

Reading to Raise Anti-Racists - Year Two
A Yearlong, Schoolwide Initiative at Orchard School
2021-2022

<https://bit.ly/OrchardDEI>

Rationale: Children’s sensibilities and attitudes about race start forming at a very early age. If we want to change racialized systems, then we have to deliberately engage kids in dialogue about the complexities of race early on in their development. A recent article from Teaching Tolerance (now [Learning for Justice](#)) illuminates the ever increasing need to take an activist approach and go beyond teaching kindness towards teaching justice [[Teaching Kindness Isn't Enough](#)]. During this second year of our Reading to Raise Anti-Racists project, we plan to again use picture books as a springboard for meaningful, transformative, conversations about race because when we “read race” we are helping children develop the skills to see the world through a critical race lens. These books were specifically chosen for the following reasons: they feature Black, Indigenous People, and People of Color (BIPOC) as the main character, they avoid stereotypical portrayals of BIPOC, they help us gain understanding of people whose racial, cultural or gender identity may be different from our own, and they are written by authors/illustrators who share an identity with the characters in the book. Some are stories of racism and oppression, but others introduce, explore, and celebrate human differences and show children of many identities in everyday situations because we don’t want to send the message that struggle alone defines a person’s experience. Our hope is that as a result of engaging in this school-wide reading and conversation, students will be inspired to become active anti-racists and ask questions like “What can we do?” or “How can we change that?”, as they fight for racial justice.

Possible Discussion Protocol:

1. What did the story make you think about or wonder?
2. How does this story connect to your own life?
3. What did you learn from this story/what will you take with you after reading this story?

This document from Teaching Tolerance (now [Learning for Justice](#)) is a good introduction to this work and includes the opportunity for some self-assessment:

[Let’s Talk!: Discussing Race, Racism, and Other Difficult Topics with Students](#)

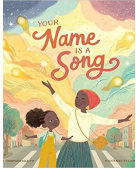
Also, [Classroom Resources](#) that would work for many of the books below are available through the Learning for Justice website.

Age appropriate standards for anti-bias, multicultural, and social justice education:

[Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards K-2 and 3-5](#)

[START HERE START NOW: A Guide to Antibias and Antiracist Work in Your School Community](#) by Liz Kleinrock - two copies available in Orchard’s library

To further collective understanding, the DEI Team suggests that each grade level team (one class per grade each month) share something about the month's book during the final whole school Morning Meeting of the month. A prompt will be offered, but it's ok to go outside of that. An example for September might be: How did your students learn classmates' names?



SEPTEMBER

[Your Name is a Song](#) by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow

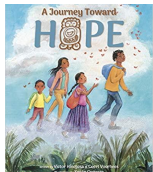
When a child is frustrated by a day full of teachers and classmates mispronouncing her beautiful name, the girl tells her mother that she never wants to go back to school. The child's mother responds by teaching her about the musicality of African, Asian, Latinx, Middle Eastern and Black-American names on their walk home through the city. Empowered by newfound understanding, the girl shares her knowledge with her class.

Selected Resources:

- [Getting to Know Our Names Week](#) from Santa Clara County Office of Education
- [My Name, My Identity](#) Slides by A. Vazquez
- [Your Name is a Song activities](#) from Stories by Storie
- [Video](#) of Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow teaching how to pronounce names in the book.

Companion Books:

- [Teach Us Your Name](#) by Huda Essa
- [Speak Up](#) by Miranda Paul



OCTOBER

[A Journey Toward Hope](#) by Victor Hinojosa & Coert Voorhees

Four unaccompanied migrant children from various Central American countries come together along the perilous journey north through Mexico to the US border, finding strength in one another as they share their dreams of the past and their hopes for a better future. The back matter has a good deal of additional information and resources.

Selected Resources:

- [A Journey Toward Hope](#) web site from the Baylor Migration Project
- [Book Q & As with Deborah Kalb](#) - Interview with the authors and illustrator
- [Peace & Justice Center](#), Burlington, VT
- [Migrant and Displaced Children](#) information from UNICEF
- [Geography for Kids: Central America](#) from Ducksters

Companion Books:

- [Watch Me: A Story of Immigration and Inspiration](#) by Doyin Richards
- [Wishes](#) by Muon Thi Van



NOVEMBER

[We Are Still Here: Native American Truths Everyone Should Know](#) by Traci Sorell

Twelve topics, specific to Native Nations' experiences, are presented through student research projects. Some topics include: forced assimilation, land allotment, Native urban relocation, Native civil rights, religious freedom, Native language revival efforts and nationhood. Each powerful topic description ends with "We Are Still Here!"

Selected Resources:

- [Exploring Native American Activism: Teaching Ideas for We Are Still Here!](#) from The Classroom Bookshelf
- [Native Knowledge 360°](#) from Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (Be sure to explore the Educational Resources for online lessons!)
- [Indian Country Today](#) Digital Indigenous News of today
- [Native Voices](#) timeline from National Library of Medicine (May be browsed by specific tribe.)
- [Framework for Essential Understandings About American Indians](#) from Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian
- [What is the Status of the Abenaki Native Americans in Vermont Today?](#) from VPR
- [Teaching Our Culture](#) from abenakitribe.org



DECEMBER

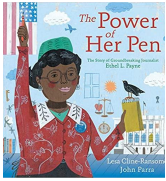
[The Most Beautiful Thing](#) by Kao Kalia Yang

The author tells a true intergenerational story about childhood experiences as a Hmong refugee. The story begins in the jungles of Laos and moves to the family's early years in the US. They had little money, but a great deal of love.

Selected Resources:

- [Book Lesson for Educators and Caregivers](#) from Amazebooks
- Create a [Photographic Family Collage](#) - directions from Walker Art Center
- [I See, I Think, I Wonder Lesson](#) from Christi Schmitt of the Nokomis Montessori Magnet School
- [13 Most Popular Gratitude Exercises and Activities](#) from PositivePsychology.com

- [How Cultures Around the World Show Gratitude in their Ceremonies of Thanksgiving](#) from Star Tribune
- [Among Timeline](#) from Minnesota Historical Society



JANUARY

The Power of Her Pen: the Story of Groundbreaking Journalist Ethel L. Payne by Lesa Cline-Ransome

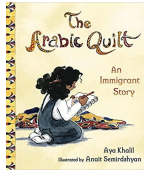
Known as the “First Lady of the Black Press,” this is the inspiring story of Ethel Payne, who broke barriers in the White House briefing room as the only black female journalist in the 1950s. She was fearless and determined in her quest for answers to questions that mattered most in the fight for Civil Rights.

Selected Resources:

- [Common Core Curriculum Guide](#) from Simon & Schuster
- [Information about Ethel L. Payne](#) from Literary Ladies Guide
- [Ethel Payne: The Trailblazing Black Female Journalist](#) from timeline.com

Companion Books:

- [Our Skin](#) by Megan Madison



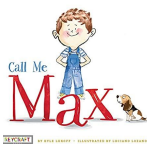
FEBRUARY

The Arabic Quilt: An Immigrant Story by Aya Khalil

Based on events from her childhood when she immigrated to the US from Egypt, Khalil tells the story of a first day at a new school. Her main character, Kanzi, is teased by classmates when her mother comes to school in a hijab and speaks in Arabic. The next day, the teacher sees a poem written in Arabic about a special quilt and the class creates a paper collage “quilt” of student names in Arabic,

Selected Resources:

- [Discussion Questions and Activities](#) from Book It!
- [Arabic Word Cards](#) - Free from Teachers Pay Teachers
- [Paper Quilt Crafts for Kids](#) from AHC Arts & Crafts
- [Egypt Country Profile](#) from National Geographic Kids
- [The Arabic Quilt Guide](#) by Marcie Colleen
- [Aya Khalil's \(author\) website](#) (includes link to guide above)



MARCH

Call Me Max by Kyle Lukoff

When transgender student Max starts school, his teacher is unsure which name

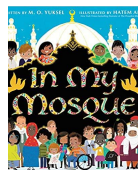
she should use - the one on her attendance sheet or the name Max chooses. Max learns to make new friends and reveals his feelings about his identity to his parents. This is the first in a three book series that includes Max and the Talent Show and Max on the Farm.

Selected Resources:

- [Kyle Lukoff's website](#)
- [The Gender Wheel Pronoun Protocol](#)
- [No More Gender Roles](#) - YouTube video by Queer Kids Stuff
- [T is for TRANS!](#) - YouTube video by Queer Kids Stuff
- There are three copies of It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity available in Orchard's library. Video available at: <https://www.wokekindergarten.org/wokereadalouds>

Companion Books:

- Sparkle Boy by Leslea Newman
- Jacob's New Dress by Sarah and Ian Hoffman



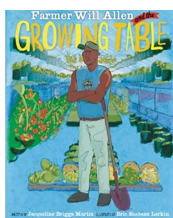
APRIL

In My Mosque by M. O. Yuksel

This beautiful book is a celebration of the joys and traditions found in every mosque around the world. It offers foundational knowledge on Islam, the world's second largest religion. The book includes a glossary and information about many historical and significant mosques worldwide.

Selected Resources:

- [In My Mosque Resources](#) from the author
- [Readers' Guide for In My Mosque](#) from the author
- [In My Mosque Coloring Page](#) from the author
- [An Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices](#) from the Council on American-Islamic Relations
- [Review: In My Mosque](#) by Hijabi Librarians
- [A Teacher's Guide to Muslim Students](#) from GainPeace
- [Beliefs and Daily Lives of Muslims](#) from PBS



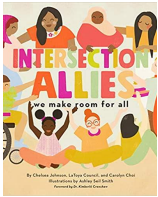
MAY

Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table by Jacqueline Briggs Martin

This is an inspiring story of an African American innovator, educator and community builder. A former basketball player, Will Allen looked at an abandoned city lot in Milwaukee and saw its potential as a garden space.

Selected Resources

- [Will Allen Discusses Last Urban Farm in City of Milwaukee](#) - video from PBS
- [Urban Farmer Starting His Own Revolution](#) - video from SuperSoul Sunday
- [Lots of activities from Reading is Fundamental](#), including word search and memory. Guides and extension activities are also available.
- [Curriculum Guide](#) from Readers to Eaters
- [Make a Difference](#) from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- [HMH Read Aloud](#) - video from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- [KidsGardening.org](#) - Lots of garden-based activities, lesson plans and growing ideas.



JUNE

Intersection Allies: We Make Room for All by Chelsea Johnson, LaToya Council, and Carolyn Choi

The intent of this book is to teach young readers that despite all of the ways that people may be different from each other, there are still values and common interests that can intersect. In the book, nine interconnected characters proudly describe themselves, taking pride in their individual stories.

Intersection Allies includes an extensive “Page by Page Book Discussion Guide” that may serve as a fine source for extended conversations.

Selected Resources:

- [Lesson Plan](#) from Reading is Resistance
- [Wellbeing for Children: Identity and Values](#) - video from ClickView
- [3 Ways to Be a Good Ally](#) - video from Queer Kid Stuff
- Helpful information may be found at: <https://www.wokekindergarten.org/>

Companion Books:

- Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match by Monica Brown