

# Books to Begin the Anti-Racism Conversation

There is no doubt about the fact that having honest conversations about racism and inequity is difficult at any age. How do we begin these conversations with our children? Literature is a good place to start.

[\*Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice\*](#) by Marianne Celano

Two families, one white and one black, discuss the shooting of a black man in their community.

Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers with guidelines for discussing race and racism with children, child-friendly definitions, and sample dialogues.

[\*Let's Talk About Race\*](#) by Julius Lester

Julius Lester said: "I write because our lives are stories. If enough of these stories are told, then perhaps we will begin to see that our lives are the same story. The differences are merely in the details."

[\*Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness\*](#) by Anastasia Higginbotham

A picture book about racism and racial justice, inviting white children and parents to become curious about racism, accept that it's real, and cultivate justice.

[\*Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight to End Desegregation\*](#) by Duncan Tonatiuh

In 1944, Sylvia's family moves to a new town in California and go to enroll in the local school. They are told the children must enroll in the Mexican school even though they speak and write perfect English. Sylvia's family unite the Hispanic community to fight for desegregation.

[\*All the Colors We Are/Todos Los Colores de Nuestra Piel\*](#) by Katie Kissinger

A bilingual book with photographs exploring where we get our skin color from.

[\*Can I Touch Your Hair?: Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendship\*](#) by Irene Latham and Charles Waters

Irene and Charles have been paired up by their teacher for a poetry assignment. Poetry on the same subject told in two voices, one white, one black.

**For older students (middle and high school):**

[\*Ghost Boys\*](#) by Jewell Parker Rhodes

[\*Stamped: Racism, Antiracism,\*](#)

and Ibram X. Kendi

[\*and You\*](#) by Jason Reynolds



*Compiled by Paula Falvey*