



Speak Up, Speak Out! The Extraordinary Life of Fighting Shirley Chisholm

Tonya Bolden

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Tonya Bolden's *Speak Up, Speak Out!* is a biography for young readers that showcases the inspiring life and accomplishments of Shirley Chisholm.

Shirley Chisholm was the first Black woman to be elected to the United States Congress—a fiery, inspiring figure whose messages still resonate more than fifty years after she was elected. The book opens with the compelling 1972 speech that ushered in her run for the presidency. It then goes back “paso a paso,” step by step, as Chisholm liked to say, with its short chapters focused on her early life in her beloved Brooklyn and her storied political career, which began with her election to the New York State Assembly in 1964, at the height of the civil rights movement.

It's “a story about possibility, about resilience, and about destiny,” as the contemporary, already legendary activist Stacy Abrams states in the foreword. It's as much about her message and beliefs as her character: the book presents Chisholm's longing for an America free of discrimination and poverty, and echoes her raising her voice and putting herself on the line with hope, heart, resolve, and confidence. Indeed, the energetic prose is a fitting tribute to Chisholm; it balances promoting Chisholm's greatness with getting out of the way to let Chisholm herself have center stage—a place where she knew how to shine.

With a map of today's Brooklyn showing its key places in Chisholm's life and legacy, this is an excellent resource for teachers, parents, and young learners. *Speak Up, Speak Out!* celebrates that Shirley Chisholm “had *guts*”—just as she longed to be remembered.

MELISSA WUSKE (January / February 2022)

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