This online resource list accompanies the book *Something Happened in Our Town*, a picture book which introduces young children to the topics of racial injustice and police shootings. The book also includes information for parents or caretakers to help them encourage children to value diversity. In this resource list, the authors provide the following additional information:

- Lists of books for young children about
  1. resisting racial bias and advocating for civil rights, and
  2. accepting oneself and valuing diversity;
- Additional resource lists including books supporting racial pride for children of diverse ethnicities, books about Africa, resources for multicultural families, anti-bullying books, resources about community violence, and resources about racial injustice for older children;
- Additional resources for parents; and
- Additional resources for teachers.

**Book Lists for Young Children**

This section includes two lists of picture books designed for children ages 4 to 8. **List 1** contains books about racial discrimination or civil rights which include an anti-bias message. **List 2** includes books which promote general self-acceptance and the value of diversity. Many of the authors and illustrators on this list have multiple books which may be of interest to families and young readers. A suggested age range is also offered for each book, although some books may also be appropriate for younger or older children. The books listed below were reviewed by one of the three psychologists who authored *Something Happened in Our Town*, or by Nell Harvey Booker, a retired elementary school librarian for the Nashville Public Schools, or Glenda Harvey, a retired elementary school principal and teacher in the Detroit Public School system.

**Book List 1: Resisting Racial Bias and Advocating for Civil Rights**


*Harriet Tubman’s life story helps children learn about key historical issues such as slavery, the Underground Railroad, and the Civil War.* (Ages 4–8)


*Illustrated by historic photographs, this is the story of a courageous 6-year-old Black girl who integrated an all White New Orleans school.* (Ages 4–5)


*This inspirational book covers key figures in the civil rights movement who paved the way for the first African-American president.* (Ages 4–8)
*Baseball-loving Willie sees a game between the Major Leaguers and Negro Leaguers in the 1940s which fuels his determination to work hard, excel, and overcome prejudice.* (Ages 6–8)

*Sarah Roberts and her family challenge school segregation in 1840s Boston.* (Ages 6–8)

*African-American parents teach their son strategies for safely managing potential encounters with police.* (Ages 6–8)

*A series of poems portrays how the friendship between two Black girls helps them overcome the problems and prejudices they encounter.* (Ages 6–8)

*After hearing about a police shooting of an unarmed African American man, a white girl becomes aware of race and racism.* (Ages 6–8; publisher lists age range of 8–12)

*Classmates tell Grace that she can’t play Peter Pan because she is a Black girl, but that’s not the end of the story!* (Ages 4–8)

*Through the eyes of one child, this book celebrates the first African-American Emancipation Day, when freedom finally reached the last slaves in the South.* (Ages 4–8)

*This book presents Rosa’s life story as she stood up for civil rights and justice.* (Ages 4–8)

*Sections of MLK’s famous speech are beautifully illustrated in this introduction to the notable civil rights leader.* (Ages 6–8)

*A week of protests left many shops boarded up after the 2014 shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. This inspirational book documents the art that volunteers and artists created on those boards, conveying messages of hope for healing.* (Ages 4–8)

*Henry devises a unique plan to escape slavery after suffering the pain of multiple family losses.* (Ages 4–8)
*Based on the 1964 Mississippi Freedom School Summer Project, this story features a brave teacher and student facing violent resistance to change. (Ages 4–8)*

*Tosh learns that his grandmother’s tea cake recipe was passed down from an ancestor who was a slave. (Ages 4–8)*

*This book tells the story of MLK Jr.’s life in simple language, conveying a message of brotherhood among all people. (Ages 4–8)*

*This intergenerational tale contrasts the discrimination faced by Joseph’s grandfather in the 1950s and 1960s with his many strengths. Readers learn about overcoming racial discrimination and striving to use your hands to do whatever inspires you. (Ages 4–8)*

*Set in the segregated South, two girls find an inventive way to overcome Jim Crow laws. (Ages 6–8)*

*At night, an African American boy secretly shows his best friend, a Jewish boy, how to throw a big-league slider, and his friend lets him try his violin. With family support, they summon the courage to cross the alley and reveal their friendship during the day. (Ages 4–8)*

*Frederick Douglass began life as a slave but learned to read and escaped to the North. He was an inspirational leader in the campaign to abolish slavery. (Ages 4–8)*

*This inspiring book tells the story of Nelson Mandela as he challenges apartheid in South Africa and wins the Nobel Peace Prize. Young readers will learn the importance of standing up for the equality of all people. (Ages 4–8)*

*A boy writes about meeting Malcolm X and his father’s bookstore, the National Memorial African Bookstore. (Ages 6–8)*

*With poetic storytelling and vibrant illustrations, this book tells the story of the sit-in by four young Black activists at the Woolworth’s lunch counter in the 1960s. (Ages 6–8)*
In the 1950s, Ruth and her parents drive from Chicago to Alabama and use the Green Book to find places that will welcome them in the segregated South. (Ages 6–8)

This beautifully illustrated brief biography of the civil rights icon includes some of MLK’s memorable quotes. (Ages 4–8)

The daughter of Jackie Robinson writes about an American family visiting their extended family in Tanzania and learning about slavery. The story encourages children’s interest in their family roots and genealogical history. (Ages 4–8)

The daughter of Malcolm X writes about how his childhood and family experiences shaped his identity and values. (Ages 6–8)

The daughter of civil rights leader Andrew Young provides a humane and community-oriented account of her experiences. (Ages 6–8)

The White House was built by diverse individuals, including slaves, some of whom were able to buy their freedom. (Ages 4–5)

In 1947, a Latino family successfully challenges school segregation in California. (Ages 6–8)

Gordon Parks was a self-taught photographer who documented social injustice and later became the first Black Hollywood director. (Ages 4–8)

Harriet Tubman’s deep faith in God inspires her to free herself and others from slavery. This beautifully illustrated book won a Caldecott Honor Award and a Coretta Scott King Award. (Ages 4–8)

In the 1960s South, laws against segregation are overturned, but attitudes are harder to change at the neighborhood swimming pool. This story is told from the perspective of a white child, with a positive message that friendship can overcome societal barriers. (Ages 4–8)
**Book List 2: Accepting Oneself and Valuing Diversity**

This engaging story of a lost and bullied sweet potato encourages children not to reject others based on their “outsides” but to value everyone’s uniqueness. (Ages 4–5)

Competition between three friends, each trying to be the best, leads to resentment until they learn to appreciate their differences. (Ages 4–5)

*Blackbird* celebrates his color but also values diversity and conveys that beauty comes from within. (Ages 4–8)

An African American girl conveys messages of self-acceptance, inclusion, and kindness. (Ages 4–8)

In this award-winning story, CJ’s grandmother helps him appreciate the beauty in his life, despite challenging economic circumstances. (Ages 4–5)

A Black child is teased by White peers and initially wishes to look differently but learns to love himself. (Ages 4–5)

This book lovingly describes and pictures the diverse skins and hair of the world’s children. (Ages 4–5)

Harris, J., & Wescott, N. (2016). *Who we are! All about being the same and being different.* Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.  
On a family excursion, two children discuss many similarities and differences, including skin color, and learn to treat others the way they want to be treated. (Ages 4–5)

This compilation of poems, essays, illustrations, and photographs offers inspiration and encouragement to children of color and their allies during challenging times. (Ages 6–8 and older)

As a multicultural group of children play in the park, they recognize their similarities despite some physical differences. Presented as a rap, the story and illustrations capture the joy of childhood. (Ages 4–8)

*Our first Black president writes about thirteen groundbreaking Americans and encourages each of us to pursue our dreams. (Ages 4–8)*


*This is a delightful Christmas and Hanukkah story about a cross-cultural friendship between an African-American and Jewish family. (Ages 4–8)*


*This book helps children understand what it feels like to be excluded. (Ages 4–8)*


*Charles, an African-American boy, gets to know his new classmate Hector, who is from Puerto Rico. (Ages 6–8)*


*Keyana handles peer teasing and learns to appreciate her special hair. (Ages 4–8)*


*This book defines race and racism and encourages children to appreciate diversity while recognizing our common humanity. (Ages 4–5)*


*This clever rhyming book celebrates the colors and usefulness of our diverse skins. (Ages 4–5)*


*A friendship between a White and African-American child exposes how racism is taught to children. The author illustrates how barriers can be broken when children are curious enough to learn about other cultures. (Ages 4–8)*


*This book is about finding the courage to connect with others when you feel different from peers in school due to race, culture, or other reasons. (Ages 4–8)*
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

Here are some starting points to identify resources on additional topics:

Books supporting racial pride for children of diverse ethnicities

This is an organization devoted to increasing children's access to books that reduce bias and promote positive identity development.


Latinx in Kids Lit. Retrieved from https://latinosinkidlit.com/books-we-have-read-reviewed/
This website recommends children's picture books featuring Latinx characters and themes. Other sections of the website provide suggestions for older children.

The mission of this nonprofit is “putting more books that feature diverse characters into the hands of all children.” Their Our Story app helps one choose books which address particular issues of interest.

Books about Africa

This website provides annotations and scholarly reviews of children's and young adult books about Africa, which celebrate Africa's geography, history, and people. This resource list covers picture books, with asterisks by award winners. Additional lists for older children are also available. We recommend reading some of these selections to children to help balance the negative associations that they may have if they first learn about Africa in the context of enslavement.

From sunset to sunrise, this book contrasts the activities of people in Johannesburg with those of the animals in Kruger National Park. (Ages 4–8)

Set in Uganda, a pair of sisters find lost objects and dream of the future. (Ages 4–8)

This book features the true story of a woman in the Gambia who developed a way to recycle and repurpose plastic bags to improve her community. (Ages 6–8 and older)
Resources for multicultural children and families


*An energetic boy embraces his biracial identity.* (Ages 4–8)


*The main character has a Caucasian mother and Latino father. In this beautifully illustrated book she finds joy in the colors of the world, including the colors of her family.* (Ages 4–5)

*This is an organization dedicated to raising awareness of mixed heritage people and families.*

Anti-bullying books for children

*With his mother’s help, a boy changes a bully’s understanding of him, and gets her to stop teasing him.* (Ages 4–8)


*A wordless book about a new student who is the victim of bullying and a bystander who becomes an ally.* (Ages 4–8)

*A girl moves from being a silent bystander to an advocate in her diverse classroom. The book also includes a section of concrete suggestions for children about how to stand up to bullies.* (Ages 6–8)

*An African-American principal helps a bully making racist taunts overcome what he hears at home and begin to appreciate himself and others.* (Ages 6–8)

*Big Red is the bully in this story, but Little Bitty Wolf finds a clever way to make her stop.* (Ages 4–8)


*Written by a civil rights icon, this book illustrates how to handle bullying and maintain compassion for others.* (Ages 6–8)

Books and resources about community violence


Books and media resources about racial injustice for older children

*Black-ish* episode (“Juneteenth,” Season 4, Episode 1)

*In the context of a lively discussion of the Juneteenth holiday, the Johnsons perform a series of Broadway style numbers which address slavery and the African-American contribution to the American economy. Available through Hulu or Amazon or other streaming services.*


*Parents of color discuss instances of police mistreatment with their children and suggest how to respond to police to reduce the likelihood of being injured. Viewers may not agree with all parents’ approaches, but this emotionally intense video challenges us to think about the impact of racially-biased police practices.*


*A creative 14-year-old talks about his own white privilege in a poetry slam.*


*This engaging book provides middle school children with pragmatic ideas about different aspects of social justice activism such as volunteering, raising money for causes, making signs, and planning a march.*

This award-winning young adult novel explores the aftermath of a white policeman's unjust beating of Rashad, an African-American youth. Rashad grapples with his role as a symbol of his community's experiences of police brutality, while a white classmate who witnessed the incident struggles with conflicting loyalties.


The narrator of this story is Jerome, a 12-year-old Black boy who is killed by a policeman. The book is aimed at middle schoolers and uses the voice of Jerome’s ghost to explore racism, family and peer relationships, and the power of bearing witness.


This website has a variety of multicultural and social justice books organized by topic area.


In this award-winning young adult novel, 16-year-old Starr is drawn to activism when she witnesses her unarmed African-American friend being shot by a police officer.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ADULTS**

**Parent Resources**

You may have found reading this book to your child to be thought-provoking for yourself. To increase your knowledge about racial issues and to become more comfortable discussing these topics, we have provided a list of helpful articles and websites:


Dr. Celano provides insight into why the authors of *Something Happened in Our Town* wrote the book and what they hope readers will gain from reading it.

This website offers booklists for diverse age groups and anti-bias topics, anti-bullying resources, and guides for meaningful family discussions about current events/social justice topics.


This nonprofit aims to end police violence by enacting policies to limit police intervention, improve community interaction, and ensure accountability.

Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. (2017). *Scene on radio: Seeing white.* Available free from Itunes or other streaming sites.

This is an engaging and informative 14-part podcast that helps White people critically examine their own racial identity. After listening, you will have a much clearer and deeper understanding of the social construction of race and institutional racism.


This two-hour documentary covers the increasingly necessary conversation taking place across the country between parents of color and their children about how to behave if they are stopped by the police. The film provides a helpful historical context which illuminates the challenges facing families and police officers.


A web-based blog and resource library for sharing best practices for raising and caring for all kids in the context of race.


Grounded in scholarship on racial identity and racial socialization, this book provides practical advice on how to raise white children to be allies in the struggle against racism.


A theologian committed to social justice reflects on “doing her own work” as she seeks to more deeply understand what it means to be white in the United States.

A web-based resource primarily geared towards White parents, including blogs, webinars, and podcasts.


TED Talk of interest to all parents.


An African-American writer offers her thoughts on how White allies can be helpful in understanding and fighting systemic racism.

Teacher resources

The authors have prepared a handout to assist teachers who would like to read Something Happened in Our Town to a group of young children. You can download those Read Aloud Tips for Educators at http://www.apa.org/pubs/magination/441B228.aspx

Below we list general resources to support teachers in providing anti-bias education to students across all ages. Some of the resources listed in the Parent Resources section may also be helpful to educators.


Social justice resource list.


_This brief article captures why it is important for librarians to facilitate race-related discussions when reading with children. A resource list offers practical examples about how to do this skillfully._


_Classroom activities searchable by age and topic compiled by Southern Poverty Law Center._