

Books to Help Children and Teens be Antiracist:

Picture Books For Children:

A is for Activist by Innosanto Nagara: The bestselling ABC book for families who want their kids to grow up in a space that is unapologetic about activism, environmental justice, civil rights, LGBTQ rights, and everything else that we believe in and fight for.

All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold: Illustrations and simple, rhyming text introduce a school where diversity is celebrated and songs, stories, and talents are shared.

All the Colors We Are by Katie Kissinger: Explains, in simple terms, the reasons for skin color, how it is determined by heredity, and how various environmental factors affect it.

The Big Umbrella by Amy June Bates: A spacious umbrella welcomes anyone and everyone who needs shelter from the rain.

Can You Say Peace? By Karen Katz: Every September 21 on the International Day of Peace, children around the world wish in many different languages for peace.

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson: Other students laugh when Rigoberto, an immigrant from Venezuela, introduces himself but later, he meets Angelina and discovers that he is not the only one who feels like an outsider.

I am Enough by Grace Byers: Shares a story of loving who you are, respecting others and being kind to one another.

Intersection Allies by Chelsea Johnson: A handy book about intersectionality that depicts the nuances of identity and embraces difference as a source of community.

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Pena: A young boy rides the bus across town with his grandmother and learns to appreciate the beauty in everyday things.

Lovely by Jess Hong: Big, small, curly, straight, loud, quiet, smooth, wrinkly. Lovely explores a world of differences that all add up to the same thing: we are all lovely!

Something Happened in our Town by Marianne Celano: After discussing the police shooting of a local Black man with their families, Emma and Josh know how to treat a new student who looks and speaks differently than his classmates. Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers that provides general guidance about addressing racism with children.

Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o: When five-year-old Sulwe's classmates make fun of her dark skin, she tries lightening herself to no avail, but her encounter with a shooting star helps her understand there is beauty in every shade.

We are America by Walter Dean Myers: Examines the events and people that have shaped America, providing portraits of figures such as Chief Tecumseh, President Abraham Lincoln, and musician Jimi Hendrix.

We're Different, We're the Same by Bobbi Jane Kates: Illustrations and simple rhyming text show that while the body parts of various human and Muppet characters may look different, they have similar uses.

Whoever You Are by Mem Fox: Despite the differences between people around the world, there are similarities that join us together, such as pain, joy, and love.

Chapter Books for Middle Grades:

Breakout by Kate Messner: From multiple perspectives, tells of a time capsule project and the middle schoolers who contribute, including future journalist Nora Tucker and newcomer Elidee Jones, whose brother is in the local prison.

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson: Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement.

Clean Getaway by Nic Stone: With G'ma's old maps and a strange pamphlet called the 'Travelers' Green Book' at their side, William "Scoob" Lamar takes off with her on a journey down memory lane. And the father they go, the more Scoob realizes that the world hasn't always been a welcoming place for kids like him, and things aren't always what they seem--G'ma included.

Feathers by Jacqueline Woodson: When a new, white student nicknamed "The Jesus Boy" joins Frannie's all-Black sixth grade class in the winter of 1971, her growing friendship with him makes her start to see some things in a new light.

Front Desk by Kelly Yang: Recent immigrants from China and desperate for work and money, ten-year-old Mia Tang's parents take a job managing a rundown motel in Southern California, even though the owner, Mr. Yao exploits them; while her mother (who was an engineer in China) does the cleaning, Mia works the front desk and tries to cope with demanding customers and other recent immigrants--not to mention being only one of two Chinese in her fifth grade class, the other being Mr. Yao's son, Jason.

Look Both Ways by Jason Reynolds: Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and weaves them into one funny, poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.

The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson: Twelve-year-old Candice Miller is spending the summer in Lambert, South Carolina, in the old house that belonged to her grandmother, who died after being dismissed as city manager for having the city tennis courts dug up looking for buried treasure--but when she finds the letter that sent her grandmother on the treasure hunt, she finds herself caught up in the mystery and, with the help of her new friend and fellow book-worm, Brandon, she sets out to find the inheritance, exonerate her grandmother, and expose an injustice once committed against an African American family in Lambert.

The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis: The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963.

Graphic Novels for Middle Grades:

March by John Lewis: This graphic novel is Congressman John Lewis' first-hand account of his lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation.

New Kid by Jerry Craft: After his parents send him to a prestigious private school known for its academics, Jordan Banks finds himself torn between two worlds.

Teen/YA Fiction:

All American Boys by Jason Reynolds: When sixteen-year-old Rashad is mistakenly accused of stealing, classmate Quinn witnesses his brutal beating at the hands of a police officer who happens to be the older brother of his best friend. Told through Rashad and Quinn's alternating viewpoints.

American Street by Ibi Zoboi: When Fabiola's mother is detained upon their arrival to the United States, Fabiola must navigate her loud American cousins, the grittiness of Detroit's west side, a new school, and a surprising romance all on her own.

Dear Martin by Nic Stone: Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen-year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him.

The Downstairs Girl by Stacey Lee: 1890, Atlanta. By day, seventeen-year-old Jo Kuan works as a lady's maid for the cruel Caroline Payne, the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in Atlanta. But by night, Jo moonlights as the pseudonymous author of a newspaper advice column for 'the genteel Southern lady.

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas: After witnessing her friend's death at the hands of a police officer, Starr Carter's life is complicated when the police and a local drug lord try to intimidate her in an effort to learn what happened the night Kahlil died.

Internment by Samira Ahmed: A terrifying, futuristic United States where Muslim-Americans are forced into internment camps, and seventeen-year-old Layla Amin must lead a revolution against complicit silence.

Teen/YA Non-Fiction:

The 57 Bus by Dashka Slater: If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment.

Stamped by Jason Reynolds: The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. Racist ideas are woven into the fabric of this country, and the first step to building an antiracist America is acknowledging America's racist past and present. This book takes you on that journey, showing how racist ideas started and were spread, and how they can be discredited.