

Children and Race

June 3rd, 2020

Are your kids too young to talk about race?¹

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Nope. Silence about race can reinforce racism by letting children draw their own conclusions.



They're not too young!!

“Young children notice and think about race. Adults often worry that talking about race will encourage racial bias in children, but the opposite is true. **Silence about race reinforces racism** by letting children draw their own conclusions based on what they see. Teachers and families can play a powerful role in helping children of all ages develop positive attitudes about race and diversity and skills to promote a more just future - but only if they know about it!”³

¹ by <http://www.childrenscommunityschool.org/social-justice-resources/>

² Adapted from work by Children's Community School

³ <http://www.childrenscommunityschool.org/social-justice-resources/>

Resources for parents

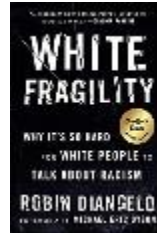


Talking Race with Young Children - NPR and Sesame Street Workshop podcast - [LINK](#)

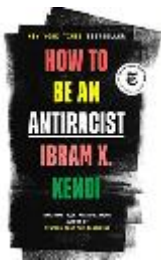
Books:⁴



So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo
Ijeoma Oluo offers a hard-hitting but user-friendly examination of race in America.



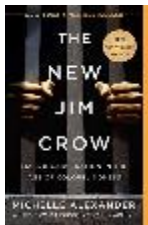
White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo



How to Be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi



The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin



The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander



Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge

Do some learning of you own to get ready for conversations with children:

- Teaching Tolerance - tolerance.org
- Raising Race Conscious Children - raceconscious.org
- Embrace Race - embracerace.org
- Teaching for Change - teachingforchange.org
- AORTA Cooperative - aorta.coop
- Fortify Community Health (CA) - fortifycommunityhealth@gmail.com
- Delaware VALley Assoc. For the Education of Young Children (PA) - dvaeyc.org

⁴ <https://time.com/5846732/books-to-read-about-anti-racism/>

Resources for Children

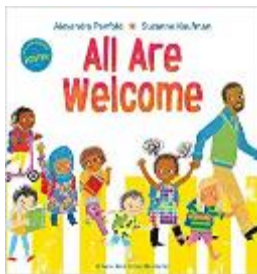
Acknowledge & Celebrating Racial Diversity⁵

“When children point out that they like particular skin tones, body shapes, or hair textures more than others – don’t shout at them or insist they are wrong. Kids this age can’t untangle feelings from fact. Shaming them for a gut reaction is just going to get them to clam up.

Instead, help them untangle bias from fact on their own. Ask why they feel this way. Use in an open, non-judgmental tone. Keep asking questions to unpack these assumptions. We’re not here to tell them what to think, we’re here to model critical thinking about racial bias moving forward.

Discuss how all bodies are good bodies – how we differ, and what we have in common.”

Books:



Ages 4-7



Ages 2+



Ages 2-5

Acknowledge & Celebrating Cultural Diversity⁶

“When we over-simplify racism, we tell kids that racism is simply bias against people based on skin color – it’s not.

Racism expands beyond skin color – it’s assumptions and discrimination against individuals and groups of people, based on racial identity. This includes not just skin color, but also cultural norms and behavior, language, and other markers of racial and ethnic identity.

White supremacy is assuming that racism would be over if people of color just assimilated and acted more like white people, that assimilation is even a goal for people of color, and that non-white culture is deviant or inferior to whiteness.

How do we counter the entrenched dominant narrative’s focus on whiteness?

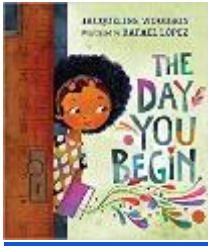
Read stories that show how people of color are not monolithic – we’re complex individuals who can’t be reduced to the caricatures of mainstream media. Our ethnic heritage is something valuable worth exploring, and our ancestors traditions, achievements, and challenges have an impact on who we are today.

But our race and ethnicity is not the only thing that defines us. Show kids how we all have a right to pride in our heritage – just not at the expense of punching down another culture.”

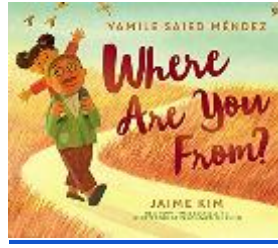
⁵ https://booksforlittles.com/racial-diversity/?fbclid=IwAR39vJQYqCnHfhF0m66o67GnGgR9BuWclmDQJXBQuUwzmf1-YxaZxSzM_I4

⁶ https://booksforlittles.com/racial-diversity/?fbclid=IwAR39vJQYqCnHfhF0m66o67GnGgR9BuWclmDQJXBQuUwzmf1-YxaZxSzM_I4

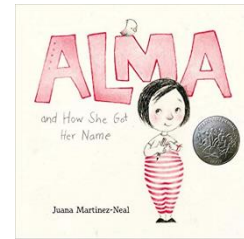
Books:



Ages 6-12



Ages 3-10



Ages 3-8

Explain How Diversity Makes Us Stronger⁷

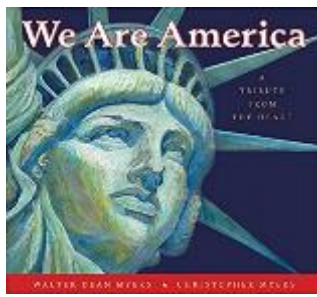
“Having a broad range of experiences to draw from, mindsets to brainstorm, and abilities to solve the problems facing humanity is a very good thing. Human diversity is good for all of humanity and evolution and stuff. I am pretty sure this is SCIENCE.

The idea that winnowing humanity into one make-believe-super-race, or segregating us all into silos based on our racial identity sounds ABSURD. Right? RIGHT?!

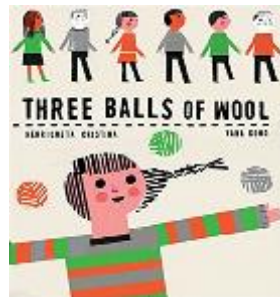
Obviously some families are not absorbing the fact that genetic diversity is good for society and the fate of humanity, so we have to make this clear. That whole ‘melting pot’ assimilation thing our teachers celebrated 20 years ago turned out to be a bad idea.

What we need is more of a chunky stew, with folks proudly retaining and celebrating our individual racial and cultural identities while cognizant of the challenges and discrimination many groups face. These books help kids see how diversity makes us stronger.”

Books:



Ages 6+



Ages 3-9

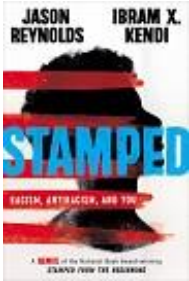
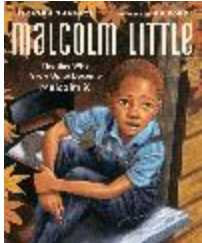

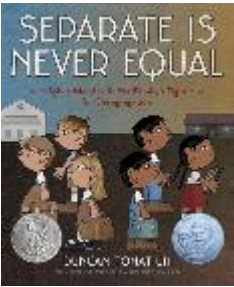

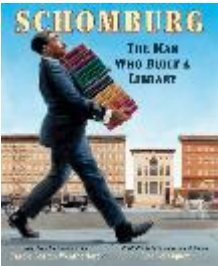

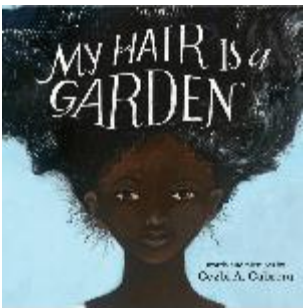



Ages 4+

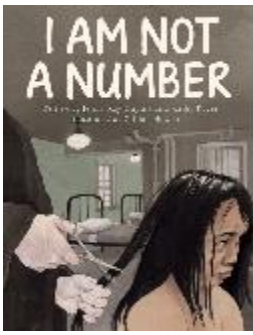
Curated booklist - <https://socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/>

⁷ https://booksforlittles.com/racial-diversity/?fbclid=IwAR39vJQyCnHfhF0m66o67GnGgR9BuWclmDQJXBQuUwzmf1-YxaZxSzM_l4

More books:⁸

 <p>Grade 7-12 Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You. Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi</p>	 <p>Ages 6-10 Malcolm Little: The Boy Who Grew Up to Become Malcolm X by Ilyasah Shabazz, illustrated by AG Ford</p>	 <p>Ages 6-9 Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illustrated by Stephen Alcorn</p>
 <p>Ages 6-9 Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for Desegregation by Duncan Tonatiuh</p>	 <p>Ages 3-8 Young Water Protectors: A Story About Standing Rock by Aslan and Kelly Tudor</p>	 <p>Ages 9-12 Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Eric Velasquez</p>
 <p>Ages 5-9 Viola Desmond Won't Be Budged! by Jody Nyasha Warner and Richard Rudnicki</p>	 <p>Ages 5-8 My Hair is a Garden by Cozbi A. Cabrera</p>	 <p>Ages 4-8 The Legendary Miss Lena Horne by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon</p>

⁸ <https://www.embracerace.org/resources/26-childrens-books-to-support-conversations-on-race-racism-resistance?fbclid=IwAR2KDgTcGgWwxprIOYs1V4-D9Ji6Ngdr-HXbJhJpKzL6nODqabekuiPIGEE> or other



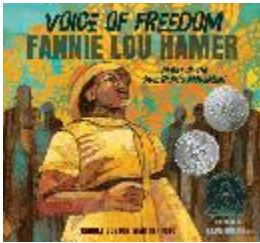
Ages 7-11
[I Am Not A Number](#) by Jenny Kay Dupuis and Kathy Kacer, illustrated by Gillian Newland



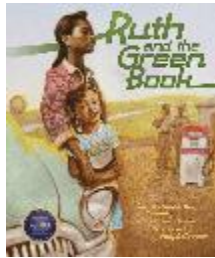
Ages 4-8
[Something Happened in Our Town](#) by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, and Ann Hazzard, illustrated by Jennifer Zivoin



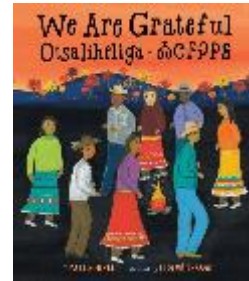
Ages 3-7
[Harlem's Little Blackbird: The Story of Florence Mills](#) by Renée Watson, illustrated by Christian Roinson



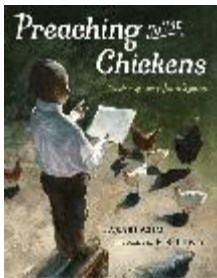
Ages 9-12
[Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement](#) by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Ekua Holmes



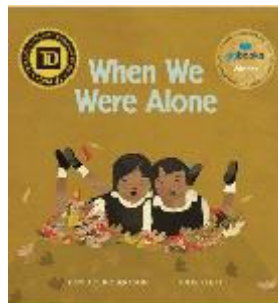
Ages 7-11
[Ruth and the Green Book](#) by Calvin Alexander Ramsey, illustrated by Floyd Cooper



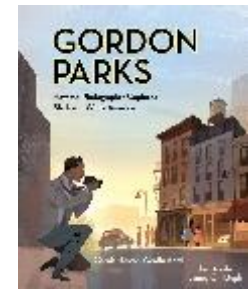
Ages 3-7
[We Are Grateful, Otsaliheliga](#) by Traci Sorell, illustrated by Frané Lessac



Ages 4-8
[Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis](#) by Jabari Asim, illustrated by E.B. Lewis



Ages 4-8
[When We Were Alone](#) by David A. Robertson, illustrated by Julie Flett



Ages 4-8
[Gordon Parks: How the Photographer Captured Black and White America](#) by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Jamey Christoph



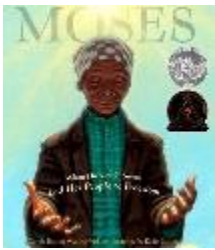
Ages 8-11
[Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History](#) by Vashti Harrison



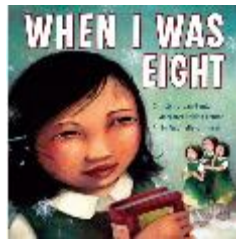
Ages 6-11
[Shining Star: The Anna May Wong Story](#) by Paula Yoo, illustrated by Lin Wang



Ages 4-8
[Coretta Scott by Ntozake Shange](#), illustrated by Kadir Nelson



Ages 5-8
[Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom](#) by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Kadir Nelson



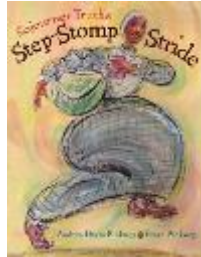
Ages 6-8
[When I Was Eight](#) by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard



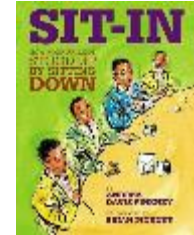
Ages 4-8
[Rosa](#) by Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier



Ages 6-10
[Frederick Douglass: The Lion Who Wrote History](#) by Walter Dean Myers, illustrated by Floyd Cooper



Ages 5-8
[Sojourner Truth's Step-Stomp Stride](#) by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illustrated by Brian Pinkney



Ages 7-10
[Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down](#) by Andrea Davis Pinkney, illustrated by Brian Pinkney



Ages 5-7
[That's Not Fair! Emma Tenayuca's Struggle for Justice](#) by Carmen Tafolla and Sharyll Tenayuca, illustrated by Terry Ybáñez



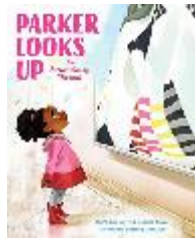
Ages 9+
[The Boy and the Wall](#) by Palestinian refugee children in the Aida Refugee Camp



Ages 4-7
[Same, Same But Different](#) Kindle Edition by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw



[Ruby Bridges goes to School](#) by Ruby Bridges



[Parker looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment](#) by Parker Curry and Jessica Curry, illustrated by Brittany Jackson



[Hair love](#) by Matthew A. Cherry, illustrated by Vashti Harrison