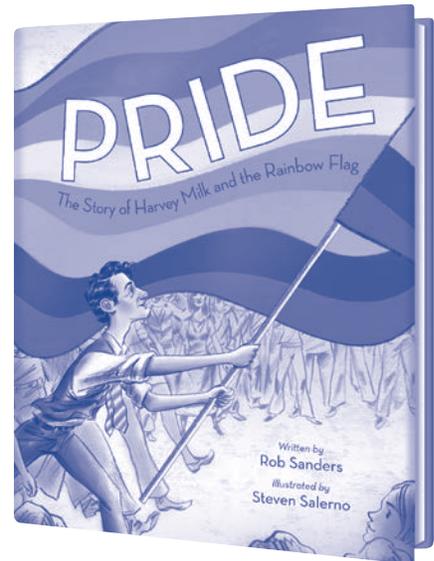
In this deeply moving and inspiring true story, young readers will trace the life of the Gay Pride Flag: from its beginnings in 1978 with social activist Harvey Milk and designer Gilbert Baker to its spanning of the globe and its role in today's world. Award-winning author Rob Sanders's stirring text and acclaimed illustrator Steven Salerno's evocative images combine to tell this remarkable—and undertold—story of love, hope, equality, and pride.

## About the Author

**Rob Sanders** is a teacher and author. His titles include *Cowboy Christmas*, *Outer Space Bedtime Race* (a Crystal Kite Award winner), *Ruby Rose: Off to School She Goes!*, *Rodzilla*, and the forthcoming *Stonewall*. He is a proud member of SCBWI and resides in Florida.

## About the Illustrator

**Steven Salerno** graduated from Parsons School of Design, where he studied under famed author-illustrator Maurice Sendak. He has illustrated many popular picture books for children, including *Mrs. Wow Never Wanted a Cow*, *Pantaloons*, *Puppy Princess*, *Brothers at Bat*, *The Fantastic Ferris Wheel*, and *The Kid from Diamond Street*.



**Rob Sanders; Illustrated by Steven Salerno**

Grades K-3

HC: 978-0-399-55531-2

GLB: 978-0-399-55532-9

EL: 978-0-399-55533-6

## Pre-reading Activity

### Symbols of Hope

**Discussion Questions:** What is a symbol? What is Harvey hopeful for in *Pride*? How can a visual symbol connect communities all over the world?

**Activity:** Use a free online translation service to find the word “hope” in multiple languages. Write the words on the board. Lead a class discussion about the limits of language and the usefulness of visual symbols. In the text, Harvey thinks a symbol shows “who we are and how we feel.” To inspire students, show the page from *Pride* with different visual symbols. Students should identify the symbols on the page (such as recycling arrows and the peace sign). Have them individually draw a special symbol about “who I am and how I feel.” They can then write a short reflection sentence or paragraph about their symbol or present the visual to the class.

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### Finding Context

**Discussion Question:** What do we know about the LGBTQ+ rights movement?

**Activity:** Create a word wall or board to gather whole-group prior knowledge. Place the terms “lesbian,” “gay,” “pride,” “LGBTQ+,” and “gay marriage” on a board and read them aloud. Ask the class to share any times they have heard these words. Facilitate a whole-class share about any prior connections or experiences, and build a visual word cloud on a board. Inform the class that this book is based on real leaders and events in our history! As a country, we used to have laws saying certain people were not allowed to marry each other. Harvey Milk was a man who hoped for change. To support entry points for ELLs and SWDs, show the cover of *Pride* and do a short picture walk through the book before reading the texts.

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This guide was written by Carson Chodos, a New York City Special Education teacher.

Random House Children's Books | School & Library Marketing | 1745 Broadway, New York, NY 10019

## Discussion Questions

### Hope and Hate

**Discussion Questions:** How does it feel to speak with confident pride when people disagree with us? What do people disagree about? What happens at protests?

**Activity:** This book provides amazing visuals for important historical events, like protests for LGBTQ+ rights. Provide examples of famous present-day and historical protests (the Boston Tea Party, Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington, etc.). Ask students to act as journalists and fill in the missing details of the protests in the book with their own imagination and prior knowledge of other protests. Students can add details like setting, crowd size, chants and cheers, and descriptions of signs, using pictures or words, so that the class can connect to these key moments in history!

● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Writing Standard 3.

### Strategies for Sewing

**Discussion Questions:** In 1994, Gilbert Baker decided to make a mile-long flag that involved a lot of geometry! What math strategies would Gilbert have needed to scale his symbol? How many people do you believe were needed to carry the flag in New York City?

**Activity:** The march in New York City with the world's longest Rainbow Flag was a powerful image! Provide students with the length and width of the flag (one mile long and thirty feet wide). Have them use multiple models and strategies to determine the area and perimeter of the flag. Next, have students estimate how many people would have been needed to stand around the perimeter and carry the flag!

● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Standards of Mathematical Practice 5.

### My Symbol to Scale

**Discussion Questions:** How can I scale my own symbol? In *Pride*, there are flags of all different sizes. What could my symbol be used on? (Examples are buttons, posters, etc.) How would I create a scale to make an accurate template for the reproduction of my symbol?

**Activity:** Gilbert Baker made an enormous Rainbow Flag in 1994, to be carried through the streets of New York City! If we wanted to scale our special symbols up or down, what math strategies would we use? Have students draw their individual symbols on graph paper and create a scale. Students can then write or draw their scale and make a plan for an incredibly large version of their symbol (to be carried in the streets!) or a teeny-tiny version (to go on a button or sticker). Push students to think of ratios (such as 2:1) or units of measurement and conversions. Is their symbol measured in miles—like Gilbert's flag—or inches, centimeters, or feet? As extensions, students can make two perfectly scaled models of their symbols.

● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Standards of Mathematical Practice 4 and 6.

### Community

**Discussion Questions:** What are the different communities represented in *Pride*? What are the multiple communities I am a part of?

**Activity:** In *Pride*, community leaders of all types are shown carrying a Rainbow Flag. Have students identify the different communities represented in the book. The pictures provide a compelling message that people can identify with different communities at the same time. Have students reflect on their own identities and communities. They can then draw or write about their overlapping identities and communities and share them with the class.

● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Writing Standard 2.

### Two Timelines, One History

**Discussion Questions:** What is a timeline? Why would there be two timelines in *Pride* when the dates overlap? How can we compare and contrast the focus of each timeline?

**Activity:** The timelines in the back of *Pride* provide amazing context for the story. By focusing on Harvey's life and the Rainbow Flag, they show the importance of details for telling a larger story. Read them together, and make a model timeline about your school community. Then have students make individual timelines about their own lives! After they share their work with the group, ask students to reflect on the overlap between the group timeline and decisions to include or omit specific facts.

● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Reading Standard 8.

### Speeches for Change

**Discussion Questions:** Harvey had strong opinions about equality, hope, and love. What do you have strong opinions about? How can we share our opinions in a speech?

**Activity:** Harvey was a brilliant activist, politician, and orator. But some people were violent when they disagreed with him, as shown in *Pride*. How can we listen to each other's opinions in a caring and community-centered way? Ask the whole class to make community norms about listening to each other and respecting opinions. Then have students individually write opinion sentences or speeches, to be shared with the class.

● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Speaking & Listening Standard 1.

### Politicians for Change

**Discussion Questions:** Why did Harvey want to become a politician? What is the relationship between elected leaders and the community? What is a representative?

**Activity:** *Pride* shows that Harvey Milk went into politics to make change and represent the LGBTQ+ community. Before this class activity, share the name of a local city or state representative, and remind students that the person was voted into office. If your school has a student government, talk about these leaders as well. As a group, discuss one change that students all want for their community (like more recess time). Students can then volunteer to run for office to represent the class's needs.

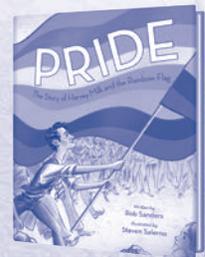
● CCSS Standards: Aligns with Common Core Anchor Speaking & Listening Standard 1.

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## Two Timelines, One History

Create your own personal timeline. It could be of your life, or of a significant series of moments (a school year or sport season). In each box, write a significant date and short description of what happened then. Make sure the events go in chronological order. You can use the format in the back of the book for reference.

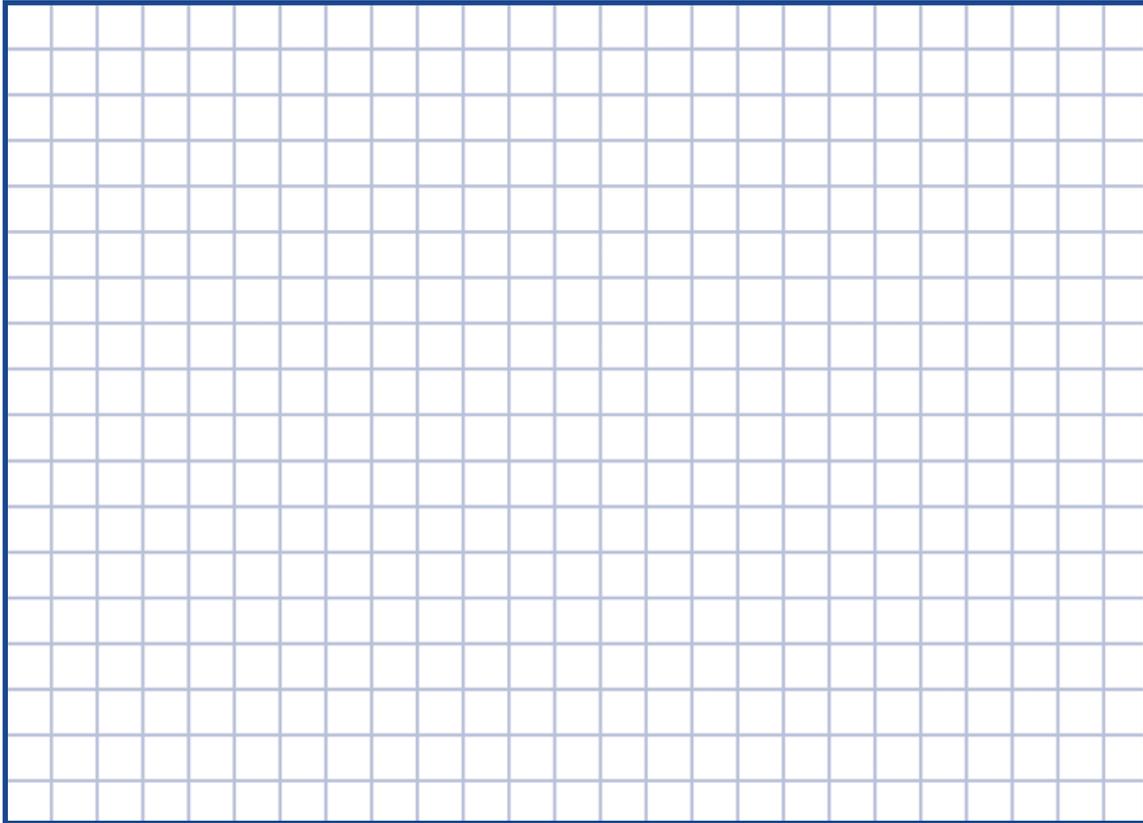


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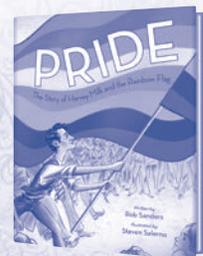


## Symbols of Hope

Use the grid paper below to draw your own personal symbol that shows "who I am" and "how I feel." That way, people all over the world can use yours!



What my symbol means to me:



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