

— IN A — PERFECT WORLD

Instilling an appreciation for diversity in young children

It is our duty as parents to empower children to not only see, but to understand the world around them. Kids are born open-minded, optimistic, curious and empathetic. Children as young as 2 years old can internalize racial bias, as evidenced by the American Academy of Pediatrics. So we must take a proactive approach against bias.

As a parent, I've instilled in my children an appreciation of diversity and culture and have made deliberate choices in the books they read, the movies they watch, the music they listen to. Raising the next generation of leaders, we must lay the foundation for their cultural literacy, cultivating empathy, kindness and understanding. Only then can we hope they will lead with compassion when compelled to act on their beliefs.

Here are some literary resources to start you on this journey. I've also included select books on racism and activism:

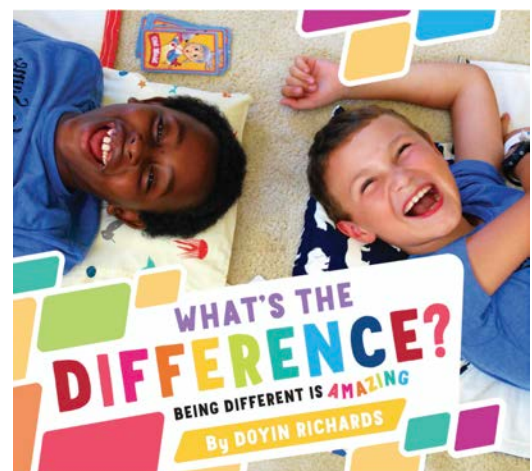
What's the Difference?: Being Different Is Amazing (3-5 years)

By Doyin Richards

What's the difference if she has light skin and yours is a little darker?

All that matters is the artwork you create together is as colorful as possible . . .

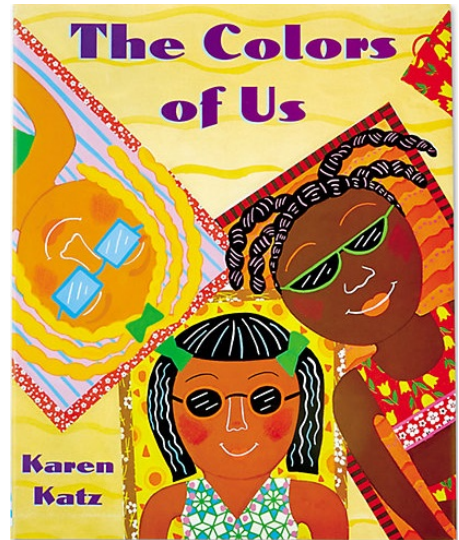
Doyin Richards tackles a timely and universal subject—diversity and acceptance—and distills it for the youngest readers. Because what matters most is not our differences, but what we do together as friends, as families, as colleagues, as citizens. Perfect for sharing as a family or in the classroom, *What's the Difference?* should find a place in homes and in hearts.



The Colors of Us (4-8 years)

By Karen Katz

Seven-year-old Lena is going to paint a picture of herself. She wants to use brown paint for her skin. But when she and her mother take a walk through the neighborhood, Lena learns that brown comes in many different shades. Through the eyes of a little girl who begins to see her familiar world in a new way, this book celebrates the differences and similarities that connect all people.



One (3-7 years)

By Kathryn Otoshi.

Red picks on Blue. The other colors don't know what to do until One shows them how to stand up, stand together, and count.

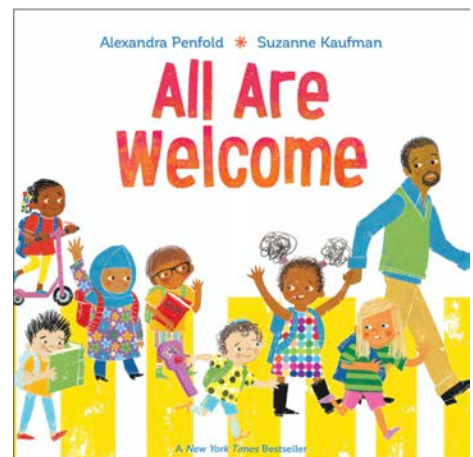


All Are Welcome (4-8 years)

By Alexandra Penfold

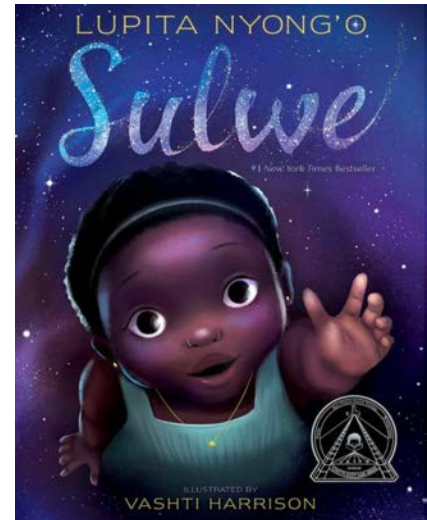
A warm, welcoming picture book that celebrates diversity and gives encouragement and support to all kids.

All Are Welcome lets young children know that no matter what, they have a place, they have a space, they are welcome in their school.



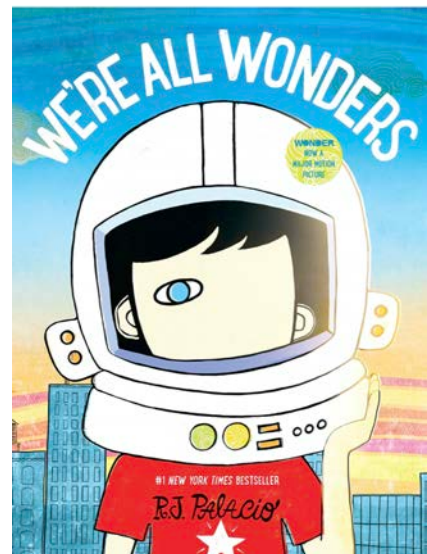
Sulwe (4-8 years)
By Lupita Nyong'o

Sulwe has skin the color of midnight. She is darker than everyone in her family. She is darker than anyone in her school. Sulwe just wants to be beautiful and bright, like her mother and sister. Then a magical journey in the night sky opens her eyes and changes everything. A whimsical and poignant story to inspire children to see their own unique beauty.



We're All Wonders (4-8 years)
By R.J. Palacio

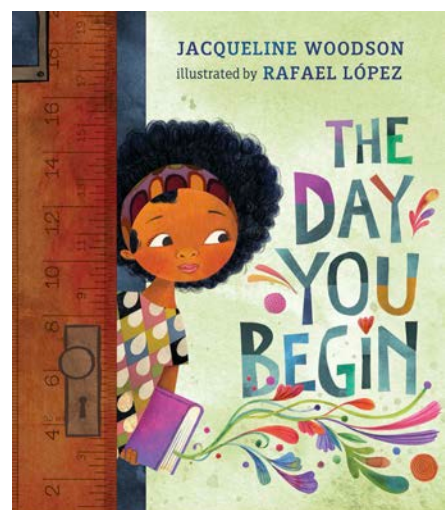
Wonder is the unforgettable story of August Pullman, an ordinary boy with an extraordinary face. This picture book shares the Wonder message that stars Auggie and his dog Daisy on an original adventure. This book taps into every child's longing to belong and to be seen for who they truly are.



The Day You Begin (5-8 years)
By Jacqueline Woodson

There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you.

There are many reasons to feel different. Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from; maybe it's what you eat, or something just as random. It's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody really knows you yet, but somehow you do it.



A Kids Book About Racism

By Jelani Memory

Yes, this really is a kids book about racism. Inside, you'll find a clear description of what racism is, how it makes people feel when they experience it, and how to spot it when it happens.

This is one conversation that's never too early to start, and this book was written to be an introduction for kids on the topic.

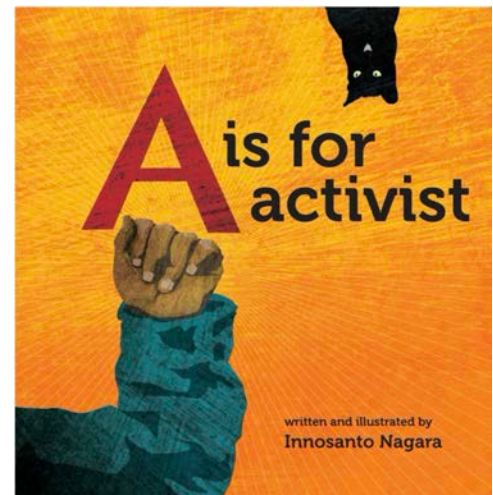
a kids book about™ racism

by Jelani Memory

A is for Activist (3-7 years)

By Innosanto Nagara

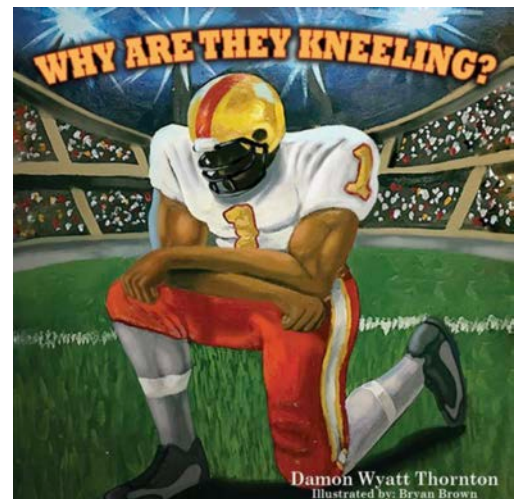
The alliteration, rhyming, and vibrant illustrations make the book exciting for children, while the issues it brings up resonate with their parents' values of community, equality, and justice. This engaging little book carries huge messages as it inspires hope for the future, and calls children to action while teaching them to love books.



Why Are They Kneeling?

By Lauren J Coleman

See what happens when Kendrick decides to ask a very important question. Kendrick thinks this Sunday will be like any other Sunday but is in for a surprise when he notices some of his favorite football players take a knee during our National Anthem. Kendrick finds the courage to ask a question and his family and friends find the courage to answer it.



The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade (3-6 years)
By Justin Roberts

Hardly anyone noticed young Sally McCabe. She was the smallest girl in the smallest grade.

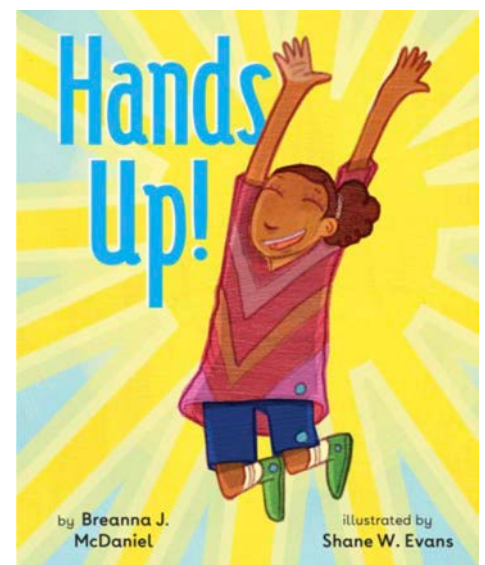
But Sally notices everything—from the twenty-seven keys on the janitor’s ring to the bullying happening on the playground. One day, Sally has had enough and decides to make herself heard. And when she takes a chance and stands up to the bullies, she finds that one small girl can make a big difference.



Hand’s Up

By Breanna J. McDaniel

A young black girl lifts her baby hands up to greet the sun, reaches her hands up for a book on a high shelf, and raises her hands up in praise at a church service. She stretches her hands up high like a plane’s wings and whizzes down a hill so fast on her bike with her hands way up. As she grows, she lives through everyday moments of joy, love, and sadness. And when she gets a little older, she joins together with her family and her community in a protest march, where they lift their hands up together in resistance and strength.



Malala’s Magic Pencil

by Malala Yousafzai

As a child in Pakistan, Malala made a wish for a magic pencil. She would use it to make everyone happy, to erase the smell of garbage from her city, to sleep an extra hour in the morning. But as she grew older, Malala saw that there were more important things to wish for. She saw a world that needed fixing. And even if she never found a magic pencil, Malala realized that she could still work hard every day to make her wishes come true.

