

Teaching About Black and Brown Racial Diversity

5 Messages we are trying to accomplish:

Message	Words and actions for kids
1. It is ok to talk about race, to notice someone's differences.	"Their skin is black/brown/darker" "Do you know other people/have other friends with darker skin?"
2. There are so many people who were important to America who are black and brown skinned	When your children talk about a white historical figure, try to give them an additional message about a historical figure of color
3. There was a time when white Americans owned black Americans. That was not ok.	"White Americans thought it was ok to have black and brown Americans do all their work for them like they were not human beings and did not deserve the same things. They used cages and ropes and chains to keep them like they were in jail. All humans deserve the same things – respect, freedom, love, and their own voice to say yes and no to things. The people who owned slaves were wrong."
4. Even though we do not own people anymore, some people still treat black and brown people like they are less worthy than white people. That is not ok.	"Racism is when you think that a person deserves less or is less of a great person because of their skin color. This is never true and never ok. If you see anyone getting treated poorly because of their skin color, you need to say something and then help to change that."
5. Because black and brown people were treated so badly for so long, there are still a lot of things that are not all fixed and white American (people) need to listen to black and brown Americans (people) to find out how to be helpful in making things better.	If you are white, you can't know what it is like to be black or brown. Because you don't know, you need to ask questions and be willing to accept the answers from those you ask. Find out how you can be helpful and do that.

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Considerations:

This paper is not intended to teach all racial diversity issues. Additional teaching needs to happen around Latin-x and indigenous populations in particular.

What not to do:

- Race is a subject to not talk about or be shushed, differences of all kinds are to be talked about.
- Allow children to touch people's hair, cultural clothing or any other aspect of their person/personal space. We would not walk up to someone who looked like us and ask to touch their hair, so that is not appropriate in regards to someone different than you.
- Perpetuate white saviorism. Black and brown people are not to be pitied for their past. We are not "sad for them that they were slaves" we are "sad that white people thought it was ok to own any other people." We do not "feel bad for them that others are still mean to them", we "will not let ourselves or our friends treat anyone disrespectfully".

Vocabulary to add to the school, classrooms and home:

- Race – This is the group of people with similar colors of skin or other body characteristics. Though there are things about these categories that we (American culture) say are why we made them into a group, people get to identify themselves and say which group they belong in. We made this up – it was never an important way to categorize people, just a way for people to try to have more power.
- Skin color – this is the shade of your skin based on the amount of a thing called melanin which is in your body which is something that is passed down based on where your family is from.
- Ethnicity – This is the group that someone identifies with that is determined by their beliefs, their actions, their holidays, etc.
- Black – This is used as the name of a skin color, which is the language pieces we are teaching. Additionally, however, we are teaching that the color black is beautiful. Teaching about crows, and pictures of night time, and beautiful shadows, etc.
- Brown – It is ok to call someone with brown skin "black", but it is also ok to refer to their skin color as brown.

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- White – This is the name of a skin color for people with lighter skin, even though their skin is not white like our crayons are white or white like a piece of paper. Some white people’s skin gets tan and darker, but they still might call themselves white.
- Equality – Same opportunities for everyone
- Prejudice – A judgement based on limited (and often incorrect) information
- Discrimination – Unjust actions based on prejudice
- Civil Rights – Rights of people to freedom and equality

Books for home and school libraries (at least 20 titles):

1. All Because You Matter – Bryan Collier
2. Sing a Song – Kelly Starling
3. I am Enough – Grace Byers
4. The Undefeated – Kwame Alexander
5. The Day You Begin – Jaqueline Woodson
6. Your Name is a Song – Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow
7. As Good As Anybody – Richard Michelson
8. Mae Among the Stars – Roda Ahmed
9. I am Every Good Thing – Derrick Barnes & Gordon c. James
10. Hair Love – Matthew A. Cherry
11. Kamala and Maya’s Big Idea – Meena Harris
12. Homemade Love – bell hooks
13. Every Little Thing – Bob Marley
14. What Is Light? – Markette Sheppard
15. Whose Knees Are These? – Jabari Asim
16. Dream Big Little One – Vashti Harrison
17. I Love My Hair – Natasha Anastasia Tarpley
18. Hey, Baby! A Baby’s Day in Doodles – Andera Pippins
19. I Believe I Can – Grace Byers
20. M is for Melanin – Tiffany Rose

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Names to know (at least 10):

1. Maya Angelou – American Poet
2. Ruby Bridges – Famous for desegregating an all-white school during civil rights movement
3. Katherine Johnson – NASA research mathematician
4. LeBron James – American basketball player
5. Octavius V. Catto – Scholar and civil rights leader
6. Bessie Coleman – American aviator
7. Mary Fields – First African-American female mail carrier in the US
8. Nina Simone – American singer-songwriter
9. Sojourner Truth – Abolitionist and American civil rights and women's right activist
10. Serena Williams – American tennis player
11. Simone Biles – American gymnast
12. Martin Luther King Junior – American minister and civil rights activist

Holidays and Cultural Celebrations:

Black History Month

Martin Luther King Junior Day

Juneteenth

Kwanza

Sources and Resources:

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/winter2021/now-read-this>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/oct2020/now-read-this>

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<https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/teaching-tolerance/how-to-explain-the-difference-between-race-and-ethnicity-to-kids/>

<https://www.theconsciouskid.org>

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources>

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwCPs8VyzJE>

<http://www.childrenscommunityschool.org/social-justice-resources/>

<https://ecclc.org/amplifying-voices-of-color-interview-with-educator-brad-fortune/>

https://info.childcareaware.org/blog/4-strategies-for-teaching-black-history-in-early-learning-programs?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=108973258&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-

[_Nmx_LxLRlxsXkvOOSMBdw2Co3m4iKk13QH61wygP4g2wMu7CfKsah2-](https://info.childcareaware.org/blog/4-strategies-for-teaching-black-history-in-early-learning-programs?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=108973258&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_Nmx_LxLRlxsXkvOOSMBdw2Co3m4iKk13QH61wygP4g2wMu7CfKsah2-)

[8JFcU3FkfrCOxokzPdJvaxYIEwtsNQiZwqWA&utm_content=108973258&utm_source=hs_email](https://info.childcareaware.org/blog/4-strategies-for-teaching-black-history-in-early-learning-programs?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=108973258&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_Nmx_LxLRlxsXkvOOSMBdw2Co3m4iKk13QH61wygP4g2wMu7CfKsah2-8JFcU3FkfrCOxokzPdJvaxYIEwtsNQiZwqWA&utm_content=108973258&utm_source=hs_email)

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/06/app-news-section/cnn-sesame-street-race-town-hall-app-june-6-2020-app/index.html>