

**A Racial Justice Reading List for All Ages \***  
***A Continually Evolving List – Additional Recommendations Welcomed***

*Reading broadly gives us a deeper connection to the human condition. Because systemic inequity centers whiteness, buying and reading books that value and celebrate the experiences of non-white folks is vital to our community and is a statement of our values and culture.*

These picture books, middle grade, young adult, and adult titles are especially recommended and can be borrowed from the library or purchased.

## **Picture Books**

### **Fiction**

*Counting on Community* by Innosanto Nagara  
1609806328, 3 to 7 years

*Counting on Community* is Innosanto Nagara's follow-up to his hit ABC book, *A is for Activist*. Counting up from one stuffed piñata to ten hefty hens--and always counting on each other—children are encouraged to recognize the value of their community, the joys inherent in healthy eco-friendly activities, and the agency they possess to make change. A broad and inspiring vision of diversity is told through stories in words and pictures. And of course, there is a duck to find on every page!

*Miss Spider's Tea Party* by David Kirk  
978-0935112139, 4 to 8 years

A lonely Miss Spider wants to have a tea party, but all the other bugs flee in terror when they see her. By the end of the book (told in a series of rhyming verses), however, the other bugs discover an important secret: Miss Spider is kind and thoughtful, and, she only eats flowers. When word spreads that their perception of her was wrong, Miss Spider soon finds herself surrounded by new friends.

*My Heart Fills With Happiness* by Monique Gray Smith  
978-1459809574, 5 to 6 years

The sun on your face. The smell of warm bannock baking in the oven. Holding the hand of someone you love. What fills your heart with happiness? This beautiful board book, with illustrations from celebrated artist Julie Flett, serves as a reminder for little ones and adults alike to reflect on and cherish the moments in life that bring us joy.

*The Skin You Live In* by Michael Tyler  
978-0975958001, 4 to 8 years

With the ease and simplicity of a nursery rhyme, this lively story delivers an important message of social acceptance to young readers. Themes associated with child development and social harmony, such as friendship, acceptance, self-esteem, and diversity are promoted in simple and straightforward prose. Vivid illustrations of children's activities for all cultures, such as swimming in the ocean, hugging, catching butterflies, and eating birthday cake are also provided. This delightful picture book offers a wonderful venue through which parents and teachers can discuss important social concepts with their children.

*Mama's Nightingale: A Story of Immigration and Separation* by Edwidge Danticat  
9780525428091, 5 to 8 years

After Saya's mother is sent to an immigration detention center, Saya finds comfort in listening to her mother's warm greeting on their answering machine. To ease the distance between them while she's in jail, Mama begins sending Saya bedtime stories inspired by Haitian folklore on cassette tape. Moved by her mother's tales and her father's attempts to reunite their family, Saya writes a story of her own—one that just might bring her mother home for good.

*The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson  
9780399231162, 5-8 years

Clover's mom says it isn't safe to cross the fence that segregates their African-American side of town from the white side where Anna lives. But the two girls strike up a friendship, and get around the grown-ups' rules by sitting on top of the fence together.

*Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña  
9780399257742, 3 to 5 years

Every Sunday after church, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. But today, CJ wonders why they don't own a car like his friend Colby. Why doesn't he have an iPod like the boys on the bus? How come they always have to get off in the dirty part of town? Each question is met with an encouraging answer from grandma, who helps him see the beauty—and fun—in their routine and the world around them.

*Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut* by Derrick Barnes  
9781572842243, 3 to 8 years

The barbershop is where the magic happens. Boys go in as lumps of clay and, with princely robes draped around their shoulders, a dab of cool shaving cream on their foreheads, and a slow, steady cut, they become royalty. That crisp yet subtle line makes boys sharper, more visible, more aware of every great thing that could happen to them when they look good: lesser grades turn into As; girls take notice; even a mother's hug gets a little tighter. Everyone notices.

*En Mi Familia/In My Family* by Carmen Lomas Garza  
9780892391639, 7-12 years

Following the best-selling *Family Pictures*, *In My Family/En mi familia* is Carmen Lomas Garza's continuing tribute to the family and community that shaped her childhood and her life. Lomas Garza's vibrant paintings and warm personal stories depict memories of growing up in the traditional Mexican-American community of her hometown of Kingsville, Texas.

*Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman  
9780803710405, 4 to 8 years

Grace loves stories, whether they're from books, movies, or the kind her grandmother tells. So when she gets a chance to play a part in *Peter Pan*, she knows exactly who she wants to be. Remarkable watercolor illustrations give full expression to Grace's high-flying imagination.

*Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts

9780763642846, 5 to 8 years

All Jeremy wants is a pair of those shoes, the ones everyone at school seems to be wearing. Though Jeremy's grandma says they don't have room for "want," just "need," when his old shoes fall apart at school, he is more determined than ever to have those shoes, even a thrift-shop pair that are much too small. But sore feet aren't much fun, and Jeremy soon sees that the things he has — warm boots, a loving grandma, and the chance to help a friend — are worth more than the things he wants.

*A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams

9780688040741, 4-8 years

After their home is destroyed by a fire, Rosa, her mother, and grandmother save their coins to buy a really comfortable chair for all to enjoy.

*Max and the Tag-Along Moon* by Floyd Cooper

9780147515469, 3 to 7 years

Max loves his grandpa. When they must say goodbye after a visit, Grandpa reminds Max that the moon above them at Grandpa's house is the same moon that will follow him all the way home. And on that swervy-curvy car ride back home Max smiles as the moon tags along, thinking of Grandpa. But when the sky darkens and the moon disappears behind clouds, Max worries that it did not follow him home after all. Yet when the clouds part and light streams through his window, he realizes that Grandpa was right—the moon was with him all along.

*Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall

9780763678388, 4 to 8 years

Jabari is definitely ready to jump off the diving board. He's finished his swimming lessons and passed his swim test, and he's a great jumper, so he's not scared at all. "Looks easy," says Jabari, watching the other kids take their turns. But when his dad squeezes his hand, Jabari squeezes back. He needs to figure out what kind of special jump to do anyway, and he should probably do some stretches before climbing up onto the diving board. In a sweetly appealing tale of overcoming your fears, newcomer Gaia Cornwall captures a moment between a patient and encouraging father and a determined little boy you can't help but root for.

*The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz

9780805071634, 4 to 8 years

Seven-year-old Lena is going to paint a picture of herself. She wants to use brown paint for her skin. But when she and her mother take a walk through the neighborhood, Lena learns that brown comes in many different shades. Through the eyes of a little girl who begins to see her familiar world in a new way, this book celebrates the differences and similarities that connect all people.

*Ada Twist, Scientist* by Andrea Beaty

9781419721373, 5 to 7 years

Ada Twist's head is full of questions. Like her classmates Iggy and Rosie—stars of their own *New York Times* bestselling picture books *Iggy Peck, Architect* and *Rosie Revere, Engineer*—Ada has always been endlessly curious. Even when her fact-finding missions and elaborate scientific experiments don't go as planned, Ada learns the value of thinking her way through problems and continuing to stay curious.

*Around Our Way on Neighbors' Day* by Tameka Fryer Brown  
9780810989719, 5 to 7 years

Neighbors gather on a hot summer day for a joyful block party: Kids play double Dutch; men debate at the barber shop and play chess; mothers and aunts cook up oxtail stew, collard greens, and other delicious treats; and friends dance and sway as jazz floats through the streets.

*Julián Is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love  
9780763690458, 4 to 8 years

While riding the subway home from the pool with his abuela one day, Julián notices three women spectacularly dressed up. Their hair billows in brilliant hues, their dresses end in fishtails, and their joy fills the train car. When Julián gets home, daydreaming of the magic he's seen, all he can think about is dressing up just like the ladies in his own fabulous mermaid costume: a butter-yellow curtain for his tail, the fronds of a potted fern for his headdress. But what will Abuela think about the mess he makes — and even more importantly, what will she think about how Julián sees himself?

*Hey Wall: A Story of Art and Community* by Susan Verde  
9781481453134, 4 to 8 years

One creative boy. One bare, abandoned wall. One BIG idea. There is a wall in Ángel's neighborhood. Around it, the community bustles with life: music, dancing, laughing. Not the wall. It is bleak. One boy decides to change that. But he can't do it alone. Told in elegant verse by Susan Verde and vibrantly illustrated by John Parra, this inspiring picture book celebrates the power of art to tell a story and bring a community together.

*The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats  
9780140501827, 2 to 5 years

No book has captured the magic and sense of possibility of the first snowfall better than *The Snowy Day*. Universal in its appeal, the story has become a favorite of millions, as it reveals a child's wonder at a new world, and the hope of capturing and keeping that wonder forever. The adventures of a little boy in the city on a very snowy day.

*The Umbrella* by Jan Brett  
9780399242151, 4 to 8 years

A walk through the Costa Rican cloud forest provides a wonderfully lush setting for Jan Brett's beloved animal illustrations. When Carlos drops his umbrella to climb a tree for a better view of the animals, they all cram into the banana-leaf umbrella as it floats by—from the little tree frog to the baby tapir to the big jaguar and more. It gets so crowded in the umbrella that there isn't even enough room for a little hummingbird! So over the umbrella tumbles, everyone falls out, and poor Carlos comes back wondering why he didn't see any animals all day.

### **Biography/History**

*Let's Talk About Race* by Julius Lester  
9780064462266, 4 to 8 years

Karen Barbour's dramatic, vibrant paintings speak to the heart of Lester's unique vision, truly a celebration of all of us. "This stunning picture book introduces race as just one of many chapters in a person's story" (*School Library Journal*). "Lester's poignant picture book helps children learn, grow, discuss, and begin to create a future that resolves differences" (*Children's Literature*).

*Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez...Fight for Desegregation* by Duncan Tonatiuh  
9781419710544, 6 to 9 years

A 2015 Pura Belpré Illustrator Honor Book and a 2015 Robert F. Sibert Honor Book  
Almost 10 years before *Brown vs. Board of Education*, Sylvia Mendez and her parents helped end school segregation in California. An American citizen of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage who spoke and wrote perfect English, Mendez was denied enrollment to a "Whites only" school. Her parents took action by organizing the Hispanic community and filing a lawsuit in federal district court. Their success eventually brought an end to the era of segregated education in California.

*Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles  
9780439472265 4 to 8 years

The year is 1960, and six-year-old Ruby Bridges and her family have recently moved from Mississippi to New Orleans in search of a better life. When a judge orders Ruby to attend first grade at William Frantz Elementary, an all-white school, Ruby must face angry mobs of parents who refuse to send their children to school with her.

*Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* by Doreen Rappaport  
9781423106357, 5 to 8 years

This picture-book biography is an excellent and accessible introduction for young readers to learn about one of the world's most influential leaders, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Doreen Rappaport weaves the immortal words of Dr. King into a captivating narrative to tell the story of his life. With stunning art by acclaimed illustrator Bryan Collier, *Martin's Big Words* is an unforgettable portrait of a man whose dream changed America-and the world-forever.

*Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales  
9780823440559, 4 to 8 years

In 1994, Yuyi Morales left her home in Xalapa, Mexico and came to the US with her infant son. She left behind nearly everything she owned, but she didn't come empty-handed. She brought her strength, her work, her passion, her hopes and dreams...and her stories. Caldecott Honor artist and five-time Pura Belpré winner Yuyi Morales's gorgeous new picture book *Dreamers* is about making a home in a new place.

*We March* by Shane W. Evans  
9781250073259, 4 to 8 years

On August 28, 1963, a remarkable event took place--more than 250,000 people gathered in our nation's capital to participate in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The march began at the Washington Monument and ended with a rally at the Lincoln Memorial, where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his historic "I Have a Dream" speech, advocating racial harmony. Many words have been written about that day, but few so delicate and powerful as those presented here by award-winning author and illustrator Shane W. Evans. When combined with his simple yet compelling illustrations, the thrill of the day is brought to life for even the youngest reader to experience.

*The Great Migration: Journey to the North* by Eloise Greenfield  
9780061259210, 4 to 8 years

When Eloise Greenfield was four months old, her family moved from their home in Parmele, North Carolina, to Washington, D.C. Before Jan Spivey Gilchrist was born, her mother moved from Arkansas and her father moved from Mississippi. Both settled in Chicago, Illinois. Though none of them knew it at the time, they had all become part of the Great Migration.

*Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer* by Carole Boston Weatherford  
9780763665319, 9 to 12 years

Despite fierce prejudice and abuse, even being beaten to within an inch of her life, Fannie Lou Hamer was a champion of civil rights from the 1950s until her death in 1977. Integral to the Freedom Summer of 1964, Ms. Hamer gave a speech at the Democratic National Convention that, despite President Johnson's interference, aired on national TV news and spurred the nation to support the Freedom Democrats. Featuring vibrant mixed-media art full of intricate detail, *Voice of Freedom* celebrates Fannie Lou Hamer's life and legacy with a message of hope, determination, and strength.

*Malcolm Little: The Boy Who Grew Up to Be Malcolm X* by Ilyasah Shabazz  
9781442412163, 6 to 10 years

Malcolm X grew to be one of America's most influential figures. But first, he was a boy named Malcolm Little. Written by his daughter, this inspiring picture book biography celebrates a vision of freedom and justice.

*Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis* by Jabari Asim  
9780399168567, 5 to 8 years

Critically acclaimed author Jabari Asim and Caldecott Honor-winning illustrator E. B. Lewis give readers a fascinating glimpse into the boyhood of Civil Rights leader John Lewis.

*Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni  
9780312376024, 4 to 8 years

Fifty years after her refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus, Mrs. Rosa Parks is still one of the most important figures in the American civil rights movement. This picture- book tribute to Mrs. Parks is a celebration of her courageous action and the events that followed.

## **Elementary / Middle Grade**

### **Fiction**

*One Crazy Summer* By Rita Williams Garcia  
9780060760908, 8 to 12 years

Eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern. She's had to be, ever since their mother, Cecile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. But when the sisters arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with their mother, Cecile is nothing like they imagined.

*Midnight Without a Moon* By Linda Williams Jackson  
9781328753632, 10 to 12 years

It's Mississippi in the summer of 1955, and Rose Lee Carter can't wait to move north. But for now, she's living with her sharecropper grandparents on a white man's cotton plantation. Then, one town over, an African American boy, Emmett Till, is killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman. When Till's murderers are unjustly acquitted, Rose realizes that the South needs a change . . . and that she should be part of the movement.

*Lucky Broken Girl* by Ruth Behar  
9780399546440, 10 and up

In this unforgettable multicultural coming-of-age narrative—based on the author’s childhood in the 1960s—a young Cuban-Jewish immigrant girl is adjusting to her new life in New York City when her American dream is suddenly derailed. Ruthie’s plight will intrigue readers, and her powerful story of strength and resilience, full of color, light, and poignancy, will stay with them for a long time.

*Forever, or a Long, Long Time* by Caela Carter  
9780062385680, 8 to 12 years

Flora and her brother, Julian, don’t believe they were born. They’ve lived in so many foster homes, they can’t remember where they came from. And even now that they’ve been adopted, Flora still struggles to believe that they’ve found their forever home.

*Harbor Me* by Jacqueline Woodson  
9780399252525, 10 to 13 years

It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them—everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives.

*As Brave as You Are* by Jason Reynolds  
9781481415903, 10 and up

When two brothers decide to prove how brave they are, everything backfires—literally—in this piercing middle grade novel by the winner of the Coretta Scott King – John Steptoe Award. Genie’s summer is full of surprises. The first is that he and his big brother, Ernie, are leaving Brooklyn for the very first time to spend the summer with their grandparents all the way in Virginia—in the COUNTRY! The second surprise comes when Genie figures out that their grandfather is blind. Thunderstruck and—being a curious kid—Genie peppers Grandpop with questions about how he covers it so well (besides wearing way cool Ray-Bans).

*Walking with Miss Millie* by Tamara Bundy  
9780399544569, 10 and up

Strolling with Clarence and Miss Millie quickly becomes the highlight of Alice's day and opens her eyes to all sorts of new things to marvel over. During their walks, they meet a mix of people, and Alice sees that although there are some bullies and phonies, there are plenty of kind folks, too. Miss Millie shares her family’s story with Alice, showing her the painful impact segregation has had on their town. And with Miss Millie, Alice is finally able to express her own heartache over why her family had to move there in the first place.

## **Biography/History**

*Crazy Horse’s Vision* by Joseph Bruchac  
978-1880000946, 6 and up

After his Lakota tribe is attacked by white soldiers, Crazy Horse, called Curly in his youth, goes on a "vision quest". Though he neglects the proper procedure for such a quest, the young man nevertheless succeeds. The vision that comes to him guides him through life.

S.D. Nelson's bold illustrations were inspired by paintings done in the ledger book style of the Plains Indians. The illustrator himself is of Lakota Indian descent. A 2000 Parents' Choice® Gold Award.

*John Lewis in the Lead* by Jim Haskins

9781600608490, 8 to 13 years

The son of an Alabama sharecropper, John Lewis experienced the injustice of segregation early in life. Inspired to action by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Lewis joined with civil rights leaders who believed in fighting segregation peacefully.

*Let It Shine! Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters* by Andrea Davis Pinkney

9780547906041, 6 to 9 years

Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus and sparked a boycott that changed America. Harriet Tubman helped more than three hundred slaves escape the South on the Underground Railroad. Shirley Chisholm became the first black woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. The lives these women led are part of an incredible story about courage in the face of oppression; about the challenges and triumphs of the battle for civil rights; and about speaking out for what you believe in—even when it feels like no one is listening.

*Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges

9780590189231, 8 to 12 years

In November 1960, all of America watched as a tiny six-year-old black girl, surrounded by federal marshals, walked through a mob of screaming segregationists and into her school. An icon of the civil rights movement, Ruby Bridges chronicles each dramatic step of this pivotal event in history through her own words.

*What is Race? Who are Racists? Why Does Skin Colour Matter? And Other Big Questions*

By Nikesh Shukla and Claire Heuchan

9781526303981, 10 years and up

Talk about race is often discouraged, but this book aims to bring everyone into the conversation. It explores the history of race and society, giving context to how racist attitudes come into being. It looks at belonging and identity, the damaging effects of stereotyping and the benefits of positive representation. The authors talk sensitively about how to identify and challenge racism, and how to protect against and stop racist behavior.

*Not My Idea: A Book about Whiteness* by Anastasia Higginbotham

9781948340007, 8-12 years

Named One of *School Library Journal's* Best Books Of 2018, this picture book invites white children and parents to become curious about racism, accept that it's real, and cultivate justice. *Not My Idea* offers an emotional inlet to the crisis white children experience when they know people are being harmed and they are actively discouraged from feeling anything about it. Inspired by her own children's curiosity, Higginbotham sets the story in present-day America, where a white child sees news coverage of a police shooting. The book empowers kids to seek an education in both white supremacy and those who have always fought against it—including some white people.

## Young Adult

*The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas

9780062498533, 14 and up

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger.

Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

*American Street* by Ibi Zoboi

9780062473059, 14 and up

In this stunning debut novel, Pushcart-nominated author Ibi Zoboi draws on her own experience as a young Haitian immigrant, infusing this lyrical exploration of America with magical realism and *vodou* culture. On the corner of American Street and Joy Road, Fabiola Toussaint thought she would finally find *une belle vie*—a good life. But after they leave Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Fabiola's mother is detained by U.S. immigration, leaving Fabiola to navigate her loud American cousins, Chantal, Donna, and Princess; the grittiness of Detroit's west side; a new school; and a surprising romance, all on her own. Just as she finds her footing in this strange new world, a dangerous proposition presents itself, and Fabiola soon realizes that freedom comes at a cost. Trapped at the crossroads of an impossible choice, will she pay the price for the American dream?

*All the Stars Denied* by Guadalupe Garcia McCall

9781620142813, 12 to 18 years

In the heart of the Great Depression, Rancho Las Moras, like everywhere else in Texas, is gripped by the drought of the Dust Bowl, and resentment is building among white farmers against Mexican Americans. All around town, signs go up proclaiming "No Dogs or Mexicans" and "No Mexicans Allowed." When Estrella organizes a protest against the treatment of *tejanos* in their town of Montesecco, Texas, her whole family becomes a target of "repatriation" efforts to send Mexicans "back to Mexico"—whether they were ever Mexican citizens or not. Dumped across the border and separated from half her family, Estrella must figure out a way to survive and care for her mother and baby brother. How can she reunite with her father and grandparents and convince her country of birth that she deserves to return home?

There are no easy answers in the first YA book to tackle this hidden history.

*Dear Martin* by Nic Stone

9781101939499, 14 and up

Justyce McAllister is a good kid, an honor student, and always there to help a friend—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. Despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out. Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

*Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds

9781481438254, 12 and up

An ode to Put the Damn Guns Down, this is National Book Award finalist and *New York Times* bestseller Jason Reynolds's fiercely stunning novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes a kid to decide whether or not he's going to murder the guy who killed his brother.

*Monster* by Walter Dean Myers

9780064407311, 13 and up

This *New York Times* bestselling novel from acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers tells the story of Steve Harmon, a teenage boy in juvenile detention and on trial. Presented as a screenplay of Steve's own imagination, and peppered with journal entries, the book shows how one single decision can change our whole lives.

*Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson

9780147515827, 10 and up

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. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become.

*March Trilogy* by Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell

9781603093002, 13 to 16 years

Discover the inside story of the Civil Rights Movement through the eyes of one of its most iconic figures, Congressman John Lewis. *March* is the award-winning, #1 bestselling graphic novel trilogy recounting his life in the movement, co-written with Andrew Aydin and drawn by Nate Powell.

*Piecing Me Together* by Renée Watson

9781681191072, 12 and up

Jade believes she must get out of her poor neighborhood if she's ever going to succeed. Her mother tells her to take advantage of every opportunity that comes her way. And Jade has: every day she rides the bus away from her friends and to the private school where she feels like an outsider, but where she has plenty of opportunities. But some *opportunities* she doesn't really welcome, like an invitation to join Women to Women, a mentorship program for "at-risk" girls. Just because her mentor is black and graduated from the same high school doesn't mean she understands where Jade is coming from. She's tired of being singled out as someone who needs help, someone people want to fix. Jade wants to speak, to create, to express her joys and sorrows, her pain and her hope. Maybe there are some things she could show other women about understanding the world and finding ways to be real, to make a difference.

## Adult

*White Kids: Growing Up with Privilege in a Racially Divided America* by Margaret Hagerman  
9781479803682

American kids are living in a world of ongoing public debates about race, daily displays of racial injustice, and for some, an increased awareness surrounding diversity and inclusion. In this heated context, sociologist Margaret A. Hagerman zeroes in on affluent, white kids to observe how they make sense of privilege, unequal educational opportunities, and police violence. In fascinating detail, Hagerman considers the role that they and their families play in the reproduction of racism and racial inequality in America.

*White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* by Robin DiAngelo  
9780807047415

In this “vital, necessary, and beautiful book” (Michael Eric Dyson), antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and “allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to ‘bad people’ (Claudia Rankine). Referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. In this in-depth exploration, DiAngelo examines how white fragility develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what we can do to engage more constructively.

*Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates  
9780812993547

In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation’s history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of “race,” a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden?

*The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein  
9781631494536

Widely heralded as a “masterful” (*Washington Post*) and “essential” (*Slate*) history of the modern American metropolis, Richard Rothstein’s *The Color of Law* offers “the most forceful argument ever published on how federal, state, and local governments gave rise to and reinforced neighborhood segregation” (William Julius Wilson). Exploding the myth of de facto segregation arising from private prejudice or the unintended consequences of economic forces, Rothstein describes how the American government systematically imposed residential segregation: with undisguised racial zoning; public housing that purposefully segregated previously mixed communities; subsidies for builders to create whites-only suburbs; tax exemptions for institutions that enforced segregation; and support for violent resistance to African Americans in white neighborhoods.

*I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* by Austin Channing Brown  
9781524760854

Austin Channing Brown’s first encounter with a racialized America came at age 7, when she discovered her parents named her Austin to deceive future employers into thinking she was

a white man. Growing up in majority-white schools, organizations, and churches, Austin writes, "I had to learn what it means to love blackness," a journey that led to a lifetime spent navigating America's racial divide as a writer, speaker and expert who helps organizations practice genuine inclusion.

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander  
Once in a great while a book comes along that changes the way we see the world and helps to fuel a nationwide social movement. *The New Jim Crow* is such a book. Praised by Harvard Law professor Lani Guinier as "brave and bold," this book directly challenges the notion that the election of Barack Obama signals a new era of colorblindness. With dazzling candor, legal scholar Michelle Alexander argues that "we have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it." By targeting black men through the War on Drugs and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control—relegating millions to a permanent second-class status—even as it formally adheres to the principle of colorblindness. In the words of Benjamin Todd Jealous, president and CEO of the NAACP, this book is a "call to action."

*The Best We Could Do* by Thi Bui  
9781419718786

This beautifully illustrated and emotional story is an evocative memoir about the search for a better future and a longing for the past. Exploring the anguish of immigration and the lasting effects that displacement has on a child and her family, Bui documents the story of her family's daring escape after the fall of South Vietnam in the 1970s, and the difficulties they faced building new lives for themselves. At the heart of Bui's story is a universal struggle: While adjusting to life as a first-time mother, she ultimately discovers what it means to be a parent—the endless sacrifices, the unnoticed gestures, and the depths of unspoken love. Despite how impossible it seems to take on the simultaneous roles of both parent and child, Bui pushes through. With haunting, poetic writing and breathtaking art, she examines the strength of family, the importance of identity, and the meaning of home.

*Parable of the Sower* and *Parable of the Talents* by Octavia Butler  
9780446675505, 978-0446675789

One of the world's most respected authors of science fiction imagines an apocalyptic near-future Earth where a remarkable young woman discovers that her destiny calls her to try and change the world around her. Octavia E. Butler's brilliant two-volume *Earthseed* saga offers a startling vision of an all-too-possible tomorrow, in which walls offer no protection from a civilization gone mad.

*Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson  
9780812984965

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

*So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo

In *So You Want to Talk About Race*, Editor at Large of *The Establishment* Ijeoma Oluo offers a contemporary, accessible take on the racial landscape in America, addressing head-on such issues as privilege, police brutality, intersectionality, micro-aggressions, the Black Lives

Matter movement, and the "N" word. Perfectly positioned to bridge the gap between people of color and white Americans struggling with race complexities, Oluo answers the questions readers don't dare ask, and explains the concepts that continue to elude everyday Americans.

*I Am Your Sister: Collected and Unpublished Writings* of Audre Lorde  
978-0199846450

Audre Lorde was not only a famous poet; she was also one of the most important radical black feminists of the past century. Her writings and speeches grappled with an impressive broad list of topics, including sexuality, race, gender, class, disease, the arts, parenting, and resistance, and they have served as a transformative and important foundation for theorists and activists in considering questions of power and social justice. Lorde embraced difference, and at each turn she emphasized the importance of using it to build shared strength among marginalized.

*The Cross and the Lynching Tree* by James H. Cone  
978-1626980051

The cross and the lynching tree are the two most emotionally charged symbols in the history of the African American community. In this powerful new work, theologian James H. Cone explores these symbols and their interconnection in the history and souls of black Americans.

*Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People* by Mahzarin R. Banaji & Anthony G. Greenwald  
978-0345528438

An accessible and persuasive account of the causes of stereotyping and discrimination, this book engages readers in understanding how mental processes that we are not aware of can affect what we think and what we do.

*Myths America Lives By: White Supremacy and the Stories That Give Us Meaning* by Richard T. Hughes  
978-0252083754

Six myths lie at the heart of the American experience. Taken as aspirational, four of those myths remind us of our noblest ideals, challenging us to realize our nation's promise while galvanizing the sense of hope and unity we need to reach our goals. Misused, these myths allow for illusions of innocence that fly in the face of white supremacy, the primal American myth that stands at the heart of all the others.

### **Books About Intentional Racism and Segregation**

- [\*\*The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America\*\*](#) by Richard Rothstein
- [\*\*Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City\*\*](#) by Matthew Desmond
- [\*\*Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City\*\*](#) by Antero Pietila
- [\*\*The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation\*\*](#) by Natalie Y. Moore
- [\*\*Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America \(National Book Award Winner\)\*\*](#) by Ibram X. Kendi

## **Websites:**

This interview for grown-ups: <https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/white-antiracism-living-the-legacy?fbclid=IwAR3aMlyRN0imWdwFm18qTScnGjINmBJv-oCDbZwV8-mwJ1fG0vDGBwvQSHE>

What does "white anti-racist" mean? How can guilt get in the way? And what's all this talk about being "colorblind"? Teaching Tolerance asked community activists to share their thoughts on these questions, and others. Their answers shine light on the concepts of comfort, power, privilege and identity.

The Book Riot: <https://bookriot.com/2017/10/27/10-ways-to-be-an-anti-racist-reader/>

The Brown Bookshelf: <https://thebrownbookshelf.com/>

Lee and Low Books: <https://www.leeandlow.com/>

Coretta Scott King Award-Winning Books from the American Library Association:  
<http://www.ala.org/rt/emiert/ckbookawards>

Social Justice Books: <https://socialjusticebooks.org/>

Kids Like Us: <http://www.kidslikeus.org/>

American Library Association Award Winners:  
<http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia>

\* A Racial Justice Reading List Started by Friends at All Saints Episcopal Church, Chicago