

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS: A Guidebook on Race & Racism



AN INTRODUCTION
TO ANTIRACIST
PEDAGOGY



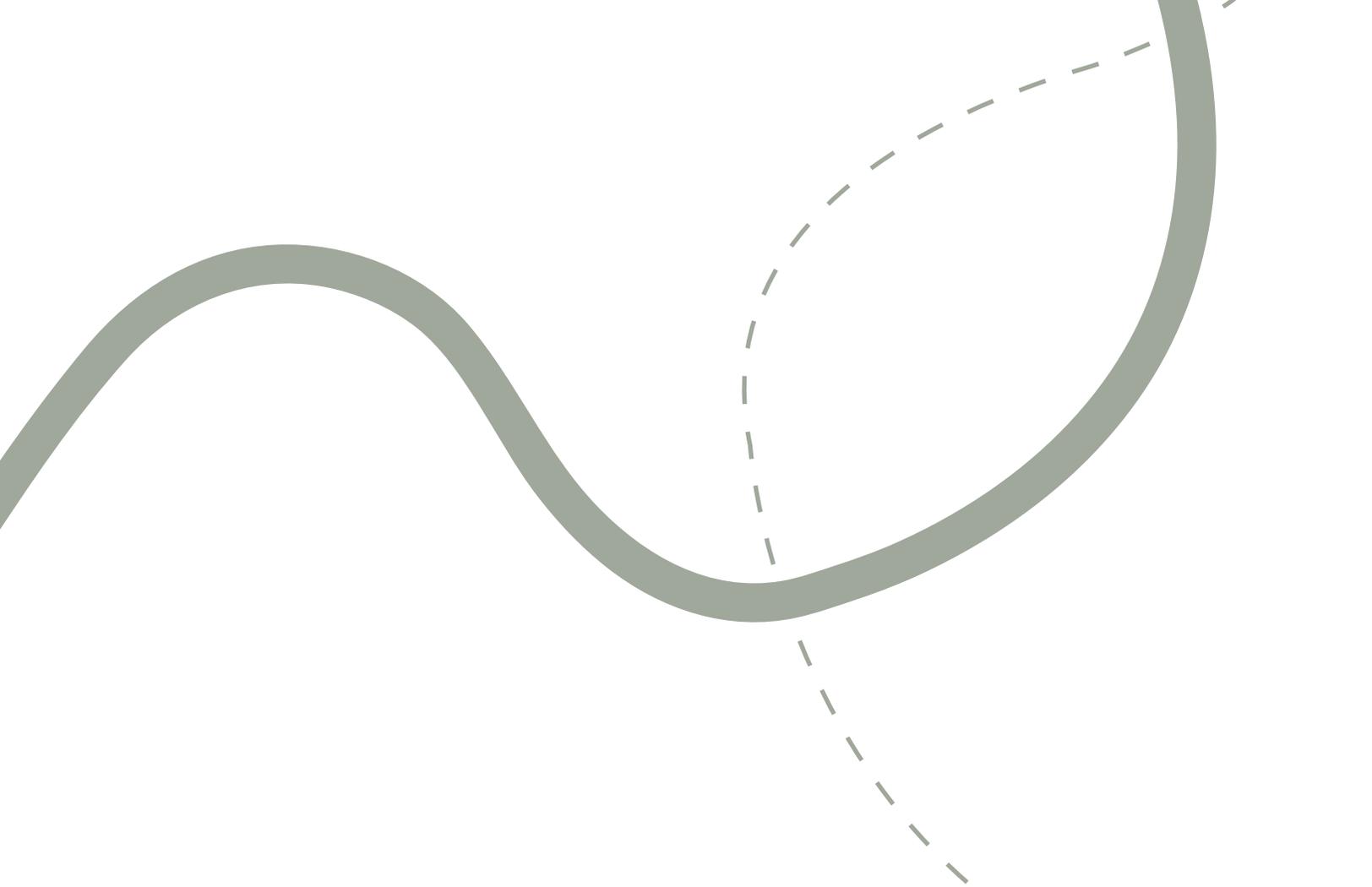
The "Empowering Educators" Series is
presented by First Book and Pizza Hut.

WHAT IS
ANTIRACIST
PEDAGOGY?

RACISM EXISTS WITHIN AND
BEYOND SCHOOLS AND
COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING.
ANTIRACIST PEDAGOGY ADDRESSES
AND SEEKS TO CORRECT IMPLIED
AND OVERT FORMS OF BIAS AND
PRIVILEGE IN EDUCATION.

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First Book is committed to removing barriers to quality education through providing books and learning resources to classrooms and programs serving children in need, from birth to age 18.



Pizza Hut is the proprietor of The Literacy Project, an initiative designed to enable access to books and educational resources, empower teachers, and inspire a lifelong love of reading. The program is rooted in the foundation set by the Pizza Hut BOOK IT! Program, which is the nation's longest-running corporate-supported literacy program.

A LETTER FROM OUR PARTNERS

Dear Educator,

First Book and Pizza Hut are proud to present ***Empowering Educators: A Guidebook on Race & Racism***. Developed in response to a nationwide survey of First Book members who expressed an urgent need to better understand how inequities impact their students and learning communities, we hope you find this guidebook an invaluable resource in your personal and professional development.

As two organizations historically committed to promoting literacy, First Book and Pizza Hut are honored to partner on the 2020-2021 ***Empowering Educators*** series, which includes this guidebook, forthcoming instructional videos, and other pedagogic resources. Our goal is to empower educators so they can help their students engage in effective, courageous conversations about race and social justice. By providing actionable steps to create equity and meaningful change, this work is essential to ensure that all children thrive in our multiracial society. The Guidebook is also designed to be used by organizations, communities, and families that are also looking to build greater understanding.

Educators not only impact a child's academic and social-emotional development, but also their character, self-esteem, and self-image. Research shows that when young people engage in productive conversations about race they:

- Positively embrace their own racial identities;
- Develop critical thinking skills to analyze the impact of race and equity in their communities; and
- Develop empathy, compassion, and confidence in having meaningful discussions about racial and social justice.

Empowering Educators: A Guidebook on Race & Racism was informed by some of our nation's leading antiracist and anti-bias experts. We hope you find this guidebook and other resources in the ***Empowering Educators*** series helpful in your work. And we want to personally thank you for making the commitment to be part of the collective change.

In solidarity,



Kyle Zimmer
President, CEO, and Co-founder
First Book



Artie Starrs
Chief Executive Officer
Pizza Hut

INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF ANTIRACISM IN EDUCATION

The United States of America is home to nearly 330 million people, and race and racism have been part of its collective history since the first English colonists arrived in 1607. Yet historical texts often focus more on the nation's industrial and financial achievements and less on the social construction of race and its lasting implications. Educational pedagogy rarely centers on *how* race was developed nor how it continues to influence social behaviors and political engagement. In a 2019 survey of First Book members, the majority of educators expressed a desire to understand and address systemic racism and bias, especially in learning environments. There was just one problem—they didn't know *how*.

Despite scientific evidence that there are no biological differences in people based on skin tones, hair textures or other physical features, the myth of a racial hierarchy remains a dominant part of America's culture. Unfortunately, the social construct of race



continues to play a significant role in how people view and interact with each other. And this can have very damaging effects in the classroom and other learning environments.

The *Empowering Educators* Guidebook provides support for educators seeking to increase their personal awareness of race and racism, as well as direction on how to ground learning environments through inclusive curriculum and diverse, affirming literature. This guidebook is *not* intended to be the only resource for educators but one of many used to “do the work” to support antiracism in education.



Did You Know?

Science has proven that **race** is not biological. That is to say, there is no gene that is common to all Black people nor a cluster of genes that all White people inherit. Rather, race is one of many **social constructs**—ideas that have been created and accepted by society. Belief in a biological racial hierarchy is the root cause of **racism**—a system of advantages based on one's skin color that benefits some individuals while causing harm to others.

"RACE IS
AN IDEA,
NOT A FACT."

NELL IRVIN PAINTER,
Historian

By 2043, BIPOC will comprise the majority of America's population. This forthcoming shift means that today's youngest students will graduate into and lead a nation that is more diverse than ever before. Through the **Empowering Educators** series, First Book and the Pizza Hut want to ensure that teaching professionals are adequately prepared to educate and support the next generation on understanding and, hopefully, *eradicating* systemic racism and injustices.

WHAT DOES
BIPOC
MEAN?

BIPOC IS A TERM
USED TO REPRESENT
BLACK, INDIGENOUS,
PEOPLE OF COLOR.



A FEW IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

Race: The grouping of humans based on shared physical and/or social qualities into categories generally viewed as distinct by society; this also comprises one's racial identity.

Racism: (1) The belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race; (2) a system of advantages and disadvantages based on one's physical and/or social qualities; and (3) having personal prejudice and bias against others based solely on their physical and/or social qualities.

Systemic racism: Institutional, legalized racial discrimination; rules, practices, and customs that negatively impact some races while benefitting others.

Privilege: A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, people of color.

ABAR: Anti-bias, antiracist; ABAR educational pedagogy is teaching against bias and racism.

Ethnicity: Usually an inherited status that groups people by shared culture, ancestry, language, homeland, ritual, and/or physical appearance.

Nationality: One's status of belonging to a nation whether by birth or by naturalization.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

Informed by leading ABAR subject matter experts, the **Empowering Educators** Guidebook is organized into three parts with related actionable steps:

Part I: The Inner Work

Step 1: *Understanding the History*

Step 2: *Increasing Your Awareness*

Step 3: *Acknowledging Personal Bias and Prejudice*

Part II: The Outer Work

Step 4: *Creating Your Framework*

Step 5: *Evaluating Your Classroom Culture*

Step 6: *Structuring Your Lesson Plans*

Part III: The Power of Literature

Step 7: *Leading with Positive Narratives (Instead of Trauma)*

Step 8: *Using an ABAR Lens to Select Books*

Step 9: *Guiding Conversations with Stories*

Educators are encouraged to begin with Part I, which provides an historical overview of America's racialized laws, policies, and practices and is structured to expand personal awareness of biases and prejudices. Part II includes an overview of liberatory teaching, how to evaluate and change classroom cultures, and helpful tips on creating inclusive curriculum and lesson plans. Lastly, Part III highlights the power of literature to teach and create meaningful change.

WHAT IS
ABAR?

ABAR IS AN ACRONYM FOR 'ANTI-BIAS, ANTIRACIST.' ABAR EDUCATION SUPPORTS ALL CHILDREN'S FULL DEVELOPMENT IN OUR MULTIRACIAL, MULTILINGUAL, MULTICULTURAL WORLD.

ABAR EDUCATION IS DESIGNED TO GIVE STUDENTS THE TOOLS TO STAND UP TO PREJUDICE, STEREOTYPING, BIAS, AND EVENTUALLY INSTITUTIONAL 'ISMS.'¹

LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE

Why Is It So Hard to Have Conversations about Race?

- I am afraid of saying the wrong thing to my students, especially something that might reveal an unconscious bias.
- If I say the wrong thing, I am afraid of being called a racist.
- Even though I am a BIPOC, I am not an authority on antiracism.
- Having conversations about race may not change anything.

The Benefits of Having Conversations about Race

- My students will feel seen and validated.
- My students will expand their awareness of and ability to analyze racial disparities and inequities.
- My students will learn the importance of addressing race and taking action to support policies and practices that benefit everyone.
- I will become a better educator.

¹ Louise Derman-Sparks and Julie Olsen Edwards, *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves* (Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2010).

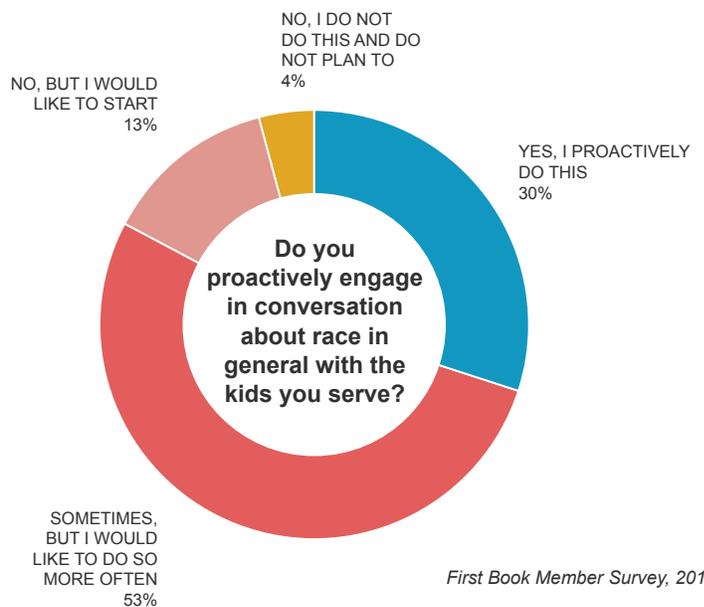
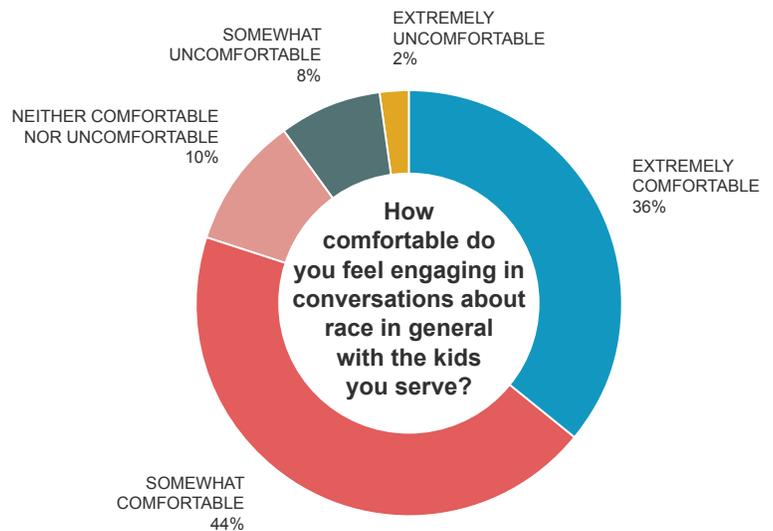
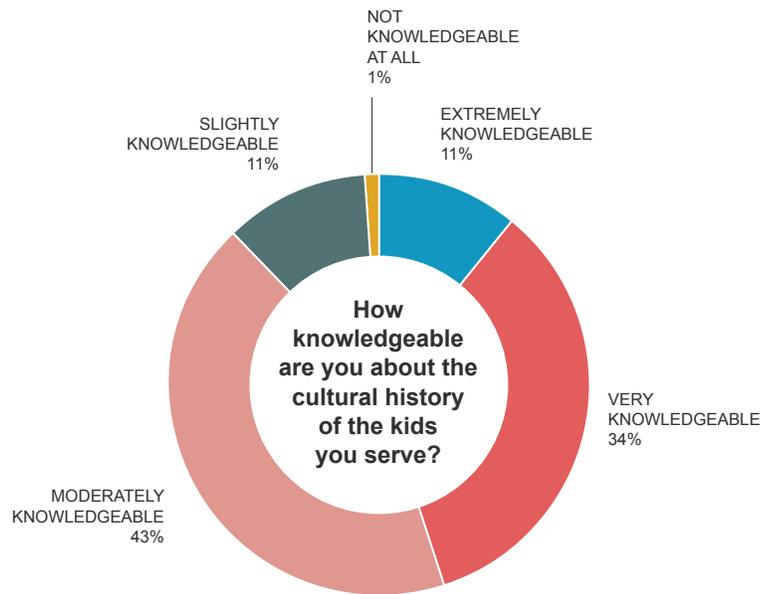
The **Empowering Educators** Guidebook also includes answers to the most common questions asked by First Book members in our 2019 survey on how to discuss race and racism with students. In addition, the Appendix provides additional resources and recommended reading from contributing subject matter experts. Throughout the guidebook, please note the “**Check-In!**” sections, which recap areas of discussion to help educators feel empowered and informed to discuss race with colleagues and students and to take action to ensure learning environments are inclusive and representative of all children.

In a survey conducted of educators registered with First Book, most said they were moderately knowledgeable and somewhat comfortable talking about race. However, a total of 66 percent said they would like to more to proactively engage their students in conversations about race.



“Educators have a collective responsibility to teach, prepare and support all young people to be compassionate citizens who can lead with confidence. These timely and important resources can help educators feel truly empowered to address racial inequities, and more importantly, learn how to dismantle them.”

JULYE M. WILLIAMS



First Book Member Survey, 2019

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS CONTRIBUTORS

The following authors and subject matter experts were instrumental in creating the *Empowering Educators* Guidebook and other series components:

JULYE M. WILLIAMS advises First Book on the creation of educator resources and is the founder of Project 2043, an educational firm committed to helping individuals, organizations, and educators develop an inclusive, equitable, and healthy multiracial democracy. An educator and former school leader, Julye is the architect of the *Empowering Educators* series and other educator resources for First Book. Fluent in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, Julye holds an M.B.A. from Florida A & M University.

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LIZ KLEINROCK is an early elementary educator who specializes in creating high-interest units of study for learners of all ages on topics of race, inclusion, and equity. Liz is the founder of Teach & Transform, an organization committed to helping educators develop culturally relevant teaching practices. Her 2019 TED Talk, *How to Teach Kids to Talk about Taboo Topics*, has over two million views.

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CORNELIUS MINOR is a Brooklyn-based educator who works with teachers, school leaders, and leaders of community-based organizations to support equitable literacy reform in cities (and sometimes villages) across the globe. His latest book, *We Got This*, explores how the work of creating more equitable school spaces is embedded in our everyday choices—specifically in the choice to really listen to kids.

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PART I: THE INNER WORK

STEP I: UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY

The evolution of race as a social construct is heavily rooted in the transatlantic slave trade and the unlawful appropriation of Indigenous lands. The following timeline highlights many key moments in history but is by no means a comprehensive history of race and racism in America.

Key Historical Moments in the History of Race and Racism

Condensed historical timeline developed by Christine Platt.

1418:

The Portuguese begin their exploration of Africa.

1444:

Prince Infante D. Henrique enslaves the first Africans in what is now modern-day Lagos, Nigeria.

1455:

Pope Nicholas V grants Portugal the right to continue the slave trade in West Africa, under the provision that they convert all people who are enslaved to Christianity.

August 3, 1492:

Christopher Columbus sets sail from Spain on an expedition that he hopes will result in the discovery of gold.

October 12, 1492:

Expecting to arrive in Japan, Columbus instead reaches the shores of what is now modern-day Bahamas in the Caribbean.

“The work of racial justice begins with ourselves.”

RHONDA V. MAGEE

“We need to reckon with our history of racial injustice . . . Everything we are seeing is a symptom of a larger disease.”

LAWYER AND ACTIVIST BRYAN STEVENSON
on the roots of police violence in both slavery and Jim Crow for *The New Yorker* magazine

“The 1492 event . . . set in motion the bringing together of separate branches of our human species within the framework of a single history that we all now live . . . and while it led to . . . dazzling achievements . . . it also led to the large-scale degradation and devalorization, and even the extinction, of a large majority of the peoples of the earth.”

SYLVIA WYNTER, “1492: A New World View”

Key Historical Moments in the History of Race and Racism

May 1493:

Pope Alexander VI grants Europeans the “right to conquest, to full and free power, author, and jurisdiction of every kind” in the New World.

1495:

Columbus returns to the Caribbean in the pursuit of gold and silver, specifically through the enslavement of Indigenous Arawak peoples; this is the beginning of slavery as an international trade and labor system.

1501–1505:

First documented arrival of enslaved Africans in the Caribbean.

1537:

Pope Paul III issues the doctrine of *Anima Nullis*, which declares the Indigenous people of the Americas as “empty souls.”

1570:

The first enslaved Africans arrive in Brazil. Millions more will follow over the next 300 years.

1606:

King James I of England and Scotland issues a charter granting English colonists land in modern-day Virginia (which includes the ancestral lands of the Powhatan and Monacan Nations) and declares his intention for the new colony to “bring the infidels and savages living in those parts to human civility.”

1607:

English colonists establish the first plantation in Jamestown, Virginia.



Did You Know?

When the Europeans arrived, carrying germs that thrived in dense, semi-urban populations, the Indigenous people of the Americas were effectively doomed. They had never experienced smallpox, measles, or flu, and the viruses tore through the continents, killing an estimated 90% of Native Americans. Within just a few generations, the continents of the Americas were virtually emptied of their native inhabitants. Some academics estimate that approximately 20 million people may have died in the years following the European invasion.

Source: Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)



“When the first Africans arrived in Jamestown in 1619, there were no “white” people there nor, according to colonial records, would there be for another 60 years.”

THEODORE W. ALLEN, HISTORIAN

1619:

The first documented arrival of enslaved Africans in Jamestown, Virginia.

1671:

The word White first appears in print in reference to “a person of a race distinguished by a light complexion.”

Source: *Oxford English Dictionary*

1676:

The first documented multiracial united front, Bacon’s Rebellion, begins in Jamestown, Virginia, as enslaved Africans and English indentured servants retaliate against White plantation owners.

1620:

Enslaved people include the Indigenous and Africans, but the majority of forced labor in Virginia are documented as English—not White.

1620–1660s:

English indentured servants and enslaved Africans are allowed to marry and attend church services together; the Indigenous are viewed as the common enemy (especially those nations who fought to protect their ancestral lands).

Bacon’s Rebellion: The Origins of White Privilege

Nathaniel Bacon, a wealthy White property owner and relative of Virginia’s governor, William Berkeley, disagreed on how the colony should be governed, particularly the colony’s policy toward Indigenous tribes. Bacon wanted all Indigenous people removed from the land so English landowners could expand their property. Berkeley feared that such an act would cause nearby Indigenous tribes to unite and wage war against the colony. In defiance, Bacon organized a militia of English indentured servants and enslaved Africans to join him in exchange for their freedom. Together, they attacked nearby Indigenous tribes with the goal of taking their land. Months of conflict followed and in September 1676, Bacon’s militia captured Jamestown and nearly burned it to the ground.

Hoping to end the civil war between Bacon’s militia and Berkeley’s loyalists, the English Crown sent a representative to negotiate between the armed English indentured servants and enslaved Africans with one primary objective—to divide them in the hopes of preventing future rebellions. **As part of the negotiations, English indentured servants were granted new rights and privileges.** In addition to maintaining shorter terms of servitude, English indentured servants were given supervisory and policing power over enslaved Africans.



“The events in Jamestown were alarming to the planter elite, who were deeply fearful of the multiracial alliance of [indentured servants] and slaves. Word of Bacon’s Rebellion spread far and wide, and several more uprisings of a similar type followed.

In an effort to protect their superior status and economic position, the planters shifted their strategy for maintaining dominance. They abandoned their heavy reliance on indentured servants in favor of the importation of more Black slaves.”

MICHELLE ALEXANDER, LEGAL SCHOLAR

“Many of the European-descended poor whites began to identify themselves, if not directly with the rich whites, certainly with being white. And here you get the emergence of this idea of a white race as a way to distinguish themselves from those dark-skinned people who they associate with perpetual slavery.”

ROBIN D. G. KELLEY, HISTORIAN

Key Historical Moments in the History of Race and Racism

1682:

New legislation is enacted in the colonies declaring “all servants not being Christians being imported into this country by shipping (Africans) should be slaves for life while those who came by land (the Indigenous) should be servants for twelve years. And English indentured servants shall serve for four to five years.”

September 3, 1783:

The American Revolution ends. Representatives of America and Great Britain sign the Treaty of Paris, which requires Britain to cede all of its North American territories south of Canada and east of the Mississippi River. All former agreements between the British and Indigenous tribes are voided, and America claims to own all Indigenous lands east of the Mississippi River by right of conquest.

November 8, 1808:

A delegation of Cherokee leaders travels to Washington, D.C., to meet with President Thomas Jefferson; Cherokee leaders ultimately reject the government’s proposal to have them relocate west of the Mississippi River.

Over the next 200 years, more than 12 million Africans are stolen from their homeland and enslaved due to their hereditary slave status.

April 19, 1775:

The American Revolutionary War begins. The Thirteen Colonies rebel against the Kingdom of Great Britain over direct taxation and lack of representation.

May 28, 1830:

President Andrew Jackson signs the Indian Removal Act. This legislation allows the president to pursue ownership of all Indigenous lands east of the Mississippi River. Indigenous tribes continue to resist relocation and refuse to leave their ancestral homeland.

The Trail of Tears

In the winter of 1831, the Choctaw became the first nation to be expelled from its ancestral land in modern-day Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Under threat of the U.S. Army, the Choctaw were forced to travel by foot to designated Indian Territory in modern-day Oklahoma. Historical documents note that many of the Indigenous people were bound in chains and required to march double file. Additionally, they were not provided with food or adequate supplies nor given any type of government assistance. One Choctaw leader described the forced relocation as a “trail of tears and death” as thousands of people perished en route. The forced relocation of approximately 60,000 Indigenous people continued well into the 20th century.

April 12, 1861:

America's
Civil War begins.

November 29, 1864:

The Sand Creek Massacre occurs. Led by Colonel John Chivington, the U.S. Army kills an estimated 150 members of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes in Colorado Territory, mostly Indigenous women and children.

April 9, 1865:

The Civil War ends.

December 6, 1865:

The 13th Amendment officially abolishes slavery.

December 24, 1865:

The Ku Klux Klan is founded in Pulaski, Tennessee. The organization will grow in number over the next 155 years, continuing to inflict terror and acts of violence against Black people, Jews, immigrants, and other members of marginalized communities.

Did You Know?

Although the Confederacy surrendered in Appomattox, Virginia, on August 9, 1865, President Andrew Johnson couldn't officially declare the Civil War ended until August 20, 1866—the date the last Confederate commanders surrendered, finally acknowledging defeat.

Source: National Archives

America's Reconstruction Era (1865-1877)

After the abolishment of slavery, America entered its Reconstruction Era, which addressed two major areas of concern: how to reintegrate Southern Confederate states and how to manage approximately four million formerly enslaved people. In 1865 and 1866, former Confederate states enacted new legislation to disenfranchise formerly enslaved and freed Black Americans. Known as Black Codes and Jim Crow laws, these restrictive laws were the foundation for segregation policies and practices. Later, America would enter its period of Radical Reconstruction with the passing of the Reconstruction Act of 1867, the ratification of the 14th Amendment to expand the definition of citizenship and equal protection under the law, and the adoption of the 15th Amendment granting Black people the right to vote. Unfortunately, much of the progress that was made during Radical Reconstruction was met with violence by extremists such as the Ku Klux Klan and supporters who were determined to restore White supremacy in the South. Many former Confederate soldiers, Ku Klux Klan members, and other extremists joined local police forces. Acting under their new policing powers, Southern police were allowed to legally discriminate against and harm formerly enslaved and freed Black citizens. As a result of these historical events, the Black community's mistrust of police quickly became deeply rooted in American society.

WHO IS JIM CROW?

JIM CROW WASN'T AN ACTUAL PERSON. IT WAS A FICTIONAL RACIST CHARACTER WHO PORTRAYED BLACK PEOPLE AS CLUMSY AND IGNORANT. THE NAME ORIGINATED FROM A FOLK SONG THAT HAD ONCE BEEN POPULAR AMONG ENSLAVED PEOPLE. WHITE PEOPLE PAINTED THEIR FACES BLACK WHENEVER THEY WERE PRETENDING TO BE JIM CROW. IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY WEARING 'BLACKFACE' AS A COSTUME IS CONSIDERED RACIST AND OFFENSIVE.

Key Historical Moments in the History of Race and Racism

June 25, 1876:

General George Custer and approximately 210 troops in his battalion are defeated by Lakota leaders Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull and their Indigenous army in modern-day Montana.

October 6, 1879:

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School is established by General Richard Henry Pratt and Sarah Mather in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Pratt will implement his assimilation theories on approximately 82 Indigenous children from the Dakota Territory. Many of Pratt's practices were developed and influenced by his work supervising Indigenous prisoners at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, years before.

February 8, 1887:

Congress enacts the Dawes Severalty Act, which authorizes President Grover Cleveland to partition designated lands into 160-acre parcels for Indigenous people. Any land that remained would be purchased by the government and sold to White settlers, the proceeds of which would allegedly be used to "educate" and "civilize" members of Indigenous tribes.

May 18, 1896:

The Supreme Court upholds "separate but equal" as legal doctrine in *Plessy v. Ferguson*; this decision results in Black and White citizens living in a segregated America for another 50 years.

February 12, 1909:

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded by W. E. B. DuBois, Mary White Ovington, Moorfield Storey, Ida B. Wells, and other leaders. The NAACP is the first recognized multiracial civil rights organization to advance justice for Black people.

The Battle of the Greasy Grass

Often referred to in American history as the Battle of Little Bighorn or Custer's Last Stand, this two-day battle occurred along the Little Bighorn River in modern-day Montana and Wyoming—a highly desirable area due to the discovery of gold in the Black Hills region. While considered a victory for the Indigenous people, White settlers were outraged and used the battle as proof that Indigenous people were dangerous, wild, blood-thirsty "savages." Within five years after the Battle of the Greasy Grass, the majority of Sioux and Cheyenne were forced to relocate and confined to reservations.

The Wounded Knee Massacre

On December 29, 1890, the U.S. Army entered a Sioux camp located along the Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota. Troops opened fire and killed approximately 300 Lakota people—two-thirds were women and children. The Wounded Knee Massacre is often noted as an example of the government's determination in pursuit of White western expansion in the Americas.

The Birth of a Nation

On February 8, 1915, the silent film *The Birth of a Nation* was released. Considered one of the most controversial movies ever made in America, the film portrays Black people as ignorant and sexually aggressive, especially toward White women. The Ku Klux Klan is depicted as heroic and necessary to maintain American values through a White supremacist social order. Many historians acknowledge that *The Birth of a Nation* served as an inspiration for the Ku Klux Klan's rebirth and resurgence.

May 31, 1921:

The Tulsa Race Massacre begins in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Mobs of White residents attack Black residents' homes and businesses in the successful Greenwood District, also known as Black Wall Street. By June 1, 1921, the entire community is destroyed, and an estimated 300 Black residents are murdered.

1932:

The infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment begins. Over the next 40 years, the U.S. Public Health Service would conduct unauthorized experiments on approximately 400 Black men in the late stages of syphilis. Historians note this experiment "used human beings as laboratory animals in a long and inefficient study of how long it takes syphilis to kill someone."²

May 17, 1954:

The Supreme Court rules segregation of public schools is unconstitutional in the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Following the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, there was a surge in the establishment and enrollment of private schools for White students—a legal way to keep educational institutions segregated. Many school districts chose to close their public schools rather than comply with desegregation.

August 28, 1963:

The March on Washington for Jobs & Freedom is held in Washington, D.C.; Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

July 2, 1964:

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. This legislation prohibits discrimination in public places, provides for the integration of public schools and other public facilities, and makes employment discrimination illegal.

June 22, 1944:

Congress passes the Servicemen's Readjustment Act. Known as the GI Bill, this law grants White WWII veterans with access to low-cost mortgages, business loans, tuition assistance, and unemployment compensation. However, Black WWII veterans are blocked from accessing GI Bill benefits. The GI Bill is often noted by historians as a contributing factor to wealth disparities.

November 15, 1944:

The National Congress of American Indians holds its first conference in Denver, Colorado. Nearly 80 delegates from 50 tribes and associations in 27 states forge an alliance against discriminatory Indigenous policies and practices.



Did You Know?

Many of the Black people in the film "The Birth of a Nation" were actually portrayed by White actors in blackface.

²Borgna Brunner, "The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment," Free Republic, accessed August 13, 2020, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/2010486/posts>.

Key Historical Moments in the History of Race and Racism

April 4, 1968:

Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated by James Earl Ray, an outspoken White supremacist.

April 11, 1968:

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 is signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. This legislation prohibits discrimination concerning the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, or sex—one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s last civil rights efforts.

April 29, 1992:

America grapples with its first race riots in decades after a jury acquits four White police officers for the videotaped beating of a Black man, Rodney King, in South-Central Los Angeles, California.

February 26, 2012:

Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old Black high school student, is fatally shot in Sanford, Florida, by George Zimmerman, a 28-year-old neighborhood watch coordinator, sparking outrage across the nation.

June 28, 1978:

The Supreme Court upholds the constitutionality of affirmative action in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*. However, limitations are imposed, specifically to ensure that opportunities for BIPOC do not come at the expense of White rights. Affirmative action will continue to be debated and suffer setbacks in years to come in cases such as *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), *Parents v. Seattle* (2006), and *Meredith v. Jefferson* (2006).

1972:

Venereal disease investigator Peter Buxton leaks information about the Tuskegee Experiment's unethical practices to the Associated Press, which prompts public outrage and forces the study to end.

August 6, 1965:

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is enacted. This landmark legislation prohibits racial discrimination in voting.



“How can you dismantle a system when you don’t know how it was built? You have to know the history.”

CHRISTINE PLATT,
HISTORIAN & ANTIRACIST ADVOCATE

ACTS OF VIOLENCE
AGAINST BLACK
COMMUNITIES ARE OFTEN
IDENTIFIED ON SOCIAL
MEDIA BY THE HASHTAG
#BLACKLIVESMATTER.

July 13, 2013:

Black Lives Matter Foundation, Inc. is established in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer. The mission of the global organization is to eradicate White supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities.

August 9, 2014:

Michael Brown, an unarmed Black 18-year-old, is shot and killed in Ferguson, Missouri, by a White police officer, Darren Wilson. When a grand jury decides not to indict Wilson, protests in Ferguson and cities across America begin on November 24 and continue for several months. On July 17 of the same year, another Black man named Eric Garner died in Staten Island, New York, after being placed in a chokehold by a White police officer named Daniel Pantaleo. The death of 44-year-old Garner, which was recorded as he continuously stated, "I can't breathe," and the later acquittal of Pantaleo further intensify the Black Lives Matter movement.

America Today

On May 25, 2020, an unarmed 46-year-old Black man named George Floyd was murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, by a White police officer, Derek Chauvin. Video footage showed Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck for almost 10 minutes as a handcuffed Floyd cried out, "I can't breathe!" Floyd's murder, along with other acts of violence against Black men and women leading up to and after his death, spurred global protests as America continues to reckon with its history of police brutality and systemic racism.

Check-In!



- 1 How does this historical timeline compare to history lessons you received as part of your formal education? How does it compare to the history lessons you teach?
- 2 After reviewing a brief history of race, racism and systemic violence against Black and Indigenous people, can you identify areas where you can incorporate some of these historical moments into your curriculum and instruction?
- 3 Think of the many ways America's past has informed your present reality, such as familial legacy and/or inheritance, personal wealth, education, and other opportunities.

STEP 2: INCREASING YOUR AWARENESS

Personal awareness is an important aspect of effective communication, and even more so when it comes to having conversations about race and racism. David Foster Wallace's famous adage about two fish illustrates how easy it is for us to have the same experience but different levels of awareness. Although both fish are swimming, the older fish is aware of the water while the younger one is not.

Often, our awareness about the realities of racism operates in a similar way. Some recipients of advantages and benefits may not be aware of their privilege or understand there are systemic laws and policies designed to help them succeed. Others, especially people who are disenfranchised, may be very much aware of racial inequities and barriers to success.

Many antiracist experts note that racism in America is not perpetuated by "bad" people. Rather, racism is maintained by laws, policies, and normalized practices that are upheld consciously and unconsciously by those who knowingly or unknowingly benefit from them.

INCREASE YOUR AWARENESS: TYPES OF RACISM

Although many people don't engage in individual acts of racism, they still benefit from racist policies, practices, and social norms. Becoming aware of the different types of racism helps individuals understand, recognize, and ultimately address inequities. Here are three of the most common types of racism:

Personal racism occurs when an individual's beliefs, attitudes, and actions support or maintain the idea of a racial hierarchy in conscious or unconscious ways.

Institutional racism occurs when companies, organizations, and institutions implement policies and practices that benefit one group while harming another. Institutional racism is also referred to as **systemic racism** because it creates and maintains a system of racial inequity.

Cultural racism occurs when the widespread customs in a society perpetuate the belief that the behaviors, values, and practices of one group are superior to those of other groups.



"Two fish are swimming in the water and an older, wiser fish swims by. He says, 'Good morning, how's the water?' One of the younger fish looks a bit puzzled and says, 'Excuse me, what is water?'"

DAVID FOSTER WALLACE

SO, HOW CAN I
INCREASE MY
AWARENESS?

WELL, YOU CAN
START BY EXPLORING
YOUR OWN IDENTITY.

YOU CAN ALSO REFLECT ON
YOUR PAST TO SEE HOW YOU
WERE SOCIALIZED. THEN, YOU
CAN SEE HOW IT INFLUENCES
WHAT YOU BELIEVE AND
UNDERSTAND TODAY.

Because race is a social construct (remember, it has been largely accepted by society but not scientifically proven), it is often an important part of people's identities. In fact, racial identity is a **social identity**, one of many. As Tiffany Jewell explains in *This Book is Anti-Racist*, "Your social identity is the you that relates to other people in society. These identities have been created, named, framed, and defined by society for a very long time. While social identities can help us to see and understand ourselves and the people around us, they also determine how others will treat us. It is our job to learn and act."³

It is important to note that people have multiple identities and that these identities can intersect and affect how people are treated and viewed in society. A person who is Black and female, for example, experiences discrimination and disadvantage differently than a person who is White and female. This concept of **intersectionality** was coined in 1989 by Dr. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. She describes how a person's social identities such as race, class, and gender coincide to create overlapping systems of disadvantage. When developing your awareness, it is important to acknowledge this reality for students, families, and colleagues.

AMERICANS' EXPERIENCES WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RACIAL IDENTITIES

three out of four

White Americans don't have a single friend of color, and the average White American's friend group is

91% White.

Source: 2014 Public Religion
Research Institute Study

³ Tiffany Jewell, *This Book is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on how to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work* (London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2020), 18.

INCREASE YOUR AWARENESS: TYPES OF SOCIAL IDENTITIES



RACE



ETHNICITY



GENDER



ABILITIES



FAMILY
STRUCTURE

What social identities have you chosen for yourself? What social identities do you feel others have chosen for you or assumed about you?

INCREASE YOUR AWARENESS: SOCIALIZATION

Reflecting on how you were socialized to think about and understand race will help increase your awareness of how your beliefs impact your behavior. Consider your family and, particularly, what you learned from them as a child about differences among people. Did you ever have explicit conversations about racial difference, and if so, what were you taught? Our early life experiences with schools, religious groups, and people who are different from us—whether by racial identity, culture, family structure, religion, economic class, gender, or sexual orientation—are significant contributors to our beliefs and values. Equally influential are the experiences we didn't have. The absence of exposure or a lack of genuine relationships with people who have different identities from our own plays a significant role in our development, attitudes, and beliefs.

There are many ways to increase one's personal awareness, and committing to understanding and reflecting on lived experiences is an important part of the work. That can happen through reading literature, engaging in social media, or developing genuine relationships with people from a range of backgrounds that are different from your own. Increasing personal awareness ensures that educators are more informed when interacting with students, families and colleagues.

Check-In!



- 1 Take a moment and pay attention to your emotions. Did this section bring up any specific reactions, thoughts, or emotions about your upbringing?
- 2 How did your socialization, or the way you were introduced to society, influence the beliefs you have and actions you take today?
- 3 Consider your answers to the questions above. What is it you would like to learn about people who have different identities and lived experiences from your own? What actions will you take to learn more about these people?

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGING PERSONAL BIAS AND PREJUDICE

“

“Children as young as three-years-old begin to show evidence of societal messages affecting how they feel about themselves or their group identity—this is the beginning of internalized superiority or internalized oppression.”

LOUISE DERMAN-SPARKS,
AUTHOR OF *ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION FOR
YOUNG CHILDREN AND OURSELVES*

“

“After age nine, racial attitudes tend to stay constant unless the child experiences a life-changing event.”

DR. FRANCES ABOUD,
AUTHOR OF *CHILDREN AND PREJUDICE*

“

“As adolescents mature they become increasingly aware of their own identities, and the biases held against them. Therefore, adolescents often benefit from added support in the discovery and affirmation of their identities.”

RACHEL LYNN GOLDEN, PH.D.,
LICENSED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST,
RESEARCHER, AND THERAPIST

IS IT TRUE
THAT EVERYONE
HAS BIASES?

YES! BUT ONCE WE
ACKNOWLEDGE AND
UNDERSTAND OUR BIASES,
WE CAN WORK TO
OVERCOME THEM!

By adulthood, everyone has bias. Bias is a result of our brain's tendency to categorize people, places, and more. This function is useful in a world of stimuli, especially when we need to act quickly. But bias can lead to discrimination, unfounded assumptions, and worse, especially in times of hurry or stress.

JENNIFER EBERHARDT, PH.D.,
AUTHOR OF *BIASED*

Every day, people experience and process information that causes them to form opinions about individuals, groups, or belief systems. Much of this information is based on personal, systemic, or cultural racism that is shared intentionally or unintentionally by dominant groups (those with privilege and power). Whether through various forms of media or experienced in person, the developing minds of children and adolescents are constantly influenced by external messaging, resulting in biases and prejudices against others. And most of the opinions that young people internalize will remain with them well into adulthood.

Science News for Students explains, “. . . all people harbor beliefs and attitudes about groups of people based on their race or ethnicity, gender, body weight, and other traits. Those beliefs and attitudes about social groups are known as biases. Biases are beliefs that are not founded by known facts about someone or about a particular group of individuals.” It is also important to note that biases are often formed as the result of internalized prejudices.

⁴ The Implicit Association Test can be accessed via <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

⁵ Unconscious Bias: An Educator's Self-Assessment can be accessed via <http://bit.ly/BiasSelfAssessment>

LEARN MORE ABOUT BIAS

Do you want to learn more about implicit/unconscious bias? Are you curious to know your personal biases? Take the *Implicit Association Test (IAT)*⁴ Developed by researchers from Harvard University, the University of Virginia, and the University of Washington, the IAT is a free online assessment that has helped more than one million people worldwide identify areas of implicit/unconscious bias. For additional guidance, download First Book's free resource, *Unconscious Bias: An Educator's Self-Assessment*.⁵

Prejudice occurs when someone harbors an unfavorable, preconceived opinion about an individual, group, or belief system.

Bias occurs when someone has a strong preference for or against an individual, group, or belief system that is often rooted in prejudice. People can be aware (conscious) or unaware (implicit/unconscious) of their biases.

Educators should work to acknowledge and understand their biases because biases often have the unintended consequence of harming students, families, and fellow faculty and staff. One of the most commonly perpetrated types of bias in learning environments is implicit/unconscious bias. It is frequently expressed in the form of microaggressions, seemingly small acts that can destroy the atmosphere of learning and professional communities in big ways.

MICROAGGRESSIONS	
Type	Examples
Microassaults are overt attacks intended to communicate discriminatory or biased feelings about a person or group.	<i>An educator calls on all White students before calling on any BIPOC students.</i> (Underlying message: I don't see you as equal to White students.)
Microinsults often come across as compliments, but they convey insensitivity or rudeness that demeans a person's identity.	<i>"You are so articulate."</i> (Underlying message: It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent.)
Microinvalidations are verbal comments or behaviors that exclude, negate, or dismiss a person's or group's feelings and lived experiences.	<i>"I don't see color."</i> (Underlying message: I don't see your race nor acknowledge that part of your identity.)

"A MICROAGGRESSION IS AN INDIRECT, SUBTLE OR UNINTENTIONAL ACT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MEMBERS OF A MARGINALIZED GROUP. SUCH BEHAVIOR SENDS A HARMFUL MESSAGE TO THE MARGINALIZED PERSON OR PERSONS THAT THEY ARE LESSER HUMAN BEINGS, SUGGEST THEY DO NOT BELONG WITHIN THE MAJORITY GROUP, THREATEN AND INTIMIDATE, OR RELEGATE THEM TO INFERIOR STATUS OR TREATMENT."

DERALD WING SUE, PH.D.

The psychological effects of microaggressions can be deeply harmful to students. Studies show that microaggressions:

- impact a student's ability to concentrate, focus, and learn new material;
- inhibit students from participating in class and taking appropriate risks;
- are directly related to negative academic outcomes: low grades, low motivation, risk of dropping out, and negative self-perceptions;
- transmit messages of low intellectual expectations;
- lead to feelings of invisibility for immigrant and BIPOC families and students;
- lead to low self-esteem and life satisfaction; and
- lead students to believe teachers don't call on them because of their ethnicity (this becomes more common in adolescence).

Often, discussion of microaggressions will bring up the concept of **intent vs. impact**. Although many people use microaggressions with no ill intent, meaning they didn't plan to hurt someone with their words or actions, the impact is no less harmful. If someone uses a microaggression when interacting with a BIPOC, it is best to apologize, reflect on the underlying message of their words or actions, and take steps to remove that language or behavior from their future interactions.

LEARN MORE ABOUT MICROAGGRESSIONS

*Microaggressions in the Classroom*⁶ is an 18-minute film that features students speaking about their experiences with microaggressions. The film is narrated by Dr. Yolanda Flores Niemann, a Professor of Psychology at the University of North Texas. The full video, or segments of it, can be used to help high school students and school or program staff gain a clearer understanding of microaggressions and their impact on students and adults.

Check-In!



- 1 Did you take the Implicit Association Test? If not, please take 10 minutes to take this important assessment now. What did you learn?
- 2 Reflect on your words and actions with students, their families, and your peers. When have you unintentionally used a microaggression?
- 3 What are three ways that microaggressions harm students?

⁶ The film, *Microaggressions in the Classroom*, can be accessed via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZahtlxW2CIQ>

PART II: THE OUTER WORK

Much of the anti-bias, antiracist (ABAR) work for educators involves helping young students develop a healthy awareness of racial differences and supporting older students as they process the world around them. One way to ensure success is to use an ABAR “lens” when designing lesson plans, evaluating classroom culture, and having courageous conversations with students, families, and learning professionals. As antiracist pedagogy continues to expand, there are likely to be many frameworks for educators to use. Currently, the most widely taught ABAR framework is Liberatory Consciousness.

STEP 4: CREATING YOUR FRAMEWORK

Liberatory Consciousness is an educational framework developed by Dr. Barbara J. Love that teaches students and adults to develop an awareness of oppression and inequity and then work to take positive action to change systems and promote equity.

Dr. Love’s framework is used by leading ABAR teachers across the United States because it provides a guide for infusing anti-bias, antiracist practices into everything they do in the classroom, and it enables the work to be ongoing and reflective. We suggest you read her [groundbreaking work](#) in depth to further your understanding. What follows is an introduction to get you started.

THE LIBERATORY CONSCIOUSNESS FRAMEWORK OFFERS A SEQUENCE FOR HELPING STUDENTS THINK DEEPER ABOUT WHAT THEY SEE EVERYDAY. IT OFFERS A PATH TO HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP AN AWARENESS OF BROADER ISSUES, CRITICALLY ANALYZE THEM, DEVELOP ACTIONS THAT PROMOTE EQUITY AND BECOME ACCOUNTABLE.

MAKE SURE TO INCORPORATE THIS FRAMEWORK INTO PLANNING LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR STUDENTS.

THE LIBERATORY CONSCIOUSNESS FRAMEWORK INCLUDES FOUR COMPONENTS:

1	Awareness. This is the ability to simply become aware of what is happening around us. It is awakening to situations and events that we may have previously ignored. One does not need to be part of a marginalized group to know that inequity is taking place.
2	Analysis. It is not enough to <i>notice</i> that inequity is taking place. The ability to think about and analyze what's going on can inform solutions that could make the situation fair and equitable.
3	Action. Based on the analysis, it's time to take the appropriate action to restore equity.
4	Accountable/ Allyship. This last phase requires that we take responsibility for the action that has or has not been taken. It also requires that we commit to taking action for the long term to ensure equity in our society.

This framework is important because it guides students through steps that promote critical thinking about current events, inequities, and other daily interactions that can have harmful effects on people. It helps students develop an ability to spot racial and other inequities by connecting their awareness to critical analysis and their analysis to purposeful action and accountability.

The framework can be incorporated into teaching practices for grades PreK–12. Whether reading a picture book or discussing a current event, educators across grade levels can initiate discussion by asking students age-appropriate versions of the following questions:

1. Awareness

- What do you notice about the characters/people, setting, or environment in this story/current event?
- What do you notice that may be unfair, harmful, or hurtful to someone or a group?
- What do you notice in our current environment that you hadn't seen before?

2. Analysis

- Why did the problem or situation arise?
- Who is affected by this problem or situation? How?
- What can be done to solve/fix/address the problem or situation? Who has the power to do it?

3. Action

- What is the best action to take given your analysis?
- Who should be involved to ensure proper action is taken?
- What can students do?

4. Accountable/Allyship

- How will you as a student see the action through to completion?
- How can you as a student use your position to raise awareness about the problem/situation?
- How can you as a student support ongoing efforts for equity?

THE LIBERATORY FRAMEWORK IN ACTION: AN EXAMPLE

“My children are doing identity work (because that part never ends) and we build analysis all of the time about their ‘immunities’ (the areas where they have privilege) and marginalizations. When we are walking and the sidewalk is broken, I stop to say, ‘Look at this sidewalk. Who does this hurt? Or is this unfair to anyone?’ At this point, my children can say, ‘People who use wheelchairs, people with strollers or carts, someone who is unstable with walking.’ Then we move to action, we call 311 to report it.”

BRITT HAWTHORNE,
ANTI-BIAS ANTIRACIST TEACHER EDUCATOR

Check-In!



- 1 How does the Liberatory Consciousness Framework help students move beyond just being aware of inequities in society, the stories they read, and elsewhere?
- 2 How does the Liberatory Consciousness Framework promote critical thinking and reflection for students?
- 3 Given the Liberatory Consciousness Framework and the sample discussion questions, what book, current event, or other source will you use to initiate conversation with your students?

STEP 5: EVALUATING YOUR CLASSROOM CULTURE

The quality of a classroom's or learning community's culture is ultimately determined by how students feel in their learning environment. If they feel safe, respected, valued, and supported by strong relationships, then it is likely the learning community is ready for dialogue about race and racism.

There are many elements that lead to a strong classroom culture. Four of the most important are below.

Students feel welcome.

A learning community that welcomes all students will include the following:

- Wall art, books, and visuals that show students of various identities (racial, gender, religious, etc.), geographies, family structures, and more.
- Curriculum that celebrates multiple racial identities and is not White-centric. *Note: If you teach or work with predominantly White students, it is critically important that you feature and actively include students and stories from multiple racial identities in your curriculum.*
- Physical and emotional safety in your learning space; swiftly addressing bullying, teasing, and other harmful actions.

Students feel respected.

A learning community that respects all students will include the following:

- Equally high expectations of all students, no matter their racial identity, socioeconomic status, or any other factor.
- Equal opportunity for students to use their voices and contribute to classroom discussions.
- A culture that encourages students to listen to what their peers have to say.



WATCH
Britt Hawthorne discuss how she creates a brave space and the power of community.

Students are supported with strong relationships.

Strong relationships between educators and students, as well as among students themselves, are critical. Strong, authentic relationships look like the following:

- Educators knowing personal details about each of their students' lives (e.g., interests, activities, and aspirations) beyond the school or program day.
- Students celebrating and encouraging one another for large and small accomplishments.
- Educators using positive, encouraging, and affirming language with students.

Students feel safer.

While it is difficult to declare that any space is truly safe for everyone, educators can work to ensure learning communities are safer for students. To ensure safer spaces, it is recommended that educators ask students the following:

- What would make you feel supported in our learning space?
- What makes you feel appreciated and cared for?
- What makes you shut down and not want to talk or participate in class?
- What are three things you need from me as your educator to be successful?

**TIFFANY
JEWELL**

Montessori Educator
and *New York Times*
Bestselling Author of
This Book is Antiracist

**ON
CLASSROOM
CULTURE**

“I love playing games with my students. That is one of the best (and most fun) ways we build relationships with each other. Whether it’s between transitions, at the beginning of the day, or at the end, anytime we need to reconnect you will find us playing a game on the rug or outside. When we spend time laughing and sharing community it allows me to see my students as children and not just vessels in which to input information. And, they get to spend time with me where I make mistakes, lose a round of the game, fall off the stone into hot lava, etc. We are able to share our humanity and these moments are the ones we’ll remember best.”

Check-In!



- 1 Why do you think having a strong classroom culture is essential for facilitating effective conversations about race?
- 2 How does your learning space let students with varying racial identities know they are valued? How do you ensure various racial identities are acknowledged and celebrated even if they’re not represented among the students you’re currently serving?
- 3 What specific actions can you take to ensure you’re creating a classroom culture that welcomes, respects, and supports all of your students?

STEP 6: STRUCTURING YOUR LESSON PLANS



With an understanding of the Liberatory Consciousness Framework and a strong classroom culture, the next step is to structure your lesson plans.

Structuring Your Lesson Plans

Liz Kleinrock, founder of Teach & Transform, and an expert in ABAR teaching, recommends creating inquiry-based teaching and learning plans. In her classes, students use KWL (Know, Want to Know, Learned) charts to share their prior knowledge and develop guiding questions as they begin a unit of study. This allows her, as an educator, to observe any biases or untrue beliefs her students have and to create more authentic learning experiences for kids driven by their interests.

Develop an Inquiry-Based Learning Plan

Inquiry-based learning is a teaching method that puts student questions at the center of the curriculum and builds a lesson, or lesson plans, around them. It begins with the educator asking questions, providing challenges or sharing scenarios with students.

**LIZ
KLEINROCK**
Anti-bias Antiracist
Educator/Writer

**ON
STRUCTURING
LESSON PLANS**

“Every year I teach about race, and every time it looks different depending on the class. I begin by collecting prior knowledge from my students to identify what they know, what they don’t know, and what they think they know that actually isn’t true (I check for biases). Then students generate questions about race and racism.

One year my students were really into science and inventors, and they wanted to understand the origins of race and where racism comes from. Another year I had more affluent White students, so we focused on privilege and being an ally. Last year I had more Latinx and South East Asian students who wanted to know about race beyond the Black-White binary and how Brown people were impacted.

Their questions help me determine what resources to pull, and how students can direct their own learning. It also helps me avoid being accused of indoctrinating students or pushing my own agenda, when they’re the ones directing their learning.”

“It is important that students know why they’re having a conversation about race. And, that they believe the conversation is worth their energy and vulnerability.

This can be achieved by being intentional about how you incorporate these conversations into your curriculum. And, importantly, we should avoid making all of our race conversations about race problems.

Students can do more than just realize inequity. Conversations about race can help them think more critically about a variety of topics, and remember the conversation long after your class is over.”

MATTHEW KAY, AUTHOR OF *NOT LIGHT, BUT FIRE*

“If your school or program has a grade-wide or annual theme, consider developing a year-long conversation thread that incorporates race. This will help students know these conversations aren’t random, and offer consistency.”

**MATTHEW KAY,
AUTHOR OF *NOT LIGHT, BUT FIRE***

Experts agree that, in addition to using an inquiry-based method to design curriculum and lesson plans, these plans should be evaluated through an anti-bias, antiracist (ABAR) lens.

An ABAR lens can be applied to all subject areas. Whether it is for language arts, math, science, social studies, or another subject area, once you have your lesson plan and instructional resources, ask the questions below to ensure your content is anti-biased and antiracist.



WATCH

Liz Kleinrock discuss how to build an Inquiry-Based Learning Plan.



VISIT

the Appendix for specific steps to build your Inquiry-Based Learning Plan and for a student handout to guide your instruction.

Questions about Who

- Whose voices are centered?
- Who is missing?
- Who will this affirm?
- Who will this silence?
- Who will this make feel like an outsider?
- Who is missing from this story and how can I include their perspective?

ASK THESE QUESTIONS TO ENSURE YOUR CONTENT IS ANTI-BIASED AND ANTIRACIST!

Questions about Messaging

- Do these materials disrupt or reinforce stereotypes?
- Does this uphold and reinforce the dominant (White, Western) culture?
- What is the story of injustice?

Questions about Student Impact

- Am I aware of any student trauma and how this student might react to certain topics?
- Is this going to empower all of my students?
- Am I creating time and space for my students to develop their awareness?
- Are students able to reflect on their own words, thoughts, and experiences and understand different points of view?
- Are students able to reflect on how their words may impact others?
- Are students able to move beyond themselves when reflecting on this topic?
- Am I encouraging my students to think critically?
- Are we able to engage in query and conversation that will help us grow together?

Check In!



- 1 Why do you think an Inquiry-Based Learning Plan is the recommended approach for teaching about race?
- 2 When planning a lesson, what are some questions you can ask your students to help guide the direction you'll take and the resources you'll use?
- 3 How might you apply the questions in the table above to the subject areas you teach? For example, if you're a math teacher and part of your lessons include watching YouTube videos of math personalities, who are the mathematicians you're featuring?

PART III: THE POWER OF LITERATURE

STEP 7: Leading with Positive Narratives (Instead of Trauma)

Stories of joy are universal. No matter our skin tone, we all enjoy stories that make us feel good, beautiful, and validated. Talking about race is not an automatic invitation to a sad, heavy, or difficult conversation. People of all racial identities experience joys and struggles. Before having conversations about race with your students, it is important to lead with positivity, not trauma.

1. All kids should know the everyday joy that kids with different racial identities experience.

Giving students a window to learn about someone else's life experience, or a mirror to reflect back their own, is a key benefit of having and reading inclusive books. Stories help students build emotional connections with others. They also help combat messages from society that focus on negative stereotypes. Books allow BIPOC authors and illustrators to tell and share their own stories of joy, happiness, and love.

2. Positive books promote self-love.

When a student sees characters who look like them in the illustrations in a book, or as a leading voice in a novel, it lets them know that they matter. It is critical that before students begin to discuss and dissect the harsh realities of racism, they have a strong sense of self-worth and self-love. When children and teens see themselves in positive stories being read by *everyone*, it helps communicate that they and their stories are valuable.

“Who are we but the stories we tell ourselves, about ourselves, and believe?”

SCOTT TUROW, AUTHOR



WATCH

Tiffany Jewell discuss activities that help students explore their understanding of race.

3. Positive books help avoid a single story about any group of people.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a Nigerian writer, has warned about “the danger of the single story.”⁷ A single story is one narrative that is told over and over again about a person or a people. A single story makes it hard to see a person or a group beyond what we are repeatedly told or tell ourselves about them. Leading with positivity and not trauma ensures that students develop multiple stories and narratives about people with different racial identities.

“Picture books that show children having positive experiences across racial differences are rare, but powerful. When children read stories that have leading characters with two or more different racial identities, they report more comfort and interest in playing with kids in real life who are different from themselves. Early and ongoing exposure to such stories can reduce the anxiety kids may have about playing with others.”

RESEARCH FROM DR. KRISTA ARONSON,
DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AT BATES COLLEGE AND DIRECTOR
AND COFOUNDER OF DIVERSEBOOKFINDER.ORG

⁷ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk can be accessed here:
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story



Check-In!

- 1 Reflect on the books you share with students or that are available in classroom/school libraries. What is the balance between stories of trauma or pain vs. positive and affirming ones? How does this challenge your notions/understandings of including “diverse” books in your library/curriculum?
- 2 What specific actions can you take to ensure your students receive more than a single story about any group of people? Why is it important to include positive narratives that affirm all students?
- 3 What are the benefits of showing students examples of cross-racial friendships in books? How do these models impact how students treat each other in real life?



STEP 8: Using an ABAR Lens to Select Books

Books that celebrate and explore different identities and lived experiences are essential in our classrooms and programs. We know that, from birth to 12th grade and beyond, representation matters. And books that are anti-bias and antiracist support all students in profound ways. Studies show that when students see themselves and their life experiences reflected in their learning environment—in the books they read, the curriculum they learn, and more—they are more engaged and interested in learning. But how do we know if our books are anti-bias and antiracist?



“When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part.”

DR. RUDINE SIMS BISHOP

BRITT HAWTHORNE

Anti-bias Antiracist
Teacher Educator

ON CLASSROOM LIBRARIES

“When educators are curating their anti-bias classroom libraries, I always ask them to keep these questions in mind, ‘Who is being recognized, represented, and affirmed? Who is being ignored, silenced, and pushed-out?’ Classroom libraries should include books that help students:

- Develop self-awareness, confidence, and pride.
- Develop accurate language to describe diversity by representing and celebrating differences.
- Develop language to identify unfairness and bias.
- Develop their agency to advocate against prejudice and bias.

One year, when I was teaching 4th grade, I invited my students to evaluate the books in our classroom. One student, a young Muslim girl came up to me and told me that I had a lot of fiction books about Christianity, but only one (very large) non-fiction book about Islam. By pointing this out, she helped me recognize the importance of making sure that the books in my classroom reflect students in my classroom for that particular school year. It is important to evaluate my classroom library each year, and make sure my titles are inclusive of the students I have. Since then, when teaching younger students, I invite older students to evaluate my bookshelf. And, I also invite parents for a book night to visit our classroom library and help ensure their children are reflected in our titles.”

Educators should ask the questions below to evaluate their current class, program, or personal library. Keep in mind that this is not a pass/fail test for one’s book collection. The goal is to create an anti-bias and antiracist book collection, so all books should be evaluated individually and as part of the collection with the questions that follow. Don’t be afraid to get rid of books that perpetuate harmful stereotypes and invisibility. The aim is for students to experience accurate narratives through positive storylines and/or through historical truths.

Explore the Storylines.

FOR THE FULL COLLECTION

When evaluating the storylines in the full collection, ask the following:

- Does a single story or narrative about a group dominate my bookshelves? For example, books that feature Indigenous or Native American people should include more than folktales from the past, and books that feature African Americans should include more than stories about overcoming oppression.
- Do I have stories that take place in different geographical settings?
- Do I have books that celebrate Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, nonreligious traditions, etc.?
- Do I have books with main characters from different countries?
- Do I have books about BIPOC that promote self-love and joy?
- Do I have books that include a variety of family structures (e.g., nuclear families, blended families, multigenerational families, single-parent families, same-sex-parent families, childless families, etc.)?

FOR INDIVIDUAL TITLES

When evaluating the storylines of individual titles, ask the following:

- Who will this story affirm?
- Who will this story silence or harm?
- Will this story make someone feel like they don't belong or like an outsider?
- Does this storyline disrupt or reinforce a stereotype?
- Does this story make generalizations about people?
- Does the story feature present-day characters and experiences?
- What is the theme of the book? Do I have books that cover a variety of themes?
- Is a BIPOC character on the book's cover?

Explore the Characters.

As you evaluate the characters in books, ask the following:

- Whose voices are being centered in this story? What are their racial identities?
- Do I have many books that feature characters with disabilities or characters who are BIPOC or LGBTQ?
- Do I have stories that include characters who use adaptive equipment, wear glasses, or who have learning disabilities, autism, anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, etc.?
- Do I have books that feature characters with different genders (e.g., girl, boy, transgender, nonbinary)?
- Do I have stories with characters who have diverse hairstyles, hair colors, body shapes, jewelry, clothing, food, housing structures, etc.?
- Who is missing from the stories on my shelves? Whose life experience is not included?

Explore the Authors and Illustrators.

As you explore the authors and illustrators in your collection, ask the following:

- Do I have numerous books written and illustrated by BIPOC?
- Who is writing books that feature BIPOC? Is the author of the book representing their community or lived experience?
- What is the copyright date of the book? Does it use outdated language to describe BIPOC?



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STEP 9: GUIDING CONVERSATIONS WITH STORIES

Stories and activities are great starting places to help students explore the topics of identity, race, and structures in our current society. Whether it is a classroom read-aloud, an assigned novel, or an activity, there are many ways to help students develop pride in their identity, apply critical-thinking skills, and learn about a variety of life experiences.

When reading books, experts recommend asking questions that help students explore identity, race, and power. The topic of race for many young people is strongly connected to their identity and how they see themselves. Race, however, is just one of a person's many identities. Asking questions from the following lists can help students understand that we all have multiple identities, beyond the color of our skin, and that just like characters in stories, there is more to a person than their physical appearance.



“[Older students] are much more outward-looking. They see books less as mirrors and more as maps. They are indeed searching for their place in the world, but they are also deciding where they want to go. They create, through the stories they’re given, an atlas of their world, of their relationships to others, of their possible destinations.”

CHRISTOPHER MYERS, AUTHOR AND ARTIST

CORNELIUS MINOR

Educator & Author
of *We Got This*

ON SELECTING BOOKS



WATCH

Cornelius Minor show how he uses picture books to promote student dialogue and critical thinking about race.

“Children use the books that you introduce to them to build their internal understanding of what is valued in society. As such, every book that you read in your classroom is a book about race (and gender and class). Even if the book only has White people in it. A reading diet of books with mainly White characters teaches children that Whiteness is the default. These books teach kids that White people’s adventures and problems and interests are important. When kids build their idea of what is ‘normal’ in a society, this idea of ‘normal’ is built around the worlds that you introduce, so you are talking about race. Even when you aren’t. We can be more responsible in our book selection, and we can go beyond that by naming what we see in those books. If a book has Brown characters, and those characters never talk, the author is saying something about race. If a book has Brown characters or women, and they all play into harmful stereotypes, the author is saying something about race or gender. These books teach about race and class and gender in their silences, and we can render those silences audible by pointing them out to our students and by discussing them.”

ASK YOUR STUDENTS AGE-APPROPRIATE VERSIONS OF THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO BEGIN A DIALOGUE ABOUT IDENTITY, RACE, AND POWER.

Questions about Identity

1. How is the character's identity shaped by their relationships?
2. Is their relationship with certain characters strengthening or weakening their identity?
3. How does the character change their identity to belong to different groups?
4. Do you believe the character can belong to multiple groups?
5. How are the characters in this book like you? How are they unlike you?
6. What identities does the character allow people to see? What identities do they hide?

Questions about Race and Human Difference

1. Is the author of this book a part of the community they wrote about? If they are not, why do you think they felt that they were the person to tell this story? If they are a part of the community, why is it important for us to read this author and their words?
2. Does this book center Whiteness/White culture as normal? How can you tell?
3. How could this book be different if the "normal" centered Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC)?
4. When was the first time you noticed human differences, and did you have any adults who helped you to think about these differences?
5. What do you know about race? What questions do you have?
6. What's your story of race? How has it impacted your life?
7. What does it mean for someone to be treated fairly or unfairly?
8. Who was present in this book? Whose voice or experience was missing?

Questions about Rules and Power

In almost all books, there are "rules" that characters have to follow. Sometimes these are named or listed. Sometimes you learn about them from the characters. Some of them may apply to all of the characters or only some of the characters.

1. What are the "rules" in this book?
2. Do they apply to everyone?
3. Why?
4. Is this fair?
5. What does this make you think about the world that's depicted in the book?
6. What does this make you think about our world?

In books, and in reality, some people use their power to take advantage of other people and situations. Power, as it is expressed in books, is the ability to make choices for oneself and others or the ability to be comfortable in any setting. In books, some characters draw power from how much money they have or their size or age. Others may draw power from popularity, their gender identity, or their racial group.

1. In this book, who has power? Who gets to make choices, be comfortable, talk the most, make the rules?
2. How do you know?
3. Do they use their power fairly?
4. Does anyone interrupt their use of power?
5. How?

Using stories to begin conversations about identity, race, and power gives students an entry point for engaging in dialogue. Beginning with the questions above can spark discussion about many aspects of race and racism. For specific PreK–12 activities that promote understanding and discussion about race, please see the Appendix.



FIND

activities that help students understand
and discuss race in the Appendix.

IN CONCLUSION

The path to helping students of all ages discuss race and racism begins with an empowered educator. The steps outlined in this guidebook are designed to provide an introduction to anti-bias, antiracist pedagogy along with resources and literature recommendations to support your instruction.

When educators know the history of race and racism, increase their awareness about the lived experiences of people with different racial identities, and acknowledge their own personal bias and prejudice, they are better prepared to engage students. This Inner Work is the first step toward effectively and authentically discussing race.

JOIN AN ONLINE COMMUNITY!

ABAR educators from across the nation are working together to share resources, support and more to further their own personal growth, and support their students. In addition to the contributing subject matter experts, visit the websites and follow the hashtags below to join a community of educators on the path to deeper growth.

CLEAR THE AIR

 www.cleartheaireducation.wordpress.com

 [@cleartheairedu](https://twitter.com/cleartheairedu) #ClearTheAir

DISRUPT TEXTS

 www.disrupttexts.org

 [@DisruptTexts](https://twitter.com/DisruptTexts) #DisruptTexts

EDUCOLOR

 www.educolor.org

 [@EduColorMVMt](https://twitter.com/EduColorMVMt) #EduColor

TEACH LIVING POETS

 www.teachlivingpoets.com

 [@MelAlterSmith](https://twitter.com/MelAlterSmith) #TeachLivingPoets

The Outer Work for educators is focused on creating the ideal learning environment for students. This includes applying a framework that helps students expand their awareness, critical-analysis skills, and more. A lesson-planning structure that centers student interests will ensure educators meet the needs of their students and will help students get their questions answered.

Lastly, the empowered educator can use the Power of Literature to guide conversations about race. Leading with positive narratives (instead of trauma); using an anti-bias, antiracist lens to select books; and guiding students through literature that explores identity, belonging, and race will help students reflect on how race is part of history and how it deeply affects the present day.

Becoming an empowered educator who consistently implements an ABAR pedagogy is an ongoing process. There are countless research studies, insightful and instructional books, and other resources that exist to inform your work with students and their families.

Continue the work.

The Appendix that follows includes Frequently Asked Questions from educators across the United States who want to know how to talk to their students about race, activities to promote understanding and discussion among students, and instructional resources to support your work.

There is more to learn, and First Book and Pizza Hut are providing additional resources to support you in this critically important work. Visit www.firstbook.org/EmpoweringEducators to stay up to date on new releases in this series.

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GUIDEBOOK



VIDEO



ACTIVITY

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APPENDIX

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM EDUCATORS

STUDENT ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE
UNDERSTANDING AND DISCUSSION ABOUT RACE

HOW TO BUILD AN INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING PLAN

KWL CHART

CONTINUE THE WORK. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM EDUCATORS

How do I talk about race when . . .

- I have just one or two students of color?
- My school is all/predominately White and I'm not a person of color?
- I'm a White person teaching mostly BIPOC students?

First, before launching into conversations about race, it is important for educators and students to understand that everyone has a race. White children and adults have the privilege of believing their racial identity is normal or neutral while everyone else is “different” or “other.” This is because White is so often left out of the discussion of race when everyone else’s race is named. It is important that students understand that everyone is a part of a racial group.

Additionally, if you are a White educator, it is critically important that you take time to understand your Whiteness and the impact your identity has on the students and families you serve. Experts recommend reading *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad, which offers a 28-day guided process of reflection and self-exploration of Whiteness.

Having check-ins with all of your students during these conversations is imperative and this can be done in person or through sharing a journal. It is important to connect with your students to see how they are feeling about the conversations, and what can be done to make the conversations more supportive and caring.



When having conversations about race, it is extremely important to not expect your BIPOC students to speak for everyone who shares their race/ethnicity. You will need to be mindful of their actions and silence because students may not feel comfortable talking to you and their classmates about topics related to race. If you are a White teacher, if possible, invite a BIPOC colleague to share this

DID YOU KNOW
THAT NEARLY 80%
OF ALL TEACHERS IN
AMERICA ARE WHITE?

THAT MEANS THE WORK
OF TEACHING ANTIRACISM
CANNOT REST ON
JUST THE SHOULDERS
OF EDUCATORS OF COLOR.
WE ALL HAVE TO
TALK TO STUDENTS.

space with your students. While BIPOC students may not want to share with you, they may be able to share with your colleague.

When you are a White person teaching predominately White students about race, it is important that you help students understand that although race is a social construct, it has real-life implications for everyone. By working through Parts I, II, and III of this guidebook, and using the conversation starters and activities in the Appendix, you can help all students, regardless of their racial identity, learn about race and racism. You don't have to be a person of color to discuss race with students. And students of all racial identities should be able to develop their awareness, think critically, and take action to ensure our schools, programs, and communities are racially just.

When your students of color think White people can't ever understand racism, and don't want to talk to you about it, you should first acknowledge this is true. White people will never truly understand what it is like to experience racism as a BIPOC in the United States. With this recognition, the next step is to explore your own racial identity. How can you talk to children and teens about their experiences of being

Black or Brown if you haven't deeply considered what it means to be White?

It is important to state that being White doesn't prevent you from having conversations about race. What may make students hesitant to have conversations with you is when they believe you haven't taken time to reflect on your own racial identity and life experiences.

What should I do when my White students have guilt about the history of the United States?

When White students express feelings of guilt, it is important to acknowledge their emotions and equally important to ensure they don't get stuck there. Sharing the history and stories of White Americans who were antiracist and who actively fought for racial justice throughout history (e.g., William Lloyd Garrison, Maria Weston Chapman, Juliette Hampton Morgan, and more) can help students see beyond their guilt and introduce them to role models who used their positions and privilege to dismantle racism.

It's important to share the history of White antiracism activists and abolitionists with your students. Using a work like Peggy McIntosh's "[Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)" can be a good place to start. Reading and discussing this article can help students understand power and privilege and serve as a springboard to analyze history and the present day.



What advice do you recommend for engaging students who prefer to stick with their own racial group and show little interest in engaging with students of different racial identities?

Students go through many phases as they develop and discover their own racial identity. For some students, the ability to surround oneself with others who share their same race and/or ethnic background is empowering and safe. This is especially true for many BIPOC students. As Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum shares in *Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In*

"I once had a Black biracial student who became physically ill when we talked about race and racism. Working closely with their family and sharing my own identity work (of being Black biracial) with them helped this student feel safe and courageous to be able to talk with me about what they were feeling. I was able to shift our discussions to ones where we talked about Black joy and solidarity in resistance, which benefited all of us."

TIFFANY JEWELL

Montessori Educator and
New York Times Bestselling Author of
This Book is Antiracist

The Cafeteria?, "One's presence at the Black table is often an expression of one's identity development, which evolves over time." Being in the presence of students who are like you can be incredibly empowering and comforting.

To support student engagement and promote positive interactions, educators can create opportunities for students to collaborate across racial identities throughout the day—whether for a literature circle conversation, group projects, games, moments of joy, or more. Regardless of the interaction, it is important to be mindful of who is doing the talking and who is silent and to ensure that, if possible, a single BIPOC student is not the only student of color in a group.

What are common mistakes that I should avoid when talking about race?

There are a number of mistakes that can be avoided. The most common are outlined below.

1. **MAKING STUDENTS SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THEIR RACE.** One common error is making students of a particular community speak for or about their lived experience as a way for others to learn. Do not do this. Racial trauma may merit a DSM-5 diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Knowing that racism causes trauma, asking learners to share or relive such experiences is negligent at best. Instead, use documented stories, and ask all learners to feel empathy. If a learner wants

to share their story, they are the expert of their experiences. No one gets to judge or criticize the way they handle a situation just as we wouldn't judge anyone who has been through a traumatic experience.

2. **EDUCATORS REPHRASING STUDENTS' WORDS.** Another pitfall is when educators minimize a student's experience or rephrase it for their own comfort. If, when recounting an event, the student thinks it was racist, then it was racist.
3. **EDUCATORS PRIORITIZING THEIR OWN COMFORT.** Another common error is avoiding the conversation until the adult is ready to discuss it. Instead, respond with genuine curiosity. Asking students, "How did that make you feel?" and "How can I support you?" will let them know that you care. Also, thank the student for discussing their experience with you.
4. **LACK OF SHARED LANGUAGE.** Having a shared language with your learners is important. Students need clear definitions of stereotypes, microaggressions, racism, and discrimination in order to better understand and process their experiences. This will also help them to share their story with others.
5. **EXCLUDING FAMILIES.** Reaching out to families and notifying them that you will be discussing race in the classroom builds trust and open communication with families. Parents and guardians can also notify you of sensitive experiences that have occurred, and you can share tips for supporting their child's developing identity.

There is resistance from school/district leadership regarding having conversations about race in my class or program. What can I do?

Many times, school and district leaders rely on data to justify action or inaction. However, research can be highly persuasive. In cases of resistance at the senior levels, it is often effective to cite research from leading universities and educator training programs to support your position and proposals. For example, the [Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools](#) (also known as NYU Metro), the [Department of Education at UCLA](#) (currently the #1 ranked graduate school of education

Planning for Your Fears

What would you do? Take time to map out your response to potential scenarios that make you nervous as they relate to having conversations about race. Ask yourself, "If this happened, what could I do?" Write down all of your possible actions. Repeat as needed for each scenario that you initially identified.



in the United States), [Columbia University](#), and the [Harvard University Graduate School of Education](#) are excellent sources for research and insight. The research on these sites can help leaders understand that if they are not talking about race (or about gender, class, and ability), they are miseducating children.

My administration (and other teachers) have a colorblind attitude and do not believe there are "race issues" in our school. But there are.

Unfortunately, when many people think of "race issues," they envision segregated buses, fire hoses, and vicious dogs. In the absence of these civil rights-era events, the idea that race issues exist is often brushed aside. Why? Because everyone gets along. But being nice does not mean race issues don't exist. Disparities in the academic performance among students of different races (where one race predictably outperforms another) are a race issue. Disparities in student disciplinary actions (where one race predictably has higher infractions than another) are a race issue. There are many others that exist in our school systems. Addressing race issues begins by redefining what a race issue is. One way to identify race issues is to take a class-, grade-, or schoolwide audit. By gathering data on student outcomes, the administration, leadership, and other staff will be able to see beyond the former "race issue" paradigm and truly see how students of different races fare across your learning community. Being able to acknowledge, quantify, and then work to solve the race issues that do exist will benefit all of your students.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING AND DISCUSSION ABOUT RACE

The following activities can promote discussion and understanding about race and racism. It's important to note that while an activity may seem appropriate for a particular grade level, the concept is still applicable for all learners. For this reason, please pay attention to the "Enhance This Activity" sections, which will give guidance on scaling an activity up or down for various grade levels and ages.

Activity #1

Where do our skin colors come from?*



Enhance This Activity

To scale this up for older students, invite them to research melanin, and explain how it works within the body's cells to affect skin tone. For further enhancement, invite students to write a paragraph connecting melanin to the social construct of race.

Everyone has melanin—the pigment or “tiny grains of coloring” in our skin. Some people have a lot and some people have a little, but we all have some.

In this activity, students will learn where differences in skin color come from: our family, melanin, and our proximity to the equator.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Brown, black, white, and red paint or powdered tempera, or skin-tone crayons
- Styrofoam plates
- Paper towels
- Brushes
- Paper for painting/coloring

DO THIS:

Explain to students the origins of our skin tone: Our skin tone comes from our family, melanin and our proximity to the equator.

- Our skin tone comes from our **family**. Our skin tone is passed down from our ancestors. We get our skin tone from our parents, our grandparents and great grandparents, too.
- Our skin tone also comes from **melanin**. Melanin is pigment or “tiny grains of coloring” in our skin, and we all have some. If our skin is dark, we have a lot of melanin. If our skin is light, then we do not have a lot of melanin.
- Lastly, our skin tone comes from **the sun**. When we spend time in the sun, it activates our melanin. When our melanin is activated, our skin becomes darker.

Invite students to use the paints or crayons to make a color that matches their skin tone. Help students see that no one is literally Black, White or Red, but that these colors help make the shades of Brown that we are. Help students mix and experiment with the paints until they reach a shade that closely matches their skin color. Help students see that we are all shades of Brown.

As a bonus, invite students to use their creativity to come up with a name for their skin tone. It could be after a food (cinnamon, brownie, vanilla ice cream, tortilla), something in nature (seashell, sand castle) or anything else.

*Activity adapted from *All the Colors We Are: The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color* (Bilingual Spanish) written by Katie Kissinger.

One of the keystones of effective communication is having a common language. In this activity, students will develop a shared, common language for terms related to race and identity. They will also share their knowledge and beliefs about various events that relate to race in America. The educator will set up and display a variety of words and images in the classroom or program space, and learners will write down their reactions for a whole or small-group discussion.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Sticky notes for students to write on (about 30 per student)
- Vocabulary words that relate to race, such as identity, dominant culture, race, ethnicity, racism, oppression, bias, antiracism, stereotypes, prejudice, privilege, institutions, history, and social construct
- Ten to fifteen images or words that relate to race in America, such as the following: The Loving family, The Freedom Riders, Japanese internment camps, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Indian boarding schools, *Black-ish* (TV show), Bacon's Rebellion, Chinese Exclusion Act, Black Lives Matter, The Trail of Tears

DO THIS:

1. Set up your classroom as a gallery of words and images. Display the words and images around your classroom or program space.
2. On a chalkboard, whiteboard, or other highly visible place, write these questions for students to consider:
 - Share what you know about the words and/or images on display.
 - What do you notice about these words and/or images?
 - What do you want to know more about?
 - What is your body's reaction to the words and/or images you see?
3. Distribute the sticky notes to each student, and give them 10 minutes to walk around the room and post their answers to the questions on the sticky notes.
4. After 10 minutes, come back together as a whole group.
5. Invite students to take turns reading the sticky note comments on each gallery item. After each item's summary, ask students if there is anything that needs to be added.
6. Return to the definitions. Let students discuss the definitions in small groups and come to an agreed upon understanding of each word. Invite students to share their understanding with the whole group and solicit feedback.
7. Close the activity by asking students to share their key takeaways either in writing (e.g., a journal prompt) or orally with a partner or small/whole group.
8. Use the replies from the images to inform future instruction. Students have shared what they know and believe about various topics and events related to race in America. Their responses can inform future research projects, essays, art projects, debates, and other methods to help students learn about various moments in history and how they've impacted race in America.

Activity #2

Gallery Walk to Establish a Common Language



Enhance This Activity

This activity can be scaled down for younger students by changing the vocabulary words and images you display. For younger students, use age-appropriate terms such as *fairness*, *kindness*, *skin color*, *difference*, *being nice* and *being mean*, etc. Invite students to share their definitions of these words in a whole group discussion.

Activity #3

Collecting Data about Our Community

*In this activity, students will apply the Liberatory Consciousness Framework to study the demographic and racial data of their city and school. They will develop an **awareness** of various data points about their city/town, **analyze** their findings, determine appropriate **action** steps based on their findings, and develop a plan to be **accountable** for seeing their actions through. This activity will help students develop an understanding of how race may influence their local community and how to apply the Liberatory Consciousness Framework to their thinking and action.*

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- A large city map (ideally something that can be displayed in front of the classroom)
- Different colored pushpins

DO THIS:

1. Explain to students that they will begin a research project to explore the ways in which advantages and disadvantages related to race may affect their city and school or program.
2. **Students will develop their awareness.** Divide students into groups and ask them to gather the following data points:

Citywide Data	School District Data	[Your School/ Program's Name] Data
<p>Total population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial demographics • Income levels across racial demographics • Home ownership rates across racial demographics • Percentage of higher education degrees obtained by race • Population distribution across the city by race (e.g., Where do the majority of White people and BIPOC live throughout our city/ town?) • Hospitals and their addresses in the community • Concentration of fast food restaurants across the city • Number of full-service grocery stores across the city and their addresses 	<p>Student population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial demographics • Percentage of students in AP or honors classes • Percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch • Year the district was established 	<p>Student population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial demographics • Percentage of students in AP or honors classes • Percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch • Year the school was founded • Who or what the school is named after

3. **Students will develop their ability to analyze data.** Using the different color pushpins, have students plot the following data points on the map:
 - The population distribution by race (mark the neighborhoods where different racial groups predominantly live)
 - The locations of each hospital
 - The clusters of fast food restaurants
 - The locations of full-service grocery stores
 - Your school/program location
4. **Then, have students answer the following questions:**
 - When you compare the data between our city, our school district and our school/program, what do you notice?
 - Are the results proportionate or equal across all three categories or are they unequal or disproportionate? In what ways? Why do you think that is?
 - Based on your analysis, is any group receiving an advantage or disadvantage over the others?
 - If so, who is accessing the advantage? How? Who is being disadvantaged? How?
 - Does your analysis lead you to identify any problems or inequities in our city, school district, or school/program? If so, what are they?
 - Who is in a position of power in our city, school district, and school/program? Do you think they are using their power correctly or misusing it? How do their choices affect people in our school, district, and city?
5. **Students will brainstorm actions to address the results of their analysis.** Invite students to identify actions that could bring solutions to the problems they identified. Is it writing a letter to the school board asking for more funding, speaking with the school principal or program leader, or starting an initiative to better support students in other parts of the community?
6. **Students will develop a plan to be accountable for taking action related to their new learning.** Invite students to brainstorm ways they will be accountable to each other and commit to the results they want to see. How will they be accountable for taking action regarding what they have learned?

According to a 2019 survey from Ed Build, 75% of U.S. public school students attend racially concentrated schools, where 75% or more of the student body is either White or non-White.

HOW TO BUILD AN INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING PLAN

Follow the steps below to develop an Inquiry-Based Learning Plan.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Chart paper, whiteboard, or other space that all learners can see
- Marker
- KWL template (See Appendix)

DO THIS:

1. (Prework) Identify the topic you'd like to explore with students (e.g., stereotypes, differences in skin tone, fairness, racism, etc.).
2. (Prework) Draw the three-part KWL chart on your chart paper, whiteboard, etc. so that all learners can see it.
3. Introduce students to the topic you're going to explore. Tell them that you are going to begin a new unit of study exploring this topic. Be sure to explain and define the topic you choose using age-appropriate language. If your topic is race, for example, you might tell younger students that you will be talking about skin tone.
4. Distribute the KWL handouts to students.
5. Ask students to write the topic at the top of their handout.
6. Then, ask students the following questions to help them populate the "K" or "Know" column:
 - a. What do you think of when you hear the word race?
 - b. What do you think of when you see people with different skin tones?
 - c. What do you already know about race (skin tones)?
7. Invite students to share what they wrote in the "K" column with the group. Write their answers on the chart paper/whiteboard. Use this discussion time to check for biases. Did a student say they "know" something that is, in fact, a stereotype? Use this opportunity to help students understand that a stereotype or bias is not the same as "knowing."
8. Next, to populate the "W" or "Want to Know" column, ask students the following:
 - a. What do you think you know about race or skin tone?
 - b. What do you want to know about race or skin tone?
9. Invite students to share what they wrote in the "W" column with the group, and write their answers on the chart paper/whiteboard. Encourage students to discuss what they want to know and share the reason(s) why.
10. To conclude, invite one or two students to summarize for the group (use the large chart paper as a guide) what they collectively know and want to know regarding the topic.
11. Tell students that you will return to the "Learned" ("L") column of the chart after you have a few more group meetings/classes.
12. (After meeting with students) Begin your lesson-planning process, and make answering student questions—what they want to know—a key objective.

KWL CHART

TOPIC: _____

WHAT I KNOW

WHAT I WANT TO KNOW

WHAT I LEARNED

CONTINUE THE WORK. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

The following resources are recommended by leading ABAR experts to promote awareness, analysis, action, and accountability as they relate to anti-bias and antiracism in your work with students, families, and colleagues

PODCASTS

TOPIC/FOCUS	Podcast	Link
The study of Whiteness as a race	<i>Scene on Radio, Seeing White Series</i>	https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white/
Study of US democracy and American history	<i>Scene on Radio, The Land that Has Never Been Yet</i>	http://www.sceneonradio.org/season-4-trailer-the-land-that-never-has-been-yet/
The impact of Brown vs. Board of Education on Black educators	<i>Revisionist History</i> , Malcolm Gladwell, “Ms. Buchannan’s Period of Adjustment”	http://revisionisthistory.com/episodes/13-miss-buchanans-period-of-adjustment
Native representation in mainstream media	<i>All My Relations</i>	https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/
Exploration of race and culture by journalists of color	<i>Code Switch</i> (also a newsletter)	https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510312/codeswitch
American history	<i>Teaching Hard History</i>	https://www.tolerance.org/podcasts/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery

FILM/VIDEO

TOPIC/FOCUS	Video/Film	Link
How to teach kids to talk about taboo topics	Ted Talk, “How to Teach Kids to Talk about Taboo Topics”	https://www.ted.com/talks/liz_kleinrock_how_to_teach_kids_to_talk_about_taboo_topics?language=en
Racial identity development	Ted Talk, “Is My Skin Brown Because I Drank Chocolate Milk?”	https://tedx.stanford.edu/lineup/beverly-daniel-tatum
Adults of various races discuss race in America	“The Color of Fear”	https://vimeo.com/424513234
Video explaining Systemic (Institutional) Racism	“Systemic Racism Explained”	https://youtu.be/YrHIQIO_bdQ

BOOKS

TOPIC/FOCUS	Book	Author(s)
For students	<i>It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book about Gender Identity</i>	Theresa Thorn
For students	<i>Not My Idea: A Book about Whiteness</i>	Anastasia Higginbotham
For students	<i>One Crazy Summer</i>	Rita Williams-Garcia
For students	<i>Tristan Strong</i>	Kwame Mbalia
For students	<i>Indian No More</i>	Charlene Willing McManis
For students (young adults)	<i>This Book is Antiracist</i>	Tiffany Jewell
For students (young adults)	<i>Stamped</i>	Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
For students (young adults)	<i>Juliet Takes a Breath</i>	Gabby Rivera
For educators	<i>We Got This: Equity, Access, and the Quest to Be Who Our Students Need Us to Be</i>	Cornelius Minor
For educators	<i>Me and White Supremacy</i>	Layla F. Saad
For educators—racial identity development	<i>Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?</i>	Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum
For educators	<i>Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves</i>	Louise Derman-Sparks and Julie Olsen Edwards
For educators	<i>Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Anti-Racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development</i>	Edited by Enid Lee, Deborah Menkart, and Margo Okazawa-Rey
For educators	<i>Courageous Conversations about Race</i>	Glenn E. Singleton
For educators	<i>Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong</i>	James W. Loewen



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