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Children's Books

❖ [*All the Colors We Are: The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color* by Katie Kissinger](#)

- **Description:** This book deals with skin color in a straightforward, scientifically accurate, child-friendly manner. Young children are curious about why people have different skin colors, and too often teachers are tempted to brush this curiosity aside in the name of a glib “We’re all the same.” The book is the product of Kissinger’s years-long work with children, and features valuable teaching suggestions to get children thinking imaginatively and unselfconsciously about skin color. The book, including teaching ideas, is fully bilingual in English and Spanish.
- **Read-Aloud:** Not Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ [*Black is brown is tan* by Arnold Adoff](#)

- **Description:** This book centers around a biracial Black and white family and describes all of the physical colors that they are. With beautiful illustrations, it depicts several scenes of the family living their daily life and talking about the different colors that they are, including the different kinds of red that both parents turn when upset and the tan that the kids develop when playing outside during the summer. This book does a good job of asserting the validity of all skin pigmentations—there’s not just one way to look or be Black. It’s also a story poem, which could be a great way to mix up the readings for class!
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ [*Black Is a Rainbow Color* by Angela Joy](#)

- **Description:** This book starts with a discussion of Black as a physical color then develops into walking the reader through Black culture and histories, featuring figures like Thurgood Marshall as well as child-friendly illustrations of people rallying for the Black Lives Matter movement. This book also reads as a poem, with each line starting with “Black is.” With lots of

allusion, this book provides an opportunity for students to connect with many aspects of Black culture and history, for example, quoting lyrics from Nina Simone's *Don't Explain*.

- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ **[The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi](#)**

- **Description:** This book follows the story of Unhei, a new student at a school who's just moved from Korea. Because of anxiety about whether the other kids will like her, she doesn't introduce herself after students on the bus mispronounced her name. Eventually she chooses her own name after a friend intervenes in her classroom. This book speaks to an experience that many people with non-American/English names have when introducing themselves in new spaces.
- **Read-Aloud:** Not Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ **[Fry Bread by Kevin Noble Maillard](#)**

- **Description:** This book starts with a description of how to make fry bread, then physical descriptions, then goes into Indigenous histories and culture, notably pointing out the differences between names of states (Delaware, Georgia, Colorado, etc.) and the names of nations (Seminole, Ojibwe, Narragansett). It ends on the note that Indigenous people are still here, combatting the large erasure of that narrative. The author is a member of the Seminole nation of Oklahoma and features the likenesses of his own family in the illustrations for the book.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ **[Is it a Mermaid? By Candy Gourlay](#)**

- **Description:** This story revolves around a brother and sister who come across a mermaid at the beach. While Benji urges that she is a dugong (a species of sea cow), his sister, Bel, immediately accepts and respects the mermaid's self-identification. At the end of the story, Benji realizes that his behavior has hurt the mermaid's feelings and follows his sister's example. This story's message provides a really nice way of explaining the importance of respecting

others' identities regardless of the assumptions we have about what that identity "should" look like. It also features Filipinx children and is set in the Philippines, with beautiful illustrations showcasing the country's beaches and ocean life.

- **Read-Aloud:** Not Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ **[We Came to America by Faith Ringold](#)**

- **Description:** *We Came to America* is an ode to every American who came before us, and a tribute to each child who will carry its proud message of diversity into our nation's future. America is a country rich in diversity — From the Native Americans who first called this land their home, to the millions of people who have flocked to its shores ever since. Some of our ancestors were driven by dreams and hope. Others came in chains, or were escaping poverty or persecution. No matter what brought them here, each person embodied a unique gift—their art and music, their determination and grit, their stories and their culture. And together they forever shaped the country we all call home.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Question:** Included

❖ **[Hands Up by Breanna Michael Jr](#)**

- **Description:** Breanna McDaniel shows us in this children's picture book, illustrated by Shane Evans, that raising our hands can have both positive and joyous effects in our lives. We watch as she grows from a little girl raising her hands in early morning, stretching them high. Or just doing everyday things like raising hands in play with her parents or getting dressed. Getting older, you can reach higher. Or raising your hands because you know the answer to the questions asked in school. Hands up while riding your bike, playing basketball, giving a high five, or when singing praises. Finally, she raises her hands together with others to show support in protest a march for her cause and those causes of others. There can be positive side to things we face in everyday life, you just must look for it.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Question:** Included

❖ **[The Hula Hoopin' Queen by Thelma Lynne Godin](#)**

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- A spunky African American girl has a hula-hooping competition with her friends in Harlem, and soon everyone in the neighborhood-young and old alike-joins in on the fun. With vibrant illustrations by Vanessa Brantley-Newton, *The Hula-Hoopin' Queen* is a charming celebration of family and community ties. Set in Harlem, this intergenerational story shows the importance of staying young at heart.
 - **Read-Aloud:** Included
 - **Discussion Question:** Included

❖ [My Papi Has a Motorcycle by Isable Quintero](#)

- **Description:** This joyful, vibrant picture book presents a loving father-daughter story through the effective use of comics visual vocabulary. As Daisy and her father tour their favorite spots, she expands on the charms of their beloved, working-class town — Corona, California. “Daisy's experiences mirror Quintero's childhood memories, recounted through tender language and vivid sensory details,” writes reviewer Jessica Agudelo in *School Library Journal*. “Recalling the motorcycle rides with her papi is an exercise in familial love, but also a way to honor a hometown and present the changes from gentrification. Although the topic is touched upon lightly, its complexity percolates and becomes much more vivid with multiple reads.” The book's core message, “Home is a feeling you take with you,” can offer comfort to readers across all kinds of communities who are experiencing instability and uncertainty in this moment.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Question:** Included

❖ [We've Got the Whole World in Our Hands/Tenemos El Mundo Entero en las Manos by Rafael López](#)

- **Description:** We've been thinking a lot about how stay-at-home orders are about the common good, and we're trying to communicate that message to our kids and to others in our circles of family and friends. Although Rafael López's picture book has a clear green/environmentalist focus, we think it also speaks to the sense of mutuality at the heart of any hopes we have in the midst of this pandemic and the simultaneous wave of racialized violence occurring in the United States. Its words and pictures embody the values of interconnectedness we want to live and to pass on to our children.

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- **Read-Aloud:** Included (Bilingual Option Included)
 - **Discussion Question:** Included

❖ **[Baba, What Does My Name Mean? A Journey to Palestine by Rifk Ebeid](#)**

- **Description:** When Saamidah, a young Palestinian refugee, is asked by her friends what her name means, she isn't quite sure what to say. She turns to her baba for some answers - but what she gets is an adventure beyond her wildest dreams. Join Saamidah on a lyrical journey, with dazzling illustrations, that brings to life her beloved homeland and celebrates the richness of her cultural heritage and the determination to return.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ **[Race Cars by Jenny Devenny](#)**

- **Description:** Race Cars is a children's book about white privilege. It was created to serve as a springboard for parents and educators to facilitate tough conversations with their kids about race, privilege and oppression. Race Cars tells the story of 2 best friends, a white car and a black car, that have different experiences and face different rules while entering the same race. Why is this book important? As early as 6 months, a baby's brain can notice race-based differences, by ages 2 to 4, children can internalize racial bias and start assigning meaning to race. 5 to 8-year-olds begin to place value judgments on similarities and differences. By age 12 children have a complete set of stereotypes about every racial, ethnic, and religious group in society. Our guidance is especially crucial during this impressionable time. Race Cars offers a simplistic, yet powerful way to introduce these complicated themes to our children and is a worthy addition to classroom and home libraries.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ **[Bilal Cooks Daal by Aisha Saeed](#)**

- **Description:** Six-year-old Bilal is excited to help his dad make his favorite food of all-time: daal! The slow-cooked lentil dish from South Asia requires lots of ingredients and a whole lot of waiting. Bilal wants to introduce his friends to daal. They've never tried it! As the day goes

on, the daal continues to simmer, and more kids join Bilal and his family, waiting to try the tasty dish. And as time passes, Bilal begins to wonder: Will his friends like it as much as he does? AThis debut picture book by Aisha Saeed, with charming illustrations by Anoosha Syed, uses food as a means of bringing a community together to share in each other's family traditions.

- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ *Eyes That Kiss in the Corners* by [Joanna Ho](#)

➤ **Description:** A young Asian girl notices that her eyes look different from her peers'. They have big, round eyes and long lashes. She realizes that her eyes are like her mother's, her grandmother's, and her little sister's. They have eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea, crinkle into crescent moons, and are filled with stories of the past and hope for the future. Drawing from the strength of these powerful women in her life, she recognizes her own beauty and discovers a path to self-love and empowerment. This powerful, poetic picture book will resonate with readers of all ages.

- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ *Visiting Day* by [Jacqueline Woodson](#)

➤ **Description:** In this moving picture book from multi-award winning author Jacqueline Woodson, a young girl and her grandmother prepare for a very special day--the one day a month they get to visit the girl's father in prison. "Only on visiting day is there chicken frying in the kitchen at 6 a.m, and Grandma in her Sunday dress, humming soft and low." As the little girl and her grandmother get ready, her father, who adores her, is getting ready, too, and readers get to join the community of families who make the trip together, as well as the triumphant reunion between father and child, all told in Woodson's trademark lyrical style, and beautifully illustrated by James Ransome.

- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ [The People Shall Continue by Simon J. Ortiz](#)

- **Description:** Told in the rhythms of traditional oral narrative, this powerful telling of the history of the Native/Indigenous peoples of North America recounts their story from Creation to the invasion and usurpation of Native lands. As more and more people arrived, The People saw that the new men did not respect the land. The People witnessed the destruction of their Nations and the enslavement of their people. The People fought hard, but eventually agreed to stop fighting and signed treaties. Many things changed and became more difficult, but The People continued to farm and create crafts. They remembered and told their children, “You are Shawnee. You are Lakota. You are Pima. You are Acoma...You are all these Nations of the People.” The People held onto their beliefs and customs and found solidarity with other oppressed people. And despite struggles against greed, destruction of their lands, and oppression, The People persisted.
- **Read-Aloud:** Not Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ [Jacob's New Dress by Sarah and Ian Hoffman](#)

- **Description:** Jacob loves playing dress-up, when he can be anything he wants to be. Some kids at school say he can't wear “girl” clothes, but Jacob wants to wear a dress to school. Can he convince his parents to let him wear what he wants? This heartwarming story speaks to the unique challenges faced by boys who don't identify with traditional gender roles.
- **Read -Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

❖ [And Tango Makes Three by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell](#)

- **Description:** And Tango Makes Three is the heartwarming true story of two penguins who create a nontraditional family. At the penguin house at the Central Park Zoo, two penguins named Roy and Silo were a little bit different from the others. But their desire for a family was the same. And with the help of a kindly zookeeper, Roy and Silo got the chance to welcome a baby penguin of their very own.
- **Read-Aloud:** Included
- **Discussion Questions:** Included

A Children's History

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Other Resources:

- ❖ **Guide:** [10 Tips for Selecting Anti-Racist Children's Books](#)