Max Tilt: Fire the Depts

Tessa McMillan

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March Forward, Girl is a very real memoir of childhood in the Jim Crow South. For junior high students, this book will open their eyes to the realities of segregation. It outlines the fear and mistreatment African Americans endured, and from the perspective of a child, it is powerful. Melba identifies the lack of equality early on in her life, and from then on, struggles with her inability to make a difference without inciting the wrath of the Ku Klux Klan. The writing itself isn’t particularly beautiful or flowery, but the simplistic, clear style allows the message of the need for equality to hit home without any roadblocks. Melba does describe a hanging in her church and a situation where she was almost raped, but both events help the reader understand what life was really like in the 1950s in Arkansas without going into too much detail for younger readers. This is a wonderful book to learn about the life of an African American girl during segregation.

*Contains mild sexual content and moderate violence.