

YWCA Traveling Diversity Book Collection

This collection is provided by the Clinton YWCA Racial Justice Committee and is available for loan to area elementary schools, preschools, youth programs and organizations. The collection consists of two categories— racial diversity and socio-economic diversity.

Books may be checked out for free reading time in the classroom, teacher read-aloud, research, discussion starters, or in other ways that will contribute to the education and personal growth of your students and staff. These books should **not be checked out to individual students to take out of the school/program buildings.**

The Racial Justice Committee welcomes your comments on and recommendations for this collection; please leave a note in the checkout notebook.

Thank you for your interest. Enjoy the collection!

Racial Diversity Books

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Title	Author	Ages	Synopsis
<i>Shades of People</i>	Shelley Rotner Sheila M Kelly	Ages 3 & up	A brief text and photos encourage children to both observe differences in physical appearance and to look beyond them.
<i>A Rainbow of Friends</i>	P.K. Hallinan	Ages 3-5	This book explores physical appearances, talents, and character traits that make each child special. It also encourages playing and working together.
<i>This is Our House</i>	Michael Rosen	Ages 3-7	After creating a house from a cardboard box, a young boy learns that keeping certain people out isn't as much fun as letting everyone in.
<i>Sesame Street We're Different, We're the Same</i>	Bobbie Ketes	Ages 3-7	A cast of Muppets, monsters, and people compare the differences in noses, hair, and skin and then look at how much we're all alike.
<i>All the Colors of the Earth</i>	Sheila Hamanaka	Ages 3-6	By comparing skin colors to such things as animals and plants, the author celebrates the colors of children and love

<i>Whoever You Are</i>	Mem Fox	Ages 4-8	Using illustrations of people in different cultures around the world, the author explains that while appearances may be very different, all people feel the same emotions.
<i>The Skin You Live In</i>	Michael Tyler	Ages 4-8	This fun rhyming book celebrates the diversity of skin colors, the potential of each person, and the importance of social acceptance for all.
<i>Sister Anne's Hands</i>	Marybeth Lorbiecki & Wendy Popp	Ages 4-8	In the 1960's, young Anna sees a black person for the first time when she meets her new teacher, Sister Anne. Anna's feelings change from fear to like. When a classmate makes a racial remark, Sister Anne creates an important learning experience for her students.
<i>What If the Zebras Lost Their Stripes</i>	John Reitano	Ages 4 & up	Through rhymes, thought-provoking questions, and wonderful illustrations, the author presents a metaphorical message on racism and segregation.
<i>All the Colors We Are</i>	Katie Kissinger	Ages 5 & up	Kissinger uses photos and text (in both English and Spanish) to explain why people have different skin colors.

<i>Amazing Grace</i>	Mary Hoffman	Ages 4 & up	When <i>Grace</i> wants to be Peter Pan in the class play, two of her classmates tell her she can't because she's a girl and black. <i>Grace</i> proves that with confidence and hard work she can achieve what she wants.
<i>Freedom Summer</i>	Deborah Wiles	Ages 4 & up	Joe and John Henry are friends who enjoy the same things. However, because John Henry is black, he and Joe can't swim together at the town's pool. When the boys try to go to the pool together after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Law, they learn that a law is not enough to change people.
<i>The Story of Ruby Bridges</i>	Robert Coles	Ages 4-8	This is the story of six-year-old Ruby Bridges who, due to a court order in 1960 Louisiana, was the first black student to attend her previously all white school. Passing through angry mobs and learning alone in the classroom because white parents would not allow their children to attend, Ruby is a lesson in courage, faith, and hope.
<i>White Socks Only</i>	Evelyn Coleman	Ages 5-9	A young black girl who lives in segregated South drinks from the "Whites Only" fountain because she is wearing white socks. Due to her "bravery, defiance, and a little magic" on that day and in that place, she wins over racial hatred.

<i>The Other Side</i>	Jacquelin Woodson	Ages 5 & up	When a young black girl is warned by her mother not to go to the other side of the fence because it's dangerous, she and a white girl from the other side become friends by sitting on top of the fence.
<i>This Is the Dream</i>	Diane Z. Shore & Jessica Alexander	4-8	This rhyming journey through the Civil Rights Movement contains illustrations of participants--both famous and ordinary citizens--who stood, marched, sat, and worked nonviolently—on buses, at lunch counters, in libraries and schools... to obtain equal rights. Illustrations also include photographs and newspaper clippings from the era.
<i>Pink and Say</i>	Patricia Polacco	Ages 6 & up	During the Civil War, Pink, a teenage black Union soldier, finds Say, a 15 year old injured white soldier, and takes him home to his mother to heal. When Pink's mother is killed, the boys are captured and taken to a Confederate prison camp. As Pink is being dragged away to be hanged, his friend Say reaches out to him so that Pink can once more touch the hand that touched Mr. Lincoln.
<i>January's Sparrow</i>	Patricia Polacco	Ages 8 & up	After January is beaten and killed by the plantation master, Sadie and her family escape from Kentucky through the underground railroad and settle in Michigan. One day Sadie receives the sparrow that January had carved for her along with a note- "I found you". Sadie's family and their new town come together in an inspiring message of empowerment.

<i>Through My Eyes</i>	Ruby Bridges (Margo Lundell compiler & editor)	Ages 8 & up	Due to a 1960 court order in Louisiana, six-year-old Ruby Bridges was the first black student to attend her previously all white school. Ruby shares her experiences and memories of this very important, but disturbing, time as she faced the hostility of white parents who took their kids out of school rather than have them attend with a black child.
<i>Martin's Big Words</i>	Doreen Rappaport	Ages 5 & up	This biography of Martin Luther King (from childhood through his death) uses narrative along with excerpts of King's writing and speeches to introduce children to his ideas, Civil Rights work, and enduring importance. The book is beautifully illustrated with water colors and cut paper collages.
<i>Ruby Bridges</i>	Madeline Donaldson	Ages 7 & up	This book uses photos and a drawing by Ruby Bridges herself to tell the true story of the first black student to attend an all-white school in the South. In addition to describing the brave integration itself, the book tells of events before Ruby's attendance at the school, the effect it had on her family, and Ruby's adult role as an advocate for Civil Rights and the New Orleans schools (especially after Hurricane Katrina) .

<i>Freedom Song</i>	Sally M. Walker	Ages 4-9	This is the true story of Henry "Box" Brown, who escaped slavery by being sealed in a crate just large enough to hold him and then being sent to an abolitionist in Philadelphia. The book briefly traces Henry's life through childhood, his work on a plantation, his marriage and family (and their being sold), and his decision to escape slavery. The book also includes historical information and a letter written by the abolitionist who received the crate.
<i>Moses</i>	Carole Boston Weatherford	Ages 5-10	Through powerful paintings (many of night scenes) and poetic language this book relates the story of Harriet Tubman, her escape from slavery, and her work as a conductor on the Underground Railroad. Intermixed with the story is Harriet's ongoing dialogue with God--an expression of her deep spirituality. The story can be read without this dialogue, and the beautiful illustrations tell a story in themselves. The book includes information about slavery, as well as a timeline of Harriet Tubman's life.
<i>Unspoken: A Story from the Underground Railroad</i>	Henry Cole	Ages 4-9	This wordless book, featuring full-page drawings, tells the story of a farm girl, who finds a runaway slave in her family's barn. Despite wanted posters, bounty hunters, and her own fears, she delivers food to the runaway until she discovers that the former slave has disappeared in the night and left a special gift. The story beautifully demonstrates that communication need not depend on words and that helping others need not depend on age. An afterward adds historical information.

<p><i>Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters</i></p>	<p>Barack Obama</p>	<p>Ages 5 & up</p>	<p>This letter, which was written by Barack Obama before he became President, highlights thirteen American citizens of different races and ethnicities-both female and male-who have made significant contributions to our country. The varied talents and characteristics they have brought to America are portrayed in beautiful-and sometimes thought provoking-illustrations, which also remind us of the potential of all of our children. The book includes a mini biography of each famous person included.</p>
<p><i>We Shall Overcome: The Story of a Song</i></p>	<p>Debbie Levy</p>	<p>Ages 6-8</p>	<p>This illustrated story traces the development of this well-known song from its origins during (American) slavery through its use during the Civil Rights movement and the passage of the Civil Rights and Voting Act, into its use in South Africa and other countries where people have suffered in the pursuit for freedom, justice and a better life, and finally, into its present-day usage. Following the story there is a time line of the song's history, as well as notes on Internet sites where the song can be heard.</p>

<p><i>A Nation's Hope: The Story of Boxing Legend Joe Louis</i></p>	<p>Matt De La Pena</p>	<p>Ages 6-8</p>	<p>In 1938, just before the onset of World War II, U.S. boxer Joe Louis had a match with German Max Schneling. Though Schneling himself was not a Nazi, for many Americans this fight symbolized the war against Germany, as well as against the Nazi rule of hate during its effort to create the one pure race. The illustrations in the book are both interesting and powerful. Woven into the story are messages of failure, hard work, and ultimate victory.</p>
<p><i>Our Children Can Soar</i></p>	<p>Michelle Cook</p>	<p>Ages 4-8</p>	<p>This book traces the Civil Rights Movement by highlighting eleven famous people--and some unnamed--who were instrumental in our country's struggle for equal rights. In a break from the usual, the book is illustrated by thirteen different artists each of whom provides a wonderful image of the role each individual played to advance rights for all. The book also contains an inspiring forward by Marian Wright Edelman and ends with a one-paragraph bio of each individual.</p>
<p><i>Most Loved in All the World</i></p>	<p>Tonya Cherie Hegamin</p>	<p>Ages 4-8</p>	<p>Written from a child's point of view, this book shares the cruelties of slavery. As the girl runs plantation errands and tends to her mother, she also watches her mother sew a quilt made to guide the journey north to freedom. The little girl in the center of a red heart (made from the blouse her mother was wearing when she was whipped) is the "Most loved in the entire world"—so loved that her mother gives up her daughter, so the little girl can live safely in freedom.</p>

<p><i>My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers Growing up with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.</i></p>	<p>Christine King Farris</p>	<p>Ages 6-11</p>	<p>This is a story that only a sibling can tell. It describes the love and guidance in the multigenerational household in which Martin Luther King Jr. was raised, the pranks M.L. and his brother played, and his painful introduction to the word of segregation-- the defining moment in Martin's young life in which he told his mother that someday he would turn the world upside down. The author traces her brother's journey into the Civil Rights era.</p>
<p><i>Beatrice's Goat</i></p>	<p>Page McBrier</p>	<p>Ages 4-8</p>	<p>Beatrice, who lives in Uganda, Africa, has a dream --to go to school. Unfortunately, her family can't afford to buy the uniforms and books she must have to attend school, not to mention that she has to help care for her younger siblings as well as help her mother in the fields. Then Beatrice and her family receive a "lucky gift" which provides a better life -including an education. This book is based on a true account of a family helped by Heifer Project International.</p>
<p><i>Claudette Colvin: Twice toward Justice</i></p>	<p>Phillip Hoose</p>	<p>Ages 11 & up</p>	<p>Through narrative, interview excerpts, photos, newspaper clippings, and documents, Hoose weaves an account of a little-known event in the Civil Rights Movement. On March 2, 1955, fifteen year old Claudette Colvin refused to give up her bus seat to a white person. Not deemed an appropriate image for a Civil Rights protest, Colvin is largely dismissed by community leaders. A year later, however, she was a key plaintiff in the Browder versus Gayle Supreme Court case, and her testimony was instrumental in ending the Montgomery,</p>

			<p>Alabama bus segregation laws and, in turn, the famous bus boycott.</p> <p>Claudette's story is a testament to the difference one young person can make in the struggle for justice.</p>
<p><i>There Are No Children Here</i></p>	<p>Alex Kotlowitz</p>	<p>Adult</p>	<p>In a housing project on Chicago's West Side Kotlowitz interviews 9 and 11 year old brothers trying to survive amidst crime and gang wars and "learning to dodge bullets the way the kids in the suburbs learn to dodge baseballs." (Amazon.com review) Their struggle is made clear when one of the boys states that he'd like to be a bus driver <u>if</u> he grows up. As the boys' mother tells the author, "There are no children here. They've seen too much to be children." Customer reviewer W.M. Davidson wrote, "To hardcore conservatives who believe that the plight of the poor is no one's fault but their own, I say: Read this book. To hardcore liberals who believe the poor are oppressed by society and not responsible for their situation, I say: Read this book. <i>There Are No Children Here</i> shows that life is more complicated than either extreme."</p>

Socio-Economic Diversity Books

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<p><i>The Sneetches</i></p>	<p>Dr. Seuss</p>	<p>Ages 5-9</p>	<p>Using yellow bird-like characters, this book humorously looks at the issues of materialism, social classes, prejudice, and segregation without ever mentioning one of these terms. Is the villain McBean, who financially benefits from pushing the trappings that encourage these divides, or is it the desire to be better than others?</p>
<p><i>The Butter Battle Book</i></p>	<p>Dr. Seuss</p>	<p>Ages 5-9</p>	<p>Dr. Seuss uses his non-human characters and some of his original, silly words to tell a story in which small differences between two groups lead to violence. Is whether bread is eaten butter side up or butter side down worth a war? Reportedly written as a satire on the Cold War and arms escalation, this book can be a great springboard for discussing tolerance, respect, and the dangers of getting even.</p>
<p><i>Bully</i></p>	<p>Patricia Polacco</p>	<p>Ages 7 & up</p>	<p>In her new school Lyla finds a new best friend, Jamie, whom she eventually gives up to be in the "Celebrity" group of girls. Soon Lyla discovers that her new group members are putting cruel, humiliating posts on Facebook about Jamie. Standing up to the Celebrity clique initiates their revenge. This timely and familiar topic is illustrated with line drawings and watercolor which excellently portray the characters' feelings—especially their anger.</p>

<i>The Family under the Bridge</i>	Natalie Savage Carlson	Ages 8-12	Armand, an old homeless man living under a bridge in Paris, France, refers to children as "Starlings." They are witless twittering, little pests." How, then, will he react when he finds three children sleeping in his spot under the bridge? This story about the children, their mother, and Armand addresses the meaning and importance of family.
<i>Those Shoes</i>	MariBeth Boelts	Ages 5-8	When a new fad hits Jeremy's school, he lets his grandma know he wants <u>those</u> shoes. However, she explains that she will only spend money for the things they need. After one of his shoes falls apart at school and he experiences the embarrassment of getting shoes from the donation box in the counselor's office, Jeremy goes to the thrift store and buys <u>those</u> shoes even though they are too small. Along with sore, blistered feet, he gains an understanding of the importance of needs and the kindness of giving.
<i>The Junkyard Wonders</i>	Patricia Polacco	Ages 6-10	Trish, the main character in this book, is based on the author, who grew up with dyslexia, and her real-life experiences. After moving to a new school in an attempt to escape her special class, Trish not only finds herself in another special class with students who have multiple types of disabilities, but also in a class that is referred to as The Junkyard Wonders. A great teacher takes the tribes in her class to a real junkyard which she sees as a place of "wondrous possibilities." Trisha's tribe survives teasing, isolation, and a school bully to create a science fair project that really soars. An afterword by the author tells of the successful adult lives of her former tribe members.

<i>Thank You Mr. Falker</i>	Patricia Polacco	Ages 5-8	The pain of a young girl who struggles with dyslexia is shared in this story. The student struggles with letters that get mixed up when she tries to read and the pain of being called dummy by her classmates. Enter the hero--a great teacher who helps the child discover her gifts, overcome difficulties, and become a winner.
<i>Gifts of the Heart</i>	Patricia Polacco	Ages 5-8	A charming housekeeper appears just in time for Christmas and teaches siblings Richie and Trisha that there are two kinds of presents—"the just-good-enough kind that come from the pocketbook and the unforgettable kind that come from the heart."
<i>Mr. Lincoln's Way</i>	Patricia Polacco	Ages 6-9	"Mean Gene" the school bully has learned racism and intolerance from his dad. Can Mr. Lincoln, the principal who jumps ropes, leads nature walks, and celebrates the holidays of different cultures and religions, help Mean Gene change? Once Mr. Lincoln finds out that Gene has learned about birds from his grandpa, he discovers a way to help Gene learn to respect differences and free himself from his cage of intolerance.