



Westerville Public Library

Anti-Racism Resources

The Westerville Public Library condemns racism and all acts of violence. We do not have all the answers, but we stand ready to educate ourselves, to encourage critical conversations about racism, and to work towards social equity. Our staff have put together this list of books and other resources to help ourselves and our community get started.

Book Picks

For Babies, Toddlers & Preschoolers [View all](#)

- ***Honeysmoke: A Story of Finding Your Color*** by Monique Fields - A young biracial girl looks around her world for her color. She finally chooses her own and creates a new word for herself—honeysmoke. For multiracial children, and all children everywhere, this picture book offers a universal message that empowers young people to create their own self-identity. Description from Goodreads.com. *(Recommended by Jennifer M)*
- ***I Am America*** by Charles R. Smith - In photographs, Charles R. Smith captures the beautiful diversity of America's children. *(Recommended by Katie R)*
- ***I Walk with Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness*** by Kerascoët. - This simple yet powerful picture book tells the story of one girl who inspires a community to stand up to bullying. Inspired by real events, this explores the feelings of helplessness and anger that arise in the wake of seeing a classmate treated badly and shows how a single act of kindness can lead to an entire community joining in to help. By choosing only pictures to tell their story, the creators underscore the idea that someone can be an ally without having to say a word. *(Recommended by Rachel S)*
- ***Little Heroes of Color: 50 Who Made a Big Difference*** by David Heredia - Introduce preschoolers to the stories of fifty people of color who have made their mark on history. *(Recommended by Katie R)*
- ***Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story about Racial Injustice*** by Marianne Celano (PhD, ABPP), Marietta Collins (PhD), and Ann Hazzard (PhD, ABPP) - After a shooting of a Black man in their neighborhood, Emma and Josh learn about racism and prejudice in this early introduction to racism. *(Recommended by Alexx C)*

- ***Sulwe*** by Lupita Nyong'o - A picture book about colorism, self-esteem, and learning that true beauty comes from within. Sulwe has skin the color of midnight. She is darker than everyone in her family. She is darker than anyone in her school. Sulwe just wants to be beautiful and bright, like her mother and sister. Then a magical journey in the night sky opens her eyes and changes everything. Description from Goodreads.com. *(Recommended by Jennifer M.)*
- ***Woke Baby*** by Mahogany L. Browne ([Recommended by Annamarie C in this video](#))
- ***you matter*** written and illustrated by christian robinson - From the tiniest parts of the atom to the expansiveness of the universe, every living thing matters. Poetic text and vibrant, diverse illustrations convey this simple, powerful, and necessary message to young children. *(Recommended by Robin G)*
- [...and more](#)

For Kids [View all](#)

- ***Can I Touch Your Hair?: Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendship*** by Irene Latham and Charles Waters - Two poets, one white and one black, explore race and childhood in this must-have collection tailored to provoke thought and conversation. Accompanied by artwork from acclaimed illustrators Sean Qualls and Selina Alko (of *The Case for Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage*), this remarkable collaboration invites readers of all ages to join the dialogue by putting their own words to their experiences. *(Recommended by Rachel S)*
- ***Ghost Boys*** by Jewell Parker Rhodes - This is a heart-wrenching book that takes a look a police brutality in the Black community. As a ghost, the main character, a 12 year old boy named Jerome, observes the fallout of his death on his family and community. *(Recommended by Lisa K.)*
- ***Harbor Me*** by Jacqueline Woodson – Six kids are assigned to come to an afterschool group to talk about their biggest fears and greatest challenges (their experiences of being racially profiled, parents who face deportation, and parental incarceration). *(Recommended by Sarah S.)*
- ***New Kid*** by Jerry Craft - Jordan is the new kid at school, and he is one of the only Black students there. This is an amazing graphic novel about dealing with racism. 2020 Newbery Award Winner ([Recommend by Lisa K. in this book talk](#))
- ***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*** by Mildred Taylor - A vivid portrait of a strong, loving family detailing the racism they encounter and their family's perseverance during the Depression in rural Mississippi. This Newbery Award winning title is the first of many stories featuring the Logan family, based on Taylor's personal family history.
- ***This Book is Anti-Racist*** by Tiffany Jewell - An excellent guide to young voices discovering their identities, place in the world, and how to use their voice to make a change – especially when talking to adults. *(Recommended by Alexx C)*
- ***Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky*** by Kwame Mbalia - ([Recommended by Annamarie C in this video](#))
- ***What Lane?*** by Torrey Maldonado - ([Recommended by Annamarie C. in this video](#))
- ***Woke : A Young Poet's Call to Justice*** by Mahogany L. Browne, with Elizabeth Acevedo and Olivia Gatwood - Powerful words by a team of stellar women poets inspire

kids of all ages to speak out, fight for social justice, and stay woke. *(Recommended by Annamarie C)*

- [...and more](#)

For Teens [View all](#)

- ***Anger is a Gift*** by Mark Oshiro - Moss Jefferies became a community icon 6 years ago, when his father was murdered by police. Now a sophomore in high school, Moss has to deal with panic attacks being triggered by random searches, intimidation tactics, and just being a teenager. When the community hits a turning point, Moss has to decide: give in to fear and hate or realize anger can be a gift. *(Recommended by Michala S)*
- ***Black Enough: Stories of Being Young & Black in America*** edited by Ibi Zoboi – A collection of short stories told by own voices about growing up while being Black. *(Recommended by Michala S.)*
- ***Colorblind: A Story of Racism*** by Jonathan Harris - An own voices story by author Jonathan Harris, a fifteen-year-old African American from Long Beach, California, being physically and verbally harassed because of his race, and of overcoming the discrimination to embrace all cultures, and then to be proud of his own. *(Recommended by Michala S)*
- ***Dear Martin*** by Nic Stone - Shot at, handcuffed, and detained for cruising around town listening to music with his best friend, Justyce McAllister begins to reflect on the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and starts a journal with letters to MLK. *(Recommended by Michala S)*
- ***The Hate U Give*** by Angie Thomas - *(Recommended by Holly M)*
- ***March: Books 1-3***, by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell (artist) - March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement. *(Recommended by Jen T & Amber R)*
- ***Miles Morales: Spider-man*** by Jason Reynolds - As a student at Brooklyn Visions Academy, Miles Morales knows he's lucky. Not all kids get this opportunity, especially not kids from his neighborhood. With his quirky best friend Ganke, this school year is gonna be a blast. Right? Wrong. Miles has a secret. He's actually Spider-Man. Well not THE Spider-Man but A Spider-Man. Pretty much the only Spider-Man in town now that Peter Parker is gone. Miles is doing his best to save every little old lady but it's getting to be too much. He's got more important stuff to worry about like homework, girls, family, the perfect Halloween costume, and girls. Did we mention girls? Ok well maybe just one girl. But when Miles accidentally discovers a villainous teacher's plan to turn good kids bad, he will need to come to terms with his own destiny as the new SPIDER-MAN. *(Recommended by Mike P. and Tamara M.)*
- ***Monster*** by Walter Dean Myers – While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken. *(Recommended by Thomas S)*

- ***Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*** by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi – Jason Reynolds reimagines Dr. Kendi's award-winning book, *Stamped from the Beginning*, in a fast-paced, conversational text that confronts the hard questions--Where did racism begin? Am I racist? What does it mean to be antiracist? Reynolds' audiobook performance is particularly outstanding. *(Recommended by Annamarie C and Michala S)*
- [...and more](#)

For Adults [View all](#)

- ***An American Marriage*** by Tayari Jones – The moving portrayal of the effects of a wrongful conviction on a young African American couple. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- ***Between the World and Me*** by Ta-Nehisi Coates – The author frames his story within the context of American history to offer an insight into the experience of inhabiting a Black body in a society that regularly dehumanizes, segregates and imprisons them. *(Recommended by Megan C and Mandy K)*
- ***Good White People: The Problem with Middle-Class White Anti-Racism*** by Shannon Sullivan — Sullivan demonstrates how middle-class white people tend to approach anti-racism by vilifying working-class whites, maintaining blindness to their own history, and arguing for “color-blindness.” She then argues for more effective alternative approaches. *(Recommended by Faith V)*
- ***How to Be an Anti-Racist.*** by Ibram Kendi – The author is today's visionary in the enduring struggle for racial justice. Kendi is ready to spread his message, his stories serving as a springboard for potent explorations of race, gender, colorism, and more. *(Recommended by Erik J)*
- ***I Am Not Your Negro*** by James Baldwin, Raoul Peck (Editor) - a collection of James Baldwin's essays, letters and interviews that Raoul Peck mined to create his documentary film of the same name. It stands as an excellent introduction to James Baldwin for those unfamiliar with his works. *(Recommended by Megan C)*
- ***The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness*** by Rhonda V. Magee - Law professor and mindfulness practitioner Rhonda Magee shows that the work of racial justice begins with ourselves. The practice of embodied mindfulness--paying attention to our thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations in an open, nonjudgmental way--increases our emotional resilience, helps us to recognize our unconscious bias, and gives us the space to become less reactive and to choose how we respond to injustice. Incorporating mindfulness exercises, research, and Magee's hard-won insights, *The Inner Work of Racial Justice* offers a road map to a more peaceful world. *(Recommended by Marie C.)*
- ***Just Mercy: A Story of Justice & Redemption*** by Bryan Stevenson - There is no better example of how fallible we are as humans (and especially as white people in a white world) than this book. *(Recommended by Tamara M; seconded by Megan C & Mandy K.)*
- ***The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in an Age of Colorblindness*** by Michelle Alexander - Legal scholar Michelle Alexander examines how the mass incarceration of African American men has impacted American society. Originally published in 2010; see

the new 10th anniversary edition for an update by the author. *(Recommended by Mandy K)*

- ***So You Want to Talk About Race*** by Ijeoma Oluo – Offers advice, particularly to white people, on how to have difficult discussions on the topic of race and racism that will be productive for all parties involved. *(Recommended by Megan C)*
- ***Stamped from the Beginning*** by Ibram X. Kendi - Americans like to insist that they are living in a post-racial, color-blind society. In fact, racist thought is alive and well; it has simply become more sophisticated and more insidious. And as award-winning historian Ibram X. Kendi argues in *Stamped from the Beginning*, racist ideas in America have a long and lingering history, one in which nearly every great American thinker is complicit. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- ***Such a Fun Age*** by Kiley Reid - This fictional tale of race and privilege will make readers think. Emira Tucker is a 25-year-old living in Philadelphia with two part-time jobs and no health insurance. One night the mother of the child for whom she babysits calls upon her in an emergency, and Emira takes the toddler to a grocery store, only to be accused of kidnapping. An emotional and thought-provoking read. *(Recommended by Mandy K)*
- ***The Tradition*** by Jericho Brown - This collection of poems on blackness, fatherhood, worship and trauma are emotionally raw. Especially good on audio. *(Recommended by Mandy K)*
- ***The Vanishing Half*** by Brit Bennett - The author weaves together multiple strands and generations of a family, from the Deep South to California, from the 1950s to the 1990s through the eyes of two identical twins who chose to live different worlds, one black and one white. It is an engrossing page turner. *(Recommended by Belinda M)*
- ***When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*** by Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Asha Bandele – The cofounders of the Black Lives Matter movement share their experience with police violence and prejudice and how it inspired them to start a movement to confront racial violence head on. *(Recommended by Megan C)*
- ***White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*** by Robin DiAngelo – Takes head on the kneejerk defensiveness of white people when confronted with race issues and explains why this emotional response inhibits the ability to have frank and meaningful discussions around a difficult topic. Anti-racist educator Robin DiAngelo helps the reader unpack this response in order to develop a more constructive response to being confronted racially. *(Recommended by Megan C)*
- ***White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America*** by Nancy Isenberg – A keen insight into the role class has played in dividing white and black America, pitting poor whites against poor blacks to uphold the status quo *(Recommended by Megan C)*
- ***We Were Eight Years in Power*** by Ta-Nehisi Coates - "We were eight years in power" was the lament of Reconstruction-era black politicians as the American experiment in multiracial democracy ended with the return of white supremacist rule in the South. Now Ta-Nehisi Coates explores the tragic echoes of that history in our own time: the unprecedented election of a black president followed by a vicious backlash that fueled the election of the man Coates argues is America's "first white president." *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- [...and more](#)

Movie & TV Picks [View all](#)

- **13th** - An in-depth look at the prison system in the United States and how it reveals the nation's history of racial inequality. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- **The Central Park Five** – This documentary by Ken Burns shows how fear and systemic racism can have disastrous consequences. *(Recommended by Tamara M)*
- **Do the Right Thing** – Conversations about police brutality and rioting have been happening for a long time, as evidenced by this excellent 1989 film directed by Spike Lee. *(Recommended by Tamara M)*
- **Fruitvale Station** (2013) - The story of Oscar Grant III, a 22-year-old Bay Area resident, who crosses paths with friends, enemies, family, and strangers on the last day of 2008. *(Recommended by Thomas S)*
- **I Am Not Your Negro** – The story of race in modern America *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- **Just Mercy** - I second the description written above for the book, adding that it's an example of the many failings of the criminal justice system. [View for free during the month of June.](#) *(Recommended by Kristin M)*
- **LA 92** – Filmmakers examine the tumultuous period after verdict in the Rodney King trial that sparked days of protests, violence, and looting in Los Angeles. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- **Last Black Man in San Francisco** – A beautiful story about two friends trying to find a home for themselves in a city marred by gentrification. *(Recommended by Tamara M)*
- **Malcolm X** – Biographical epic of the controversial and influential Black Nationalist leader, from his early life and career as a small-time gangster, to his ministry as a member of the Nation of Islam. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- **Mudbound** – *(Recommended by Amber R)*
- **O.J.: Made in America** – The chronicle of the rise and fall of O.J. Simpson, whose high-profile murder trial exposed the extent of American racial tensions, revealing a fractured and divided nation. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- **Selma** – A chronicle of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s campaign to secure equal voting rights via an epic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in 1965. *(Recommended by Jen T)*
- [...and more](#)

Podcasts, Music, & Videos

- [Code Switch](#) by NPR (Recommended by Katrina Plourde)
- [Librarians Recommend Children's Books Featuring People of Color](#), recorded by Westerville Librarians
- [Librarians Recommend Children's Books Discussing Racism](#), recorded by Westerville Librarians
- [Netflix Jr's Bookmarks: Celebrating Black Voices](#)

- [Yo, Is This Racist?](#) Hosted by Andrew Ti and Tawny Newsome (Recommended by Jordan Valentine)
- [Rise, Shine, #Woke](#) by the Alphabet Rockers (Recommended by Robin)
- [Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man](#) by former NFL player Emmanuel Acho

Additional Resources

- [21 Day Race Equity Challenge](#) | YWCA of Greater Cleveland
- [31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance](#) | EmbraceRace.org
- [70 Black Voices to Add to Your Social Media Feed](#) | Inside Hook
- [700+ Books for kids featuring diverse characters](#) | Westerville Public Library
- [Anti-racism: ebooks to help you talk about racism](#) | Westerville Public Library (via Westerville Cloud Library)
- [Antiracism: A Starter Booklist](#) | Library Journal
- [Antiracist Reading and Viewing For Adults, Teens, and Kids](#) | Library Journal
- [Antiracist Resources and Reads: Lists for All Ages](#) | School Library Journal
- [Anti-Racism Resources for all ages](#) | A project by the Augusta Baker Chair Dr. Nicole A. Cooke, University of South Carolina
- [Because Black Lives Matter, A Collection of Anti-Racist Reading Lists](#) | The Teen Librarian Toolbox
- [Critical Conversations](#) | The Conscious Kid
- [Coretta Scott King Book Awards](#) | American Library Association
- [Jason Reynolds, Ibram Kendi in Conversation: SLJ Day of Dialog 2020](#) | School Library Journal
- [How To Deconstruct Racism, One Headline At A Time](#) | TEDTalk April 2019, Baratunde Thurston (recommended by Katrina Plourde)
- [Many Voices Project](#) | Westerville Education Foundation (recommended by Robin G)
- [Race, Police and Justice: Reading Recommendations for Children](#) | Fountaindale Public Library District
- [Racism Scale: Where do you fall?](#) | Ohio Library Council
- [Talking about Race](#) | National Museum of African-American History & Culture
- [Talking about Race and Anti-Racism with Children](#) | Ramsey County Library
- [Talking Race with Young Children](#) | NPR
- [These Books Can Help You Explain Racism and Protest to Your Kids](#) | The New York Times

Organizations

- [ACLU of Ohio](#)
- [Anti-Defamation League](#)
- [Black Lives Matter](#)
- [Columbus Urban League](#)
- [Equal Justice Initiative](#)

- [Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity](#)
- [Southern Poverty Law Center](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [We Need Diverse Books](#)