

Books

1. [A Kids Book About Racism by Jelani Memory](#)
2. **The Day You Begin**, by Jacqueline Woodson
A heartening book about finding courage to connect, even when you feel scared and alone. There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you. There are many reasons to feel different. Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from; maybe it's what you eat, or something just as random. It's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody really knows you yet, but somehow you do it. Jacqueline Woodson's lyrical text and Rafael López's dazzling art reminds us that we all feel like outsiders sometimes-and how brave it is that we go forth anyway. And that sometimes, when we reach out and begin to share our stories, others will be happy to meet us halfway. Ages 4–8. [The Day You Begin](#)
3. **Something Happened in Our Town**, by M. Celano, M. Collins, and A. Hazzard
This book follows two families — one white, one Black — as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community. The story aims to answer children's questions about such traumatic events, and to help children identify and counter racial injustice in their own lives. Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers with guidelines for discussing race and racism with children, child-friendly definitions, and sample dialogues. Ages 4–8. [Something Happened in Our Town](#)
4. **Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down** by Andrea Davis Pinkney
This picture book is a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the momentous Woolworth's lunch counter sit-in, when four college students staged a peaceful protest that became a defining moment in the struggle for racial equality and the growing civil rights movement. Andrea Davis Pinkney uses poetic, powerful prose to tell the story of these four young men, who followed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words of peaceful protest and dared to sit at the "whites only" Woolworth's lunch counter. Ages 7–10. [Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down](#)
5. **Let's Talk About Race** by Julian Lester
Julius Lester says, "I write because our lives are stories. If enough of those stories are told, then perhaps we will begin to see that our lives are the same story. The differences are merely in the details." Now Mr. Lester shares his own story as he explores what makes each of us special. Karen Barbour's dramatic, vibrant paintings speak to the heart of Lester's unique vision, truly a celebration of all of us. Ages 5-7. [Let's Talk About Race](#)
6. **Brown Girl Dreaming** by Jacqueline Woodson. Through poetry, Woodson shares her experience growing up African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Ages 8-10.

7. **Same Difference** by Calida Garcia Rawles

This book addresses the sensitive and sometimes divisive issues of beauty and identity. It has a lyrical, upbeat air that begs to be read aloud and offers an engaging rhyme pattern for young children. Vivid illustrations capture the spirit and innocence of Lida and Lisa, two first cousins who find themselves at odds with each other over their physical differences. With the help of their wise grandmother, the girls soon realize that their bond is deeper than what they see and our differences are what make us beautiful. Ages 4-8. [Same Difference](#)

8. **I Am Not a Number** by Jenny Kay Dupuis

When eight-year-old Irene is removed from her First Nations family to live in a residential school she is confused, frightened, and terribly homesick. She tries to remember who she is and where she came from, despite the efforts of the nuns who are in charge at the school and who tell her that she is not to use her own name but instead use the number they have assigned to her. When she goes home for summer holidays, Irene's parents decide never to send her and her brothers away again. But where will they hide? And what will happen when her parents disobey the law? Based on the life of co-author Jenny Kay Dupuis' grandmother, *I Am Not a Number* brings a terrible part of Canada's history to light in a way that children can learn from and relate to. Ages 7-11. [I Am Not a Number](#)

9. **The Other Side** by Jacqueline Woodson

Two young girls, one black and one white, sit on either side of a fence that divides their yards and the town. Both girls have been instructed not to go on the other side of the fence because it's not safe. When Annie, the white girl, climbs on the fence and asks to jump rope, she is told no by the leader of the black group. The narrator, Clover, has mixed feelings and is unsure whether she would have said yes or no. During the heavy summer rains, Annie is outside in her raincoat and boots, having fun splashing in puddles—but Clover must stay inside. When the rains stop, Clover goes outside and approaches Annie in the spirit of her freedom. Eventually, the story finds both girls and all of Clover's friends sitting on the fence together, kindred spirits in the end. "Someday somebody's going to come along and knock this old fence down," Annie says. This book reveals how we can also knock down old beliefs and barriers that keep people apart. Ages 5-10. [The Other Side](#)

10. **My Hair is a Garden** by Cozbi A. Cabrera

Mackenzie, young and black, does not love her hair. As a result of teasing, she tries to hide it. But Mack does love her neighbor Miss Tillie. Miss Tillie's house has been a safe space since Mack was a toddler. So, naturally, Mack seeks refuge in Miss Tillie after being bullied by a classmate over her hair. Using the beautiful garden in the backyard as a metaphor, Miss Tillie teaches Mack that her hair is like a garden: "And like every good garden, it must be cared for, every day." In the end, Mack learns that natural black hair is beautiful. Age 5-9. [My Hair is a Garden](#)

For Parents:

1. Talking to Children after Racial Incidents from the Penn GSE Newsroom
2. National Museum of African-American History and Culture Talking About Race
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>
3. Supporting Kids Of Color In Wake Of Racialized Violence from EmbraceRace
4. 60+ Resources for Talking to Kids About Racism, Lorien Van Ness
5. Talking About Racism And Bias: Resources For Parents And Caregivers, Children's Alliance
6. Parent Toolkit: How to Talk to Kids About Race and Racism
<https://www.parenttoolkit.com/social-and-emotional-development/advice/social-awareness/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-race-and-racism>
7. 4 Things We Should All Teach Kids About Racism Right Now by Mia McKenzie
8. Talking to Kids about Racial Violence, by Haig Chahinian
9. USA Today - George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor: What Do We Tell Our Children?
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/05/31/how-talk-kids-racism-racial-violence-police-brutality/5288065002/>
10. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/family/in-the-news/talking-about-race/>
11. https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/beyond_golden_rule.pdf
12. 7 Things to Do When Your Kid Points Out Someone's Differences, by Rachel Garlinghouse.
13. Talking With Children About Racism, Police Brutality and Protests, by Laura Markham.
14. Here's How To Raise Race-Conscious Children by Erin Winkler
15. 100 Race-Conscious Things you can Say to your Child to Advance Racial Justice from Raising Race Conscious Children
16. Talking to Kids about Racial Stereotypes – Tip Sheet, Media Smarts